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AURORA'S ASCENT: CONFLICT AND DESIRE IN THE MEDIEVAL DAWN-
SONG

City University of New York

Ph.D. 1985

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**AURORA'S ASCENT:
CONFLICT AND DESIRE IN THE MEDIEVAL DAWN-SONG**

by

GALE SIGAL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1985

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GALE SIGAL

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of the late Professor Helaine Newstead and to the living presence of Professor Frederick Goldin -- two formative and most precious influences, and to my parents.

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INTRODUCTION

The medieval erotic dawn-song is a lament for the brevity of human love and a celebration of its irrepressibility. The dawn-song as it descends to us in Old Provençal, Old French and Middle High German focuses on a passionate and intense love affair between a man and woman which is usually adulterous. Because the affair is illicit, the lovers must confine their meetings in time (to the dark hours of night) and in place (to a sequestered enclosure). Outside of legal and social ordinance, the relationship requires the protective shelter of darkness and secrecy to forestall its exposure. The danger of discovery by the lady's husband or his coterie of spies circumscribes the tryst, for the lady's husband, apprehending the lovers, might with legal sanction, do them violence. Dawn signals the time for separation and parting, its revelatory light threatening to invade the veiled sanctum of love. The lovers, prudent but reluctant, utter their expressive plaint, their alba, as they prepare for dawn-parting. Although outlawed and foredoomed, love contrives to vanquish the

opposition to it, and to vindicate its value. The dawn-song is the union's final issue. Through it echoes resoundingly the intense and fulfilled passion of which it is the abiding monument.

The generic term alba in Old Provençal literally denotes the "white" brightness of dawn's light. The Old French cognate referring to dawn is aube. Jeanroy felt that the term aube designating a poem must have existed in the Middle Ages, but as far we know, it is a coinage of modern scholarship;¹ no usage of the word aube to designate a poem has ever been discovered, and therefore there is no evidence that a genre by that name actually existed in Old French poetry.² Whether there were Old French aube conventions which developed independently from the Old Provençal alba is also not known. Woledge believes, that the Old French "was more or less like the Provençal convention" but notes, furthermore, that "it is difficult to draw the boundaries between dawn-songs and other poems."³ Bec expresses the opinion that the aube and alba, at least initially, developed independently of each other and that the aube adheres more closely to popular sources than the alba. In addition, he claims that the aube was a less rigorous, less

formal, and less elaborate type of poem. He adds:

[l'aube] est sans doute le plus hybride des genres de ce registre....Il s'agit d'un genre hybride: à la fois pré-courtois, para-courtois et, éventuellement courtois. 4

In Middle High German, the dawn-song is referred to as the tageliet, "dawn-strophe," (the first documentation of the term applied to poetry dating from 1255) and less frequently, the tagewise ("which stressed the melody").⁵ Both terms referred to "ditties sung by the watch at dawn to rouse the castle" (recorded since c.1200)" and the earliest tageliet date from about 1160.⁶

Chaucer is the first English poet to use the dawn-song in a lyric mode, and today his lyrics on the lovers' dawn-parting theme, even though they are set within narratives, are considered the first albas--or aubades--in English. Saville, however, notes that the actual generic term "aubade" was initially applied "to a French waking song addressed to the beloved and does not appear before the 15th century."⁷

In this study, the Old Provençal term, alba will be used as the generic designation for all dawn-songs, encompassing the aube, aubade (which I will

use for dawn songs in English), and tageliet unless a specific language group is referred to. The designation of the medieval dawn-song as alba is the most efficient and common way to refer to the genre since it is the Old Provençal alba which is presumed to be the earliest of medieval dawn-songs:

The formation of a genre of dawn poetry in Medieval Provençal was so marked that its name of alba has become a type name that can be used in discussions of poems from other parts of the world. 8

Most of the poems examined here have been excellently translated by various scholars and poets. For the most part, however, I have chosen to retain my own very literal if sometimes unidiomatic English readings of the lyrics under discussion. When a translation appears with no footnote citation, it is my own. All translations not my own are, of course, duly footnoted.

There are aspects of the medieval dawn-song which make it peculiarly a product of its own times. This present study focuses primarily on the works of the troubadours, trouvères, and minnesingers because it was among these poets that an entire genre of poetry based on the dawn-parting theme emerged and evolved. It is among them that the dawn-song retains a significant consistency of

theme and structure. These themes and structures prove not only interesting in themselves but provide a basis for correlation as well as contrast among the various poems.

While this work will touch upon ancillary matters, its main focus will be on the concept and experience of love as presented in the erotic alba. It is the adulterous situation and the manner in which the lovers confront that situation, as well as the style of the poetry itself, that make the alba a genre unprecedented by poetic antecedents also concerned with dawn motifs or love-parting themes.

Love, the impetus behind the alba's drama, is presented by alba poets, as a complex phenomenon. The genre, as a whole, explores the very meaning, effect and spirit of this human adventure--how it isolates but also elevates those who dare traverse its perilous terrain. Through a marvellous alchemy, love forges a bond between man and woman--a bond fused in an explicitly sexual manner. Yet the alba concerns not only the sexual relationship between man and woman, but offers as well a taxonomy of human relationships, displaying a

spectrum of diverse types. The lovers' relationships with their companions, watchmen, and the gilos are important aspects of the alba and present facets of the feudal and communal spirit of the lovers' lives. The alba is also unique in the depth of its exploration of the emotional and psychological effects of the disruption of kind of romantic love. Within the very particularized framework of the dawn-song, medieval poets were able to embody the universal drama of human love. It is this drama, in all its manifold complexities, that is a primary focus of this study.

The albas which were, presumably, composed beginning sometime in the eleventh or twelfth century in southern France are garbed in entirely new and more substantial raiment than their classical and Arabic antecedents. Consequently, the most frequently examined aspect of the medieval dawn-song is its "mysterious" origin because its structure and style are so distinctive.

The motif of lovers parting at dawn, however, has had currency in narrative and poetry before and after the medieval period on which this study focuses. The natural occurrence of day's dawning and the "realistic" situation presented by dawn's

interruption of lovers' meetings, has made the motif commonly available and accessible. A.T. Hatto's compendium, Eos: An Enquiry into the Themes of Lovers' Meetings and Partings at Dawn in Poetry, fully documents that dawn-parting poems arose independently in a large number of diverse cultures.

The lovers' dawn-parting motif extends as far back as Greek myth, first appearing in the wish-fulfillment story of Zeus and Alcmena. Zeus, in order to extend his tryst with Alcmena, prolongs night by bidding the Sun to withhold his light for one day so that he could spend three successive nights with Alcmena (in the later forms of the myth the Sun further withheld light for four days so that the number of successive nights Zeus enjoyed with her increased to nine).⁹ In other Greek myths, the Dawn-Goddess, Eos, is depicted as an envious deity because, unhappy to leave her spouse, Tithonus, at dawn, she hurries on the day seemingly out of spite, and "because her appearance terminates night, she is thought of as an enemy to love."¹⁰ Homer absorbs the mythological portrait of Eos in describing dawn:

Now Eos arose from her couch beside
lordly Tithonus,

to bring light to immortals and to
mortal men. 11

Eos also appears begrudging in the myth of Cephalus, a youth whom she strives, unsuccessfully, to woo from his wife and true love, Procris.¹²

Another famous set of myths involving dawn, centers on the love affair between the adulterous lovers Ares and Aphrodite who are eventually trapped in the cunningly wrought bed for all the Gods to see.¹³ In this myth Helios, who, as the Sun saw all things first, was witness to Ares and Aphrodite's adulterous union and became Hephestos' informer. Some retellings of this myth also include another relevant motif: the metamorphosis into a cock of Ares' friend, Alectryon, whose function was to warn the lovers of harm and who was punished for failing to do so.¹⁴ In these myths, there are no laments or complaints about the dawn, yet the seed of the alba is embedded in the fact that either Eos or Helios puts an end both to night and to lovers' unions.

Dronke documents the existence of what he terms "Hellenistic albas," lyrics he classifies as the oldest surviving dawn-poems in a European language. Grandsen also notes that "the lover's complaint

that dawn has come too soon....occurs frequently in the Greek Anthology."¹⁵ These lyrics, however, as characterized by Dronke, are wholly different from the medieval alba in both tone and spirit; they are, he observes, "graceful but artificial and cold."¹⁶

The image of dawn also occurs, not infrequently, in the works of Latin poets, but the dawn depicted in these works has been viewed as lacking any significance other than the obvious time-reference. John Lockwood comments:

There is no lack of reference to the dawn in Latin poetry but there are no dawn-songs. Virgil links Tithonus with Aurora and Ovid, too, indulges similar fancies. But in none of these passages can it be assumed that the mythological phrasing has any real or symbolic meaning other than simple time-reference. In Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, day-break brings back to man and beast the toil and trouble from which the Evening-Star had given them rest.

17

Virgil expands the Homeric description of Eos into:

Et iam prima novo spargebat lumine terras
Tithone croceum linquens Aurora cubile

18

And now she first sprinkles the earth
with new light,
Aurora, leaving the saffron marriage
couch of Tithonus.

Propertius concerns himself specifically with

parting lovers at dawn. He depicts Aurora's own grief as she, obeying a dictum of the gods--one which she finds disagreeable--mounts her chariot most unwillingly:

illa deos currum conscendens dixit iniquos
invitum et terris praestitit officium. (13-14)¹⁹

she, mounting the chariot, called the gods unfair
and unwilling proffered service to earth.

The topos where Dawn is viewed as the bringer of new toil to the waking world (present also in Virgil's Aeneid)²⁰ is here juxtaposed with the topos of the lover's complaint--as it is also in Ovid's Amores 1.13 which will be discussed shortly. But unlike Ovid, who focuses on the sorrow Aurora brings human lovers, Propertius portrays instead the suffering Aurora herself undergoes in being forced apart from her beloved mate. Her desire to remain with Tithonus conflicts with her duty of lighting the world, and she turns to her office only reluctantly. The same conflict between personal feelings and public responsibility underlies (although it is not an explicit theme in) the medieval alba.

In his poem, Propertius adheres to the mythological tradition of a reluctant Eos, for his Aurora neither scorns nor flees her aged spouse,

but rather embraces him lovingly: "illum saepe suis decedens fovet in ulnis"(9) ("leaving, she caresses him often in her arms"). Her relationship with Tithonus is similar to the one evoked by Wolfram von Eschenbach in his well-known "anti-tageliet," "Der helden minne ir klage", a poem in praise of married love.²¹ Yet Propertius' poem also resembles the alba because Aurora laments having to part from her beloved. Although married and therefore unlike the alba-lady, nevertheless, she complains like an alba-lady that night is too brief: "maturos iterum est questa redire dies"(12) ("she again lamented that the days return too soon"). This is a typical complaint of the alba lover. So deep and lasting is Aurora's love for her spouse that any separation causes her immense suffering, for although their relationship is not in the same kind of jeopardy as the one portrayed in the medieval alba, it too, is in a sense, time-bound.

Ovid, in his brilliant Amores 1.13,²² also employs the dawn parting-lovers theme. The poem consists of a monologue delivered by a lover who, for almost the entire poem, addresses himself, in

complaint, to Aurora. Ovid, like Propertius, incorporates certain details from their common mythological heritage. Amores 1.13 is a masterful example of Ovid's poetic virtuosity; in the poem, he fancifully embellishes and humanizes the mythic material while at the same time, he treats his theme with ironic detachment. As though building a legal case against the Goddess, the narrator presents exempla, not only from his own personal experience, but from the imagined experiences of others to whom Aurora is also displeasing, for the purpose of staying her or at least of persuading her to slow her pace. The poem may be seen either as a suasoria or as a parody of one.²³

As in Greek myth, Ovid's Aurora is seen as envious: the narrator calls her "invida" and describes her as displeasing to both men and girls: "ingrata viris, ingrata puellis"(9,33). But unlike the mythic tradition followed by Propertius, Ovid's Aurora abhors her ancient spouse, and is repulsed by his decrepitude:

Tithono vellem de te narrare liceret:
femina non caelo turpior ulla foret;
illum dum refugis, longo quia grandior aevo,
surgis ad invisas a sene mane rotas;
at si, quem mavis, Cephalum complexa teneres
clamares: 'lente currite, Noctis equi!'
(35-40)

Would that Tithonus were allowed to tell his
tale of you:
there would be no woman more vile in heaven;
while you flee him, because he is far gone
in years,
you rise early to a chariot hated by the
aged one.
But if you were holding in your embrace
Cephalus whom you prefer,
You would be shouting: 'run slowly,
steeds of night!'

The narrator contrasts Aurora's unhappy marital condition to the pleasure he is currently sharing with his lady and which Aurora's coming will disrupt. The husband in the alba is less sympathetic a figure than the Tithonus Ovid portrays, even though both Tithonus and the husband in the alba never speak. Ovid's narrator acknowledges the wrongs done Tithonus by Aurora, suggesting that were Tithonus given the opportunity, he might win a sympathetic hearing. The husband in the alba, a stock character known as the gilos, is never allowed the opportunity to tell the story from his point of view, nor is it ever so much as acknowledged that he might have one. Grandsen notes:

Tithonus is contrasted with the poet-lover on two counts: he is old and he is a husband--a stock figure of erotic elegy. 24

The narrator is not only contrasting himself with Tithonus; he is also contrasting Aurora's feelings

for her husband with those she might have for the youth Cephalus. He implies that Aurora should be able to sympathize with him because, were she with her preferred Cephalus, she would indeed slow her pace in order to remain longer with her lover. The narrator suggests that Aurora purposely rushes off, repulsed by her husband's age. She is, then, not merely performing her public duty, but she is doing so in a way which allows her to act out her personal emotional reaction of distaste of her spouse. He insinuates that Aurora performs her duty almost by whim, and that therefore, if she desired to, she could decelerate her approach in sympathy, if not deference, to his wishes.

The playful cleverness and rhetorical flamboyance of Ovid's Amores 1.13 does indeed differ from the sorrowful plaint or angry outcry of the medieval alba. Ovid applies broad and bright colors: "flava" (2), "roscida" (10), "purpureus" (10), "ater" (33), "rubebat" (47)--all appropriate to the deity who illumines the world, bringing with her vision and vivid colors. If dawn is golden and rosy-complexioned in Ovid's conception, in the Old Provençal and Old French alba it is predominantly

white. In the tageliet, dawn is often "grâwen," more obviously imaged as the blending of night and day in this realistic chromatic rendering. Only rarely does the alba poet mention other colors. Furthermore, the evocative imagery and extensive spectra of experience Ovid orchestrates are also absent from the alba. Ovid creates mood succinctly, effectively setting the atmosphere--another effect not important to the alba--with a handful of words. But all these factors contribute to the liveliness and sense of movement of Ovid's memorable piece.

Yet points of similarity can also be discerned. The personification of natural events so characteristic of Ovid is sometimes found in the alba. Wolfram von Eschenbach, author of some of the genre's most powerful and ingenious lyrics, depicts dawn, in his tageliet, "Sîne klâwen," as the ferocious talons of a mighty eagle piercing the clouds in its upward descent.²⁵ The lover of the Old Provençal "Gaita be" personifies nature when he accuses dawn of "stealing" (5) his beloved.²⁶

The speaker of Amores 1.13 emphasizes the idea of union and the pleasure it gives:

nunc iuvat in teneris dominae iacuisse lacertis;

si quando, lateri nunc bene iuncta meo est.
nunc etiam somni pingues et frigidus aer,
et liquidam tenui gutture cantat avis. (5-8)

Now one rejoices to have lain in the tender
arms of his mistress;
if ever, now she is well joined to my side.
Now, indeed, sleeps are deep, and cold the air,
and the bird sings flowing song in a slender
throat.

The speaker emphasizes the present moment, reiterating "nunc" three times in three successive lines, (twice as the first word in the line) for the present is the perfect moment. The word now, aras or some spelling variant thereof (Old Provençal), nu (Middle High German), is frequent in the alba, where the present moment is also of vital interest and concern. The stress, rather than being on the lady or on love, is on pleasure itself, and a sense of relaxed and contented serenity pervades the poem. Indeed, the passage focuses on the contentment ("iuvat") the lover experiences; such contentment and the idea of joy and pleasure that it gives are essentials of the alba as well. The idea of the lady being "well joined" to her lover's side is the same sort of euphemism employed in the alba, the word side ("costa") appearing in two of them. The perfect passive infinite "iacuisse" evokes the past action as well as the present

relaxation.

The lover of Amores 1.13 thrice asks: "quo properas Aurora?"²⁷ imploring the goddess to decelerate her approach. In his desire to hinder Aurora, the speaker alludes to two wish-fulfilling myths--the story of the Moon and Endymion, and that of Zeus and Alcmena:

adspice, quot somnos iuveni donarit amato
Luna! neque illius forma secunda tuae.
ipse deum genitor, ne te tam saepe videret,
commisit noctes in sua vota duas. (43-46)

Behold, how many nights has the Moon given
to her young beloved! Nor is her beauty
second to yours.
The very father of the Gods, that he should
not see you so often,
united two nights for his pleasure.

Grandsen views these passages as indications of Ovid's "deflationary treatment of myth" since Ovid presents both Jupiter and Luna as having "altered the cosmos for their own sexual gratification."²⁸ But the contrast between, on the one hand, the power of Zeus and Luna--and their ability to control the cosmos even just for the sake of sexual pleasure--and, on the other hand, the impotence of the speaker to do the same, highlights the limitations imposed on strictly human love. The speaker's acceptance of his lack of power is subtly conveyed through the use of these allusions.

However, Ovid inserts an irony, because Aurora, too, is an immortal. Although she may have the power to alter the cosmos, as the speaker implies, she has a vested interest in keeping things as they are, for as Ovid's narrator portrays her, Aurora is impatient to leave Tithonus. Ironically, the speaker, although powerless, finds joy in his human union, whereas the goddess, although powerful, lacks such joy. Certain circumstances are beyond the dominion even of Gods; certain circumstances are even more exciting and poignant--more meaningful--because of one's inability to control them.

The desire to alter the course of an immutable natural or divine force more powerful than the suppliant is one also expressed by the lovers in the medieval alba. The alba abounds with lovers' supplications to God asking him to change the course of the cosmos, or to harm their enemies. Chaucer, perhaps harking back to this very poem of Ovid's, has Criseyde allude to the myth of Jove and Alcmena in her aubade:

O night, alas why niltow over us hove,
As longe as whanne Almene lay by Jove?
(III, 1427-1428) 29

Ovid's narrator chides Aurora for fulfilling her preordained divine function. The lovers in the alba similarly castigate dawn. The lady of "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir," for instance, reiterates her hatred of dawn, a sentiment with which she opens her song, and one to which she keeps returning in her refrain:

Or ne hais riens tant com le jour,
Amins, ke me depairt de vos. (5-6)³⁰

Now I hate nothing as much as the day,
Love, which parts me from you.

Also in several tageliet, dawn is castigated. In Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Ez is nu tac," "gevlouchet wart dem tage." (28)³¹ The impersonal construction (literally translated as: "cursed was the day") makes that cursing seem all the more universal, and not just the action of two displeased lovers. Hatto translates these lines more poetically: "they roundly cursed the dawn."³² And in Wolfram's "Den morgenblic," the lady complains to dawn: "den jaget von mir dîn schîn" (11)³³ ("your shine chases [my lover] from me"). In Walther von der Vogelweide's "Friuntlîchen lac," the lady threatens dawn:

wê geschehe dir, tac,
daz dû mich lâst bî liebe
langer bliben nieht. (6-8)³⁴

Woe betide you, dawn,
that you do not permit me to stay
any longer by my love.

And Troilus, in the aubade Chaucer gives him, angrily addresses "cruel,"(III, 1450) "envious"(III, 1454) and "dispitous"(III, 1458) day. In the second aubade passage later in book III, the narrator relates how the lovers railed against day:

Calling it traytour, envious, and worse,
And bitterly the dayes light they curse.
(III, 1700-1701)

As Aurora is really fulfilling a preordained function, one prescribed to her, so, too, is the watchman of the medieval alba, a figure often reviled by alba lovers and who, although certainly not divine, is sometimes perceived by the lovers as possessing powers beyond the merely human. Sometimes the watchman is the object of the lovers' aggressive denunciation precisely because he is performing his public duty or official function.³⁵

Grandsen notes how cleverly Ovid relates Aurora's private and public lives:

Dawn's public function or natural duty is to rise each day at the duly appointed hour, and she fulfils it in the poem's last couplet, where the pun on rubebat refers both to her public function and her private life. Her blushes stand for the sunrise, imperturbable, impenetrable and punctual, yet

they also represent her confused response
to the poet's exposé of her amours. 36

The correlating or the difficulty of correlating
public and private lives is also one of the issues
which pervade the medieval alba.

The speaker of Amores 1.13, although physically
weaker than a goddess, is striving with her
verbally, using every possible argument to build a
convincing, persuasive case. Although he knows he
cannot control the environment by divine
ministration, he attempts to persuade with words.
The final lines of the poem demonstrate his failure
to persuade her to change or slow her course, yet
his arguments may have had some effect:

iurgia finieram; scires audisse: rubebat;
nec tamen adsueto tardius orta dies!
(47-48)

I had ended my chiding: you could tell she
heard: she blushed;
nevertheless day rose not slower than
her wont! 37

About this conclusion, Saville observes:

The reality principle finds its expres-
sion in the irony of the poem's final
line....Desire is a mighty force, but
reality will always win out. 38

Saville further postulates that the narrator has
deceived himself into believing that dawn responded
to his words by blushing, whereas in fact:

nature goes her own way, completely untouched by human needs. What men believe to be the result of their own words is actually a completely independent process over which men do not have the slightest control. 39

Ovid resumes the dawn-parting theme in the letter Leander writes to Hero in the Heroides. Leander laments the short span of time permitted love and the pain of separation necessitated by daybreak, recalling with longing his union with Hero:

non magis illius numerari gaudia noctis
Hellespontiaci quam maris alga potest;
quo brevis spatium nobis ad furta dabatur,
hoc magis est cautum, ne foret illud iners.
(107-110) 40

the joys of that night can no more be
numbered
than can the seaweed of the Hellespont
the briefer the space given to us for
furtive love,
the greater is our caution lest that
space be idle.

These lines, while part of a larger narrative, are not dissimilar either in tone or focus to the alba, although they are more imagistic and expository than is typical. The hyperbolic response, the idea of secret love and that the shorter time span allotted to love makes every spare second more priceless, even sacred, these are all present in the medieval alba. The "oscula properata" seized

"sine ordine raptime"(113) ("hurried kisses; without order, hastily") which are inspired by Leander's impending departure would not be out of place in a medieval alba and indeed, kindred actions occur in several where the frantic lovers attempt to capture passionately their parting moment. Leander, concluding these lines, addresses Hero as "dominam... meam,"(118) an endearment quite in keeping with one a courtly lover might bestow upon his beloved. And Leander's evocation of the nurse's bitter scolding adumbrates the jarring cries of the alba watchman which warn the couple of the imminence of danger or dawn, although Saville points out some of the differences between the watchman figure and the nurse of this poem.⁴¹

The actions, desires and protests of lovers in the medieval alba do not necessarily derive from classical poetry such as the examples briefly mentioned here, but interesting parallels exist which should not be summarily overlooked or dismissed. Such links with classical poetry point to aspects of poetry--and of love--which the two ages share, and which may exemplify certain peculiarly western or European--if not universal--sensibilities.

Although many critics have sought to discern the relationship between classical and medieval dawn-poetry, far fewer have been attuned to links between European and Arabic poetry. Several scholars, however, have traced what they believe are definite links between Arabic and Old Provençal dawn-poems. This area of study is relatively recent, and is ongoing today. The following translation of a short Arabic lyric (c. 861-908) will immediately elicit a smile of recognition from anyone familiar with the alba:

Do not meet your love except by night,
For the sun is a scandal monger,
 and the night a bawd.
How many a lover, covered by the
 darkness of night,
Meets his beloved, while slanderers sleep! 42

With its references to slanderers and scandal mongers, this lyric also succinctly portrays--minus a few details--the conventional alba plot. Just how the Arabic poetry influenced Old Provençal, however, or how much, has yet to be determined.

Another ancient tradition--the English one--is documented by Baskerville in his important study, "English Songs on the Night Visit." He explains that the dawn-song represents

one group in a large body of songs that

picture the various phases of a lover's
secret visit to his lady at night. 43

Baskerville proposes a theory, based on studies in ancient folk culture, that several types of songs developed around the night visits paid by unmarried men to women, each of which emphasized a particular phase in the visit.⁴⁴ Baskerville suggests that the customs of St. Valentine's Day are probably relics of an "ancient annual distribution of mates by lot at a spring sex festival."⁴⁵ He further speculates that the phase of the night visit during which departure occurred would have been the first of the phases to have developed and the most widespread:

It is to be expected, I think, that the...
aube should have developed first and been
the most widespread since the parting offered the dramatic moment for the expression
of lyric passion. 46

The drama of parting, then, perhaps provides the reason why the dawn-song had so great an appeal as a literary genre.

Baskerville's article, published in 1921, was a pioneering effort: extensive in its range, fascinating in its suggestiveness, encompassing in its attempt to synthesize courtly and popular poetry, and important in its use of then recently

collected ballad and folk materials. He attempts a "realistic" or "socio-anthropological" approach to the origins of the alba genre, relating a real-life situation to the creation of poetry. Yet perhaps the very attempt to synthesize all these materials resulted in the fusing or erasing of too many important distinctions.

Although Baskerville's theory is well-reasoned, he provides little proof of the European pagan practice he describes. However widespread such a practice was in ancient times, there is only the evidence which survives in song or in cultures which have retained what we presume are features of their ancient folk rituals. Yet such rituals or practices are not necessarily related to the creation of song or poetry. The real experience of lovers parting and the composing of poetry may, indeed, be only tangentially linked even if that parting is the theme or motif of a genre of poetry.

Perhaps Baskerville's reasoning is even slightly tautological, for he believes parting would have "offered the dramatic moment for the expression of lyric passion" precisely because we have tangible proof of that expression. But we still have little evidence that such an expression

was related to the experiencing of an actual event. Or perhaps we should make a larger distinction between songs which emerge as an outgrowth of popular or folk culture, and those which are conscious, even self-conscious products of individual geniuses as were the songs of the courtly poets. Medieval courtly poets (e.g. those who originated the alba that this study investigates) composed songs quite dissimilar to the kinds of works (ballads, folk-songs) Baskerville cites in his study. And even proof of the relationship between the actual event and the creation of song would not necessarily indicate that the parting phase was inherently the most dramatic or passionate one, and would therefore be the first, most widespread, or most popular phase to have been dramatized.

In the end, Baskerville's article, although an impressive work, does not explain why a genre of intricately wrought poetry on this subject suddenly appears in medieval France, nor why England lagged so far behind in the literary composition of such poems (he does note that the English material is "very fragmentary"⁴⁷ and that the relation between

English and Continental poetry is quite close), if they stem, not from the influence of a literary tradition, but from an anthropological or cultural practice which was as endemic to England as to the Continent. Although Baskerville notes that "apparently there was no such vogue of the type in England as on the Continent,"⁴⁸ his anthropological explanations do not work toward explaining that difference.

Finally, we can appreciate Baskerville's attempt to deal with the vast corpus of English folk material in which are embedded fragments of the alba theme. However, most of his citations, when they are at all medieval, are from very late in the Middle Ages (fifteenth century is the earliest), and many, since they were not recorded until later on (several had gone unrecorded until the nineteenth century), are impossible to date. As interesting as this material is, it does not really illuminate the more conscious literary and courtly productions of medieval alba poets, although it does shed light on aspects of early folk culture and how such culture passed on and developed its own traditions. In fact, the material may suggest that the themes of the alba

were popularized and subsumed into folk poetry and ballads after the period of the courtly love lyric, as seems to have been the case in Germany and France.

Dawn-songs or works which feature dawn-song themes also appear subsequent to the Middle Ages in England, France and Germany. There were songs about dawn during most later periods of French literature, but, says Woledge, "it would be rash to suggest that there is any historical connection between albas and these later works."⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the themes of French popular poetry and folk-song clearly suggest that the alba tradition persisted.

The tageliet, too, continued to be written in Germany, and ironically, more were composed after its "decline." Hatto notes:

[t]he decline of the seriously 'poetic' tageliet dates from the time when its master, Wolfram von Eschenbach, had firmly established it as a conventional genre (c. 1200). This is not surprising, for the harder a convention sets the more solid the basis for travesty and persiflage. 50

Subsequent to its great flowering, as in France, the genre became incorporated into popular culture and "became the type of love-poem most in favor"

from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries.⁵¹ Two later German works merit special mention: Goethe's opening scene in Part II of Faust and Act II of Wagner's Tristan und Isolde. Emerson Brown Jr. observes that Goethe seems to be consciously "creating an anti-Platonic, anti-Christian and specifically anti-Dantean scene..." which simultaneously "alludes to, embraces and defies" dawn-song traditions.⁵² Act II of Wagner's Tristan und Isolde has also been seen as an expanded alba.⁵³

Of the many theories about the alba's origin, one of the most interesting and convincing is put forth by Dronke, and is similar in some respects to Baskerville's, though better documented and explained. Dronke, like Baskerville, focuses on the pre-literate folk culture, but Dronke centers on the Romance tradition, suspecting that an oral Romance tradition preceded the written one:

It is possible that a popular tradition of erotic albas went back to the very beginnings of Romance patois, and that the dawn-songs of Ambrose and Prudentius were themselves a learned and sacred rejoinder to a vogue of profane albas that have not survived in writing. 54

Dronke posits that "love songs with a dawn-theme were traditional and popular in Romance speaking

areas long before we have written records of them."⁵⁵ As proof, Dronke cites the bilingual poem, "Phoebe claro," describing it as "a remarkable Latin dawn-song with a Provençal refrain which survives in a later tenth century manuscript with a melody."⁵⁶ Bec notes that "Phoebe claro"

constitue au surplus le plus ancien exemple d'insertion, dans un texte latin, de vers en langue vulgaire. 57

Owing to its early date of composition and to the obscure refrain, "enigmatic in both dialect and meaning,"⁵⁸ "Phoebe claro" has been the focus of some scholarly controversy. The poem was discovered around 1880 and greeted as the earliest example of Provençal song, and as the earliest lovers' alba. Helen Waddell, in her Medieval Latin Lyrics (1929), noted:

It is the first alba...and the refrain is one of the oldest fragments of Provençal, or of North Italy, for it is claimed for both. 59

Some critics have agreed with Waddell also viewing "Phoebe claro" as a love poem, but others have interpreted the poem as a morning hymn or sacred alba and still others have seen it as a combination.⁶⁰

When songs which focus specifically on lovers

parting at dawn begin to appear in Old Provençal literature, they seem to be already following some kind of poetic convention. As Dronke suggests, they appear to follow patterns which are established and well laid out. The Old Provençal alba seems to have been born complete with setting, an elaborate narrative scenario and scheme, and dramatis personae -- type characters -- consisting of: a lady, her lover, a watchman (gayta), the lady's husband (gilos), and often one or more allies (companhos).

Traditionally classified by scholars as a minor sub-genre of lyric--the canso being considered the major genre--⁶¹the alba has often been referred to in general discussions of medieval lyric, but few in-depth studies of the genre, or of the poems which comprise it, have actually been made. Two recent studies which work toward ameliorating this situation, make substantial contributions to our knowledge and understanding of the alba. Hatto's encyclopedic work, Eos: An Enquiry into the Theme of Lovers' Meetings and Partings at Dawn in Poetry (1965) functions as an introduction to the diversity and magnitude of the corpus of extant dawn-songs throughout history from various

cultures. The work serves as a source book which provides useful texts, translations, notes and general commentaries. The work is of encyclopedic range, and does not concern itself with intensive analyses or interpretations of individual entries. The purpose of the collection, Hatto states, is to provoke thought and interest in the subject and to provide the tools by which such study can be facilitated.⁶² Eos thoroughly fulfills that function.

Jonathan Saville's The Medieval Erotic Alba (1972) is another recent and major contribution to the study of the genre. Saville focuses specifically on the medieval Romance alba. His interesting and perceptive interpretations have stimulated much thought about the genre and encourage response. However, the book is disappointingly polarizing. Saville continually sets up the genre as one in which extreme forces conflict: the universe is composed of two worlds of value, of inside versus outside, of pleasure versus reality, etc.:

The alba is constructed in terms of dualistic oppositions: so far we have spoken of the inside-outside opposition and the night-day opposition They are oppositions of

worlds of reality and of worlds of value. 63

While this approach is interesting and somewhat illuminating, it is also simplistic. In so polarizing the poems, he skims over the examples which present views which are less than extreme with the typical observation:

It is of course not possible here to analyze all the permutations and combinations of these various elements in all of the extant albas. 64

But if such permutations and combinations exist in any number, than does not the value of analyzing only examples of polarization decrease? Why are the values, when they are diametrically opposed inherently more important or interesting than when they are reconciled?

Another problem with Saville's study is that he continually shifts his focus from the albas themselves to other aspects, not merely of medieval literature, but of all literature. While this method is sometimes applied convincingly, often it diffuses his points, ranging too wide to be of import for the particular poems he wants to deal with.

Saville analyzes those three or four albas which he considers best or most representative. He

then, by extension, applies this analysis to the genre as a whole, not finding it possible to engage those poems which stray beyond his theme of polarized values. This limited approach can only result in a reductive interpretation, since it is too selective to be truly representative and overlooks much of the diversity of the genre. Although his analysis is very fine in places, often it is so broad as to become almost unconnected to the actual alba he desires to discuss.

Since Saville's book would promise to provide the kind of intensive analysis Eos lacks, it is all the more disappointing in falling short of that mark. However, in its wide-ranging and open-minded approach, Saville's book has infused the general critical atmosphere with the kind of fresh outlook from which we all profit. His efforts are therefore to be applauded, even when some of their fruits seem disappointing.

Unfortunately, Saville is not alone in reductive approaches to studying the genre, for few scholars have studied individual albas at length, or have worked on examining the genre using most of the extant poems instead of only a handful of what the scholar himself considers to be the most

"outstanding" examples. Dronke, whose work on the alba although not comprehensive is generally very good, has commented that most troubadour albas are "unknown except to a few specialists,"⁶⁵ a comment still true today, even though studies have been published since this comment was made. These lesser known poems, however, have great poetic vitality, and are of interest not only to the scholar, but to the lover of poetry as well. In addition, they can help illuminate certain crevices of medieval culture which have been long obscured in darkness.

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The alba is an especially dramatic lyric. The narrators bemoan their agonized awareness of love's imminent disruption directly to each other or to the audience. They speak in monologue, dialogue or sometimes, in the tageliet, they each speak but not to one another (this is the Middle High German form known as the wechsel which consists of two interlaced monologues). Often there is no contextualizing narrative or authorial intervention although there are lyrics in which the watchman's

voice intervenes. The lovers or the watchman often speak directly to an audience. Lamenting their tragic dilemma of sorrow and loss, the lovers publically deliver a defiant harrangue against the inevitable or a deferential concession to it. Although the love relationship is private, the pain of its dissolution is expected to evoke universal sympathy.

One origin theory puts forth a chronological evolution: it suggests that the alba originated as a woman's soliloquy and later developed into a dialogue between two lovers. During the twelfth century, this theory continues, a third character, a watchman, was added to the scene. Another similar theory posits that the alba began as a monologue spoken by either the lady or the watchman and that as poetry become more sophisticated, other voices were added, such as that of the lover.⁶⁶ Other evolutionary theories posit that the "simplest" albas are earliest. Although such theories would help to order the poems, Dronke notes that this sort of linear evolutionary notion is without foundation, since certain elements, such as the watchman figure, appear in early dawn-songs of other languages. There is no evidence on which to

base the notion that the woman's soliloquy is an older form of the dawn-song, though it has been generally accepted that "women's song" is one of the oldest forms of lyrical expression and that courtly poetry derives from it.⁶⁷ Woledge, too, finds no evidence for this sort of chronological explanation. Confronted by the fact that most extant albas cannot be assigned definite dates and that nine of our fourteen Old Provençal and Old French albas are anonymous--and that those few that can be more specifically dated can only be done so approximately (somewhere between the late twelfth and early fourteenth centuries)--⁶⁸we are likely to agree with Dronke and Woledge. Hatto asserts: "There is no historical foundation on which to rear the evolution of the alba."⁶⁹ No one explanation of the alba's origin has yet proved fully satisfactory. Indeed, a recent article in Viator (1984) which sums up the latest attitudes dismisses this kind of approach altogether.⁷⁰ Dronke's conclusion is that albas seem "to be a genuine progeny of common humanity"⁷¹ and that no origin theory can suffice to encompass such a cultural heritage; his "third theorem" seems particularly

apt with reference to the alba:

...researches into European courtly poetry should...be concerned with the variety of sophisticated and learned development of courtois themes, not with seeking specific origins for the themes themselves. 72

Thus, it is not specific origin which should be the focus of our interest; rather, it is the thematic matter and its development which constitute greatest significance. And it is with such matter, as well as with related aspects of poetic art, that my study will be concerned.

Introduction

The first reference to each alba is footnoted and the edition used for all citations given. The line numbers of any quotations to that lyric in my text is given in parentheses following the quote and will not subsequently be footnoted.

- 1 Alfred Jeanroy, Les Origines de la Poésie Lyrique en France au Moyen-Age (Paris, 1889) p. 61n.
- 2 Brian Woledge, "Old Provençal and Old French," in Arthur T. Hatto, Eos: An Enquiry into the Theme of Lovers' Meetings and Partings at Dawn in Poetry (The Hague, Mouton, 1965) p. 346 and n. 8; all articles in Eos will be cited as above with the name of the author of the article followed by the title of the article and page number in Hatto
- 3 Ibid., p. 346
- 4 Pierre Bec, La Lyrique Française au Moyen-Age (XII^e-XIII^e siècles) (Poitiers: A. & J. Picard), pp. 91, 95
- 5 Hatto, Eos, p. 429
- 6 Ibid., p. 429
- 7 Jonathan Saville, The Medieval Erotic Alba: Structure as Meaning (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1972) p. 269, n. 1.
- 8 Hatto, p. 69
- 9 J. H. Mozley, "Classical Greek," in Hatto, p. 255
- 10 Ibid., p. 255
- 11 Homer, Iliad, XI, 1; Odyssey, V, 1.
- 12 Mozley, in Hatto, p. 255
- 13 Ibid., pp. 255-56

- 14 Geoffrey Chaucer, The Complaynt of Mars, in The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. Fred N. Robinson 2nd ed. (Houghton Mifflin Co.: Boston, 1957), pp. 529-533. All citations of Chaucer are from this edition.
- 15 K. W. Grandsen, "Lente currite, Noctis Equi: Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde 3.1422-70, Donne, 'The Sunne Rising,' and Ovid, Amores 1.13" ed., David West and Tony Woodman, Creative Imagination and Latin Literature (Cambridge: The University Press, 1979), p. 159
- 16 Peter Dronke, The Medieval Lyric 2nd ed., (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 169.
- 17 John Lockwood "Classical Latin," in Hatto, p. 271
- 18 See also Virgil, Aeneid IX, 459-60
- 19 Propertius, 2.18B (7-14), in Hatto, p. 275
- 20 Virgil, Aeneid, IX, 182-83
- 21 Wolfram von Eschenbach, "Der helden minne ir klage" Karl Lachmann and Moriz Haupt, Friedrich Vogt and Carl von Kraus, bearbeiten von Hugo Moser und Helmut Tervooren, Des Minnesangs Frühling (S. Hirzel-Verlag Stuttgart, 1977), p. 441 (XXIV, IV). All citations of the poems of Wolfram von Eschenbach are from Des Minnesangs Frühling, abbreviated as MF or from Olive Sayce, Poets of the Minnesang (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1967).
- 22 Ovid, Amores 1.13, in Ovid in Six Volumes, Grant Showerman, trans. (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1977), I, 368-373; all citations of the Amores and Heroides will be taken from this text
- 23 Grandsen, p. 160
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Wolfram von Eschenbach, "Sîne klâwen," in MF, pp. 437-439, (XXIV, II); in Sayce, pp. 122-123
- 26 Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, "Gaita be," in The Poems

of The Troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, Joseph Linskill ed. (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1964), XXV, pp. 261-263; all citations of "Gaita be" will be from this edition; Pillet-Carstens 392,16a

- 27 Ovid, Amores 1.13, 3, 9, 33
- 28 Grandsen, p. 160
- 29 Geoffrey Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, in Robinson, III, 1415-1470
- 30 Gace Brulé, "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir," in P. H. Dyggve, Gace Brulé (Mémoires de la Société Néophilologique de Helsinki: Helsinki, 1951), p. 441 which provides text in Hatto, p. 371 where Wolledge has modified Dyggve's punctuation. All citations are from text in Hatto. The refrain supplies the last two lines of the six-line strophe.
- 31 Wolfram von Eschenbach, "Ez ist nu tac," in MF, pp. 445-447 (XXVI, VII); in Sayce, pp. 125-126
- 32 Hatto, p. 449
- 33 Wolfram von Eschenbach, "Den morgenblic," in MF pp. 436-437 (XXIV, I); in Sayce, pp. 120-121
- 34 Walther von der Vogelweide, "Friuntlîchen lac," Lachmann-Kraus, Die Gedichte Walthers von der Vogelweide (Berlin, 1936), 88,9; and in Hatto, pp. 455-456
- 35 See chapter three for further discussion of the watchman
- 36 Grandsen, p. 160
- 37 Lockwood's translation of these lines in Hatto, p. 274 is so effective, I have reproduced them here
- 38 Saville, p. 174
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ovid, Heroides XVIII, pp. 244-259; for the dawn-passage, see specifically pp. 250-253, 107-118; all citations of the Heroides are from

this edition

- 41 Saville, pp. 122-123
- 42 Hatto, pp. 365-366
- 43 Charles Read Baskerville, "English Songs on the Night Visit," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 36 (1921) p. 565
- 44 Ibid., p. 565
- 45 Ibid., p. 566
- 46 Ibid., p. 570
- 47 Ibid., p. 568
- 48 Ibid., p. 593
- 49 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 354
- 50 Hatto, p. 440
- 51 Ibid., 440
- 52 Emerson Brown Jr., "William Carlos Williams' 'Full Moon' and the Medieval Dawn Song," Southern Humanities Review 11 (1977) pp. 175-183
- 53 Saville, pp. 107-110 and Emerson Brown Jr., p. 182, n. 12
- 54 Dronke, p. 172
- 55 Ibid., p. 170
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 Bec, 99-100
- 58 Hatto, p. 77
- 59 Helen Waddell, Medieval Latin Lyrics (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1929) text p. 138, and notes pp. 320-21; before her, Johannes Schmidt, who discovered the poem, also characterized it as the first erotic alba in "Die älteste Alba," ZfdPh, XII (1881) 333-41

- 60 A. D. Moody, "'Phebi Claro' by Starlight" MLR 76 (October 1981) pp. 769-779
- 61 see chapter 1
- 62 Hatto, p. 771
- 63 Saville, p. 104-105
- 64 Saville, p. 150
- 65 Dronke, p. 176
- 66 Saville, 113; see also Leo Spitzer, "The Mozarabic Lyric and Theodor Frings' Theories," Comparative Literature IV (1952), 1-22
- 67 John F. Plummer, Vox Feminae: Studies in Medieval Woman's Song (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1981)
- 68 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 349
- 69 Hatto p. 79
- 70 Elizabeth Wilson Poe, "New Light On The Alba: A Genre Redefined," Viator, 15(1984) pp. 139-150; see also further discussion in the next chapter
- 71 Dronke, p. 170
- 72 Peter Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric, 2 vols., (2nd. ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), I, xvii

CHAPTER ONE

THE PERIMETERS OF THE GENRE

In studying the scholarship of the courtly love lyric, one soon realizes that the qualities which critics use to define and characterize the canso do not sufficiently apply to the alba, even though the alba has been considered a genre subordinate to the canso.¹ The canso is considered the major genre of courtly lyric in the Middle Ages. According to Ditmar Rieger's analysis, the canso constitutes forty percent of the troubadour corpus, a corpus which includes fourteen or fifteen genres.² Not only does the canso outnumber the other genres statistically, but it is also considered the most aristocratic and highly wrought lyric form. Dante, in De Vulgari Eloquentia, pronounced the canso to be the most exalted form of lyric:

Horum autem modorum cantionum modum excellentissimum esse pensamus; quare si excellentissima excellentissimis digna sunt, ut superius est probatum, illa que excellentissimo sunt digna vulgari, modo excellentissimo digna sunt, et per consequens in cantionibus pertractanda.

of [the metrical moulds], we consider the

form of the canzone the most excellent;
and so if the most excellent things are
worthy of the most excellent, as we have
proved above, than those which are worthy
of the most excellent vernacular are
worthy of the most excellent form, and
consequently should be treated in canzoni. 3

Nor did the author(s) of Las Leys D'Amors think
otherwise when they defined the canso as a poem of
five to seven coblas, treating principally of love
or praise

am bels motz plazens et am graciosas
razos, quar en chanso no deu hom pauzar
deguna laia paraula ni degu vilanal mot ni
mal pauzat.... 4

with beautiful, pleasing words and with
gracious subject matter, for in the canso
one should not set any ugly words nor any
vulgar or badly placed words....

Jeanroy, centuries later, adhered to Dante's
dictum and that of Las Leys D'Amors, categorizing
the canso as pre-eminent, the genre most deserving
of an exalted place within the corpus of
troubadour poetry:

La chanson, expression de l'amour, est
l'oeuvre maîtresse, la seule qui mérite
l'effort de l'artiste et qu'il destine à
la postérité. Le fait qu'elle occupe dans
les recueils les plus soignés une place
d'honneur est une preuve manifeste de
cette prééminence. 5

And scholars have seemed to agree that the canso
is the genre "most in tune with the ideals of
medieval vernacular in general, and most

representative of its poetic techniques."⁶ Its wide dissemination evinces what great popularity it attained.

Although the alba, too, flourished, it was still, in some sense, a marginal genre. There are only about fourteen extant Old Provençal and Old French albas and there are about the same number of tageliet from around this time. Although many genres are defined in Las Leys D'Amors, the alba is not mentioned. It is, however, defined (although, as we will see, rather puzzlingly) in didactic works, handbooks and poems.

It is primarily as an off-shoot of the canso that the alba has received critical attention. Jeanroy singled out only two of all the surviving albas as possessing literary merit:

Parmi toutes ces pièces, deux seulement méritent de retenir l'attention. 7

And he felt that as a whole the genre was cultivated by second-rate poets.⁸ Many others have concurred with Jeanroy's evaluation. By being so perceived, or by being compared to the favored canso for merit, the alba has been treated primarily as a minor and tangential form. The alba presents fundamental and powerful evocations

of many medieval issues, yet because the poems are so very concise, stylized and elusive, their significance has, until recently, been overlooked. The actual content and themes of the alba have not provoked as much critical commentary as have its origin and form. Until recently, the genre had not received much critical exploration as an important expression of its own.

The very marginality of the genre, may in fact, have facilitated its survival up to this very day.⁹ The other genres of courtly love lyric ceased to be produced, for the most part, soon after their heyday. Goldin's account of the disappearance of the courtly love lyric in general is that it "soon played itself out because it was bound to the dimensions of the audience and to the utilitarian purpose of class congratulation."¹⁰ The other genres of lyric were narrow enough to be exhausted and consumed during or soon after they flourished, or were so rooted in the soil of their specific time and place they could not long survive transplantation of either. Perhaps the very rigidity of specialized forms made these other genres too stiff to accommodate later

meanings or alterations. Or perhaps the courtly love lyric so developed and expanded that it took on no longer recognizable forms, evolving into other lyric forms, such as the sonnet. Whatever the reason, no one writes pastourelles, tensons, or sirventes, as such, today; but albas are still going strong.

The marginality of the alba, its very divergence from the type of poems which required strict adherence to structural or compositional rules, made the genre flexible, allowing for a great deal of diversity among the poems. An agile, living genre, it was able to flourish on the outskirts of the troubadour tradition, to absorb wide variations, and to adapt in a lively, novel manner to many languages and innovations along the way. That it may have been a less common or central genre does not diminish its significance either for its own time or for us today.

The alba encompasses tremendous variety within its small form: variety in tone, theme, treatment of theme, as well as in technical matters of rhyme scheme, meter and mode of presentation. The characters, although they are very few, also vary, as

do their points of view. These factors create a genre at times so elusive that it has been difficult to characterize or categorize accurately. Even in the Middle Ages the form was so elastic that some laxness or confusion about what constituted an alba may have existed. For instance, Uc de la Bacalaria, writing in the early thirteenth century, speaks of his intention of writing an alba:

Per grazir la bon'estrena
D'Amor que.m ten en capdelh
E per aleujar ma pena,
Vuelh far alb'ab son novelh.
La nuech vey clar'e serena
Et aug lo chan d'un auzel
En que mos mals se refrena,
Don quier lo jorn et apelh!
Dieus, qual enueg
Mi fay la nueg!
Per qu'ieu dezir l'alba! ll

In gratitude for the good augury
Of Love, who holds in me its sway,
And in order to alleviate my pain,
I will write an alba with a new tune.
I see the night clear and serene
And I hear a bird's song
Which soothes my ailment;
I seek the daylight and call upon it!
Oh God! how the night
Causes me grief!
Wherefore I long for dawn!

The alba the writer speaks of in this poem, however, is of a variety altogether different from what we call an alba today. Indeed, it would seem

to be the very opposite of the alba as it has come down to us, since the singer here grieves at night and longs for dawn rather than vice versa. The speaker is not with his lady nor is his outcry the presentation of a dramatic moment of the kind generally depicted in albas. Yet the lament, bird's song, and refrain-like exclamation are present in many albas. Elizabeth Poe observes:

When Uc de la Bacalaria announces in Per grazir that he will compose an "abl'ab son novelh," he reveals at one and the same time his acquaintance with a particular kind of poem well enough known to his audience that the word "alba" alone suffices to arouse a whole set of expectations, and his own intention to modify those expectations, hence to renew the genre. [He] turns the paradigm upside down. 12

Another work that concerns the composition of albas rather than presenting one is the thirteenth century De Doctrina de Compondre Dictats, a handbook for the composition of numerous kinds of poetry, and an interesting work in its own right. Sometimes attributed to Raimon Vidal, a Catalan poet and grammarian of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the De Doctrina immediately follows another of his works, the Razos de Trobar, in the manuscript, "where it is the only text not separated from the preceeding work by a blank

space."¹³ This situation has led scholars to conclude that both works were by Vidal.¹⁴ Marshall, whose study of the Razos de Trobar and Associated Texts (1972) is the most recent in English, places De Doctrina "no earlier than the second half of the thirteenth century,"¹⁵ and he rules out the hypothesis that De Doctrina was the work of Raimon Vidal, believing instead that it was the work of Jofre de Foixa, the Catalan author of Regles de Trobar.¹⁶

In De Doctrina de Compondre Dictats, the writer who wishes to compose an alba is told to "bless the dawn" ("e bendi l'alba"),¹⁷ an act which never occurs in the Old Provençal or Old French poems we consider albas today and in which dawn is typically reviled and cursed. According to De Doctrina, albas can be written not only about consummated love affairs, as in the albas which have come down to us, but also about ones in which the lover has not obtained the lady's favors:

E si no l'acabes [lo plazer per lo qual
ames a ton dona], fes l'alba blasman la
dona e l'alba on anaves.

And if you have not obtained [the pleasure
for which you went to your lady], write

the alba blaming the lady and the dawn. 18
In addition, De Doctrina de Compondre Dictats
mentions an otherwise unknown genre: the gayta.
Both genres, according to this work, take their
names from the hour at which they are sung. The
gayta genre is distinguished from the alba on the
basis of its inclusion of the watchman:

Si vols fer gayta, deus parlar d'amor o de
ta dona, desigan e semblan que la gayta te
pusca noure o valer ab ta dona, e ab lo
dia qui ser avenir, e deus la far on pus
avinementment pugues, preyan totavia la
gayta ab ta dona que t'ajut. 19

If you wish to write a gayta, you must
speak of love or of your lady, represent-
ing and feigning that the watchman can
harm you or help you with your lady and
with the day which will come. And you
must write the poem as pleasingly as you
can, always begging the watchman to help
you towards your lady.

Again, there survive albas with watchmen, even
with sympathetic watchmen, but in none does the
lover request the watchman to help him with
regard to his lady either before dawn or "when
daylight comes." The watchman's office is one of
warning the lover that daylight approaches, not of
helping the lover to unite with his lady--an act
the lover has already accomplished by the time the
song is sung. And certainly, daylight is not the

time an adulterous lover would ask to be united with his lady, but rather signals the time which necessitates his departure from her. The other distinction made in De Doctrina between the alba and the gayta is that the former "is better sung at dawn than during the day," while the gayta "is more suitable to be sung by night than by day":

Alba es dita per co alba car pren nom lo
cantar de la ora a que hom lo fa, e per co
cor se deu pus dir en l'alba que de dia.
Gayta es dita per co gayta cor es pus
convinent a fer de nuyt que de dia, per
que pren nom de la hora que hom la fa. 20

These references confuse rather than fortify our understanding of the genre. Woledge asks:

Was the author [of De Doctrina] acquainted with a literary tradition since lost, was he an ignorant teacher trying to hide his ignorance, or has he been betrayed by his scribe? . . . the text is a sharp reminder of the fragmentary nature of our knowledge of medieval literature. 21

How far removed from the center of the poetic tradition the De Doctrina was is therefore difficult to determine, and whether it represents varieties and types of poetry that have not survived, or whether it was following an existing Catalan tradition, or formulating an original one, may never be determined. Yet the references to a watchman helping the lover with his lady at

daybreak would seem to indicate a different or less concrete conception of the lover and lady's relationship. Whatever the historical place of De Doctrina, the definitions in it of the alba and gayta demonstrate a real distance from the extant tradition as we know it today. The narrative conventions have become either so relaxed they no longer signify or have been suspended altogether.

The references to the alba and gayta genres in De Doctrina are interesting for another reason. Although the instructions make no mention of the refrain or use of the word "alba," the author, like Uc de la Bacalaria, mentions the music to which an alba should be set:

E potz hi fer aytantes cobles com te
vulles, e deus hi fer so novell.

And you can write as many stanzas as you
like, and you must write a new tune for
the poem. 22

It has generally been accepted that albas, like other medieval courtly lyrics, were sung. Unfortunately, however, only two Old Provençal and one Old French dawn-songs have been preserved with their tunes.²³ The melodies must, nonetheless have been an important consideration for many albas since both these instructive works include

directions for the tune along with the other essential aspects of composition.

The musical aspect of the dawn-song, as of much of courtly lyric, is often overlooked in literary studies, especially because only a fraction of the original music has been preserved in manuscripts. Even extant sources are difficult to decipher since notation was either unsystematized, or recorded in a way we do not yet thoroughly understand today. The music of the three Romance dawn-songs that have come down to us has been said to be "very far removed from popular art."²⁴ The melody for Giruat de Bornelh's "Reis glorios," which was originally an old Provençal hymn to the Virgin,²⁵ is characterized as "elaborate and serious in tone,"²⁶ so much so that it was later used for a lament about the martyrdom of St. Agnes in a 14th century Old Provençal play.²⁷ It has also been observed that the end of the melody of "Reis glorios" bears resemblance to the end of the melody of Cadenet's alba, "S'anc fui belha ni prezada," an observation which has led to the suggestion that "the notes used for the word alba when it occurred in the refrain were traditional."²⁸ Two of the aubes that Woledge

includes in his corpus of Old French dawn-songs are the remnants of motets, "polyphonic vocal pieces" he explains, in which two to four voices "sang different words."²⁹ In fact, several scholars have suggested that the alba was not only sung, but acted, mimed or danced.³⁰ This point, however, has been refuted most notably by Pierre Bec.³¹ In addition to the man-made music which accompanied the actual singing of the alba during its performance, the alba is full of aural infiltrations of other kinds: bird song, the sound of horns, the cries of watchmen: songs within the song. The aural environment of the scene would therefore appear to be quite significant.

Considering the lack of consistent references to the alba within the poetry itself and in such works as the De Doctrina during the Middle Ages, it is not surprising nor unexpected that scholars embarking upon this terrain subsequently have had difficulty in defining the genre and its contours and they have used various methods in their attempt to do so. Some define the genre based on formal, technical attributes, such as the refrain or the presence of the watchman. Pierre Bec, for

instance, describes the genre from the following standpoint:

Le mot alba, du moins dans les pièces occitanes, revient régulièrement a la fin de chaque couplet où il forme refrain: d'où le nom du genre. 32

Hatto, too, points out some technical features of the genre:

preference for dialogue. . . [the] almost obligatory refrain containing the word 'alba' and the regular inclusion of a third figure, the watchman, who announces dawn and who may say more. 33

And Richie comments, too, that the "refrain...is essential to the alba."³⁴ These definitions turn out to be less than encompassing since we have lyrics we categorize as albas which lack watchmen, as well as refrains. Elizabeth Poe, in her recent (1984) article, discusses the impasse she perceives in contemporary alba scholarship:

Discussions of the alba, though they continue, have reached an impasse: scholars stand at odds over virtually every aspect of the genre as it is presently conceived. 35

Poe continues with an analysis of the impasse citing its existence with respect to the various origin theories, the differing appraisals of the ideology reputed to be in the alba, the differing concepts of how the genre was performed and notes, too, that:

most fundamentally, regarding the corpus of texts, everyone has his own idea about which poems to count as true members of the genre and which to eliminate. 36

She claims, furthermore, that the "universally accepted definition of the alba is outmoded, inadequate, even misleading."³⁷

Others have sought to define the genre according to theme. Paul Zumthor defines the alba on this basis:

Plusieurs expressions entrent durant une brève période, dans l'usage du XIII^e siècle pour y désigner, par leur thème plus que par leur forme, des entités poétiques peut-être anciennes et qui pourraient avoir ré-émergé alors à la faveur d'une sorte de mode folkloriste: ainsi...[l'aube]

And he continues later on:

Le thème est le retour de l'aube, annoncé par le guetteur et qui va séparer les fin amants, leur laissant soit la tristesse, soit l'espoir d'une nuit prochaine. Certaines aubes adaptent les motifs typiques à un argument religieux, bien attesté par ailleurs dans la tradition hymnologique latine. 38

Such critics summarize the basic plot of the alba, and those poems which do not conform to their summary and scheme can no longer be considered albas. Poe faults Saville, too, for "depriving the genre of its essential lyricism," and for being deceived by "the anecdotal possibilities implicit

in that theme."³⁹

Indeed, the corpus of albas, somewhat like that of other genres of medieval lyric, often varies from critic to critic, depending on which lyrics one chooses to include and what criteria one derives a definition of the genre from. Regarding the corpus of texts, Poe observes that "everyone has his own idea about which poems to count as true members of the genre and which to eliminate."⁴⁰ Jeanroy allowed only seven albas, omitting poems that had previously been considered albas and which in his estimation were either didactic or mockeries of real albas. There were those which "méritent vraiment ce nom" alba versus "les autres."⁴¹ Woledge settles on nine Old Provençal albas, differentiating between the "main genre" and its "derivatives"⁴² and Bec speaks of "le prototype profane" as opposed to the "contrafactures" and limits his scope to the "douze pièces amoureuses."⁴³ M. de Riquer presents nineteen pieces, eighteen albas and one serena, but of these only eight he designates "albas propiamente dichas," distinguishing between the alba proper and its modalities.⁴⁴ Poe, with her "redefinition,"

arrives at eighteen poems.

Some poems are considered by certain scholars to be "border-line" albas. Although Jeanroy categorizes five Old Provençal and Old French lyrics as religious albas, and sees an overlapping significance between religious and secular albas, other scholars have sought to dissociate the religious dawn-poem from the secular alba.⁴⁵ Some scholars exclude sacred songs from the alba genre, finding the connection between such devotional lyrics and obvious adulterous love songs slight. Woledge comments that the religious lyrics "are not albas in the narrow sense of the term."⁴⁶ And Saville believes that dawn-hymns and sacred poetry written in the tradition of dawn-hymns "have nothing in common with the erotic alba except the word 'alba' or 'tac' in the refrain. There are no lovers, no separation, only the call to sinners to awaken from their night of sin to the light of God."⁴⁷ On the other hand, Wilhelm allows that the genre encompasses both the sacred and secular, concluding:

It is obvious that the generic name [of alba] really tells us nothing except that the poem concerns a dawn setting and some kind of love: the love of God or the love of a woman. 48

The dawn-hymns of St. Ambrose and Prudentius have been seen as forerunners of a string of Christian dawn-hymns in Latin (until the ninth - tenth centuries), and then (by the thirteenth century) in the Provençal and German vernaculars.⁴⁹

Prudentius' "Ales Diei Nuntius" ("Hymn at Cock-crow"), one of the earliest examples of the Christian dawn-hymn, focuses on the approaching dawn, but the imagery and meaning of the hymn are significantly different from the secular alba. The hymn, at once powerful and moving, is an exhortation to wakefulness, uprightness, sobriety and purity and a warning that once the sun is risen, it will be too late to atone for earthly sin:

post solis ortum fulgidi
serum est cubile spernere (9-10)⁵⁰

after the rising of the glowing sun
it will be too late to spurn thy bed[.]

Night, in the hymn, is the realm danger, of "vagantes daemona/laetos tenebris noctium"(37-38) ("roaming demons, happy in the shadows of night"). Envious, these malific creatures flee the approach of "lucis, salutis, numinis" (42) (the "light, salvation, divine majesty") of dawn. Night is

equated with sleep, and sleep with symbolic death:

hic somnus ad tempus datus
est forma mortis perpetis (25-26)

this sleep given for a time
is the shape of perpetual death[.]

In contrast, a glorious dawn, associated with
Christ's coming, is eagerly anticipated:

ut, cum coruscis flatibus
aurora caelum sparserit,
omnes labore exercitos
confirmet ad spem luminis. (21-24)

when, with shining breath
Dawn has sprinkled the sky,
she may strengthen us
to the hope of light
who are foredone with toil. 51

Dawn's splendor bursts asunder the foulness of the
dark, putting into flight its ministers: "rupto
tenebrarum situ/noctis fugat satellites"(43-44).

The association of sin with the pre-dawn hours
may evoke the alba plot, but this association can
also be interpreted in ways unrelated to the
particular kind of sin with which we might
associate alba lovers. Although both this hymn and
the alba concern themselves with night and activi-
ties which occur during its tenure, the alba
generally does not regard acts of love as sinful.
But in both the erotic alba and the sacred dawn-
hymn, day is perceived as a force of tremendous

power. In "Ales diei nuntius" day is also a force of justice, for when it comes:

tunc mortis oppressus vigor,
tunc lex subacta est Tartari
tunc vis diei fortior
noctem coegit cedere. (69-72)

then was crushed the power of death
then subdued Hell's law,
then did the stronger might of day
force night to yield place. 52

Cock-crow is a daily reminder that Christ returned from the dead below:

quo gallus exultans canit
Christum redisse ex inferis (67-68)

when the exultant cock sings that
Christ returned from out of Hell

The hymn culminates in a powerful crescendo warning us to be wakeful and not allow the forgetfulness of sleep to crush and overwhelm our senses as they wander in insubstantial dreams:

sat convolutis artibus
sensum profunda oblivio
pressit, gravavit, obruit
vanis vagantem somniis. (85-88)

vigilemus, hic est veritas. (92)

Prudentius concludes his hymn in a prayer to Christ to disperse sleep, break the chains of night, dissolve forbidden sin, and sow new light:

tu, Christe, somnum dissice,
tu rumpe noctis vincula,
tu solve peccatum vetus,
novumque lumen ingere. (97-100)

Christ is at once liberator, progenitor, and illuminator.

Time, as in the medieval alba, is a central, almost obsessive, motif. Iam, for example, is one of the most frequently used words in the hymn, repeated nine times. In two lines, it is used twice, and in one stanza, reiterated four times. The words propinquam, proximus, and prope, all suggesting dawn's imminence, add to the sense of the urgency of the speaker's plea.

Wilhelm claims that the hymn's originality lies in its utilization of an ordinary rooster to announce the coming dawn.⁵³ The rooster, like so many of the aspects of this poetry, has dual resonance, for he had both a sacred significance, associated with Christ and the wakeful conscience, and a mundane significance, associated with the barnyard. Hatto explains the absence of the rooster in albas on both these bases. He speaks, first, of the former:

So respected was the cock as a symbol of
the wakeful conscience that for many years
Christian knights avoided chanticleer in
their adulterous songs of dawn. 54

But the rooster was also regarded as a common, unspectacular herald and one associated with

peasants and common people. Says Hatto: "The cock was a peasant's bird and thus beneath a nobleman's notice." And he notes, too, that the bird was too popular in tone to be appropriated into courtly poetry.⁵⁵ Hatto overlooks, however, Chaucer's use of Chanticleer in the very courtly "Nun's Priest Tale."

The cock is an important figure in St. Ambrose's "Aeterne rerum conditor," a dawn-hymn in which the bird keeps nocturnal vigil, announcing not only day's advent, but also the restoration of hope. As in Prudentius' hymn, night here is the realm of evil in which wanderers go astray and robbers abound. In contrast, night, for the narrator of Amores 1.13 allows the wayfarer to rest weary limbs; the sailor he mentions finds in night's star-lit sky a map by which to guide his vessel:

ante tuos ortus melius sua sidera servat
navita nec media nescius errat aqua; (11-12)

before your risings the sailor better
observes his stars
nor does he stray (off course) in the
midst of the sea.

The sailor of "Aeterne rerum conditor" gathers strength at dawn, the time, according to St.

Ambrose, when the seas grow calm:

hoc nauta vires colligit
pontique mitescunt freta (13-14)⁵⁶

at this the sailor gathers strength
and the straits of the deep grow calm

Dawn, says the lover of Amores 1.13, forces the wayfarer, although tired, to rise again: "te surgit quamvis lassus veniente viator"(13) ("the wayfarer, although tired, rises at your coming"). For Ovid's lover, dawn reimposes bonds of toil for beasts, schoolboys, women wool workers and professionals alike. Dawn, for St. Ambrose, liberates the sky from bonds of gloom:

hoc excitatus lucifer
solvit polum caligine (9-10)

by this roused the morningstar
frees the sky from gloom[.]

The rooster heralds day's advent, and in so doing serves several important functions: he awakens sluggards and chides the sleepy; he reminds the sick that health is on the rebound, chases away thieves and recalls backsliders. He not only heralds the coming day, but he also serves as "nocturna lux viantibus"(7) ("the light at night for wayfarers"), his calls punctuating the nocturnal gloom and proffering hope of salvation and renewal.

Birds sometimes perform the awakening office in medieval secular albas as well, but the rooster himself does not reappear in them until Chaucer calls him up again as "comune astrologer"(III, 1415) in Troilus and Criseyde. Saviile observes that Chaucer "was the first to use the erotic alba, with its plot and characters intact, as a Christian exemplum,"⁵⁷ but although Chaucer's inclusion of the rooster could be seen, in this light, as a resonant and intentional echo of the religious Latin dawn-hymn tradition, the aubade in Troilus and Criseyde is not "a Christian exemplum" even if one views the poem in its entirety as such.⁵⁸

Religious Latin dawn-hymns, of which there are quite a few, continued to be written until the tenth century. A number of vernacular sacred dawn-hymns exist as well and these have been viewed by some scholars as religious versions of the erotic alba. These "border-line" albas, Christian in sentiment and without lovers, have structures, sometimes including refrains, which resemble those of albas and which focus on the advent of dawn. Again, there is critical contention over whether these poems are religious imitations of secular

poetry, or as Ruggieri claims, that just the opposite is the case and that these "religious albas" are actually the original form of the dawn-song genre.⁵⁹ And Hatto, too, observes about the interrelationship between the sacred and secular alba that:

either there was a strong tradition of real watchmen's songs from which the courtly erotic and the courtly religious albas were nourished; or the religious alba borrowed its refrain from the erotic. 60

A poem which highlights these issues is "Phoebe claro," the Latin song with what is presumed to be an Old Provençal refrain (the dialect is too obscure to be clearly translated or interpreted) preserved in a tenth century manuscript. The poem has been viewed by critics as either sacred or secular, but the various hypotheses put forth can not be conclusively proven. The very fact that the poem can be viewed both ways, however, raises the issue of the interrelationship between religious and secular dawn-songs and demonstrates how ambiguous the poems may be, and how fluid the boundaries between sacred and secular may become.

Another, less ambiguous example is the lyric by Folquet de Marseille (who became Abbot of Thoronet

in 1201 and Bishop of Toulouse in 1205) which begins, "Vers Dieus, el vostre nom et de sancta Maria."⁶¹ This lyric consists of five eleven-line strophes rhyming coblas doblas, the fifth strophe rhyming with the third and fourth. The first three lines of each strophe are eleven syllables, the remainder are lines of six syllables. The address to God with which the poem opens is not, however, the kind of address used exclusively in religious poetry, for secular albas also address God:

Vers Dieus, el vostre nom et de sancta Maria
 m'esvelharai hueimais, pus l'estela del dia
 ven daus Jerusalem, que m'ensenha qu'ieu dia:
 (1-3)

True God, in your name and in that of Holy Mary
 I will awake henceforth, since the day star
 Comes from Jerusalem, that teaches me to say:

"Reis glorios," the celebrated alba by Giraut de Bornelh, a six-strophe lyric which uses not only the coblas doblas rhyme scheme but which is also set to the same melody as "Vers Dieus" opens with an address to God, which as Hatto remarks, begins like an Easter hymn:

Reis glorios, verais lums e clartatz,
 Deus poderos, Senher, si a vos platz(1-2)⁶²

Both poets use the word true when referring to God in the first line of their respective poems, Folquet opening his poem with that very word, and

Giraut, employing the word verais to describe God's light. Both poets also mention another light-- "l'estela" which comes from afar bearing daylight with it. Folquet says: "pus l'estela de dia/Ven daus Jerusalem." Giraut's narrator, facing the same direction, warns: "Qu'en orient vei l'estela creguda/ qu'amenal jorn...."(8-9) Giraut and Folquet begin their lyrics with a prayer to God and both refer to God as "glorios," Giraut addressing God with that word in the very opening words of his alba, Folquet using the word at the beginning of his final strophe. Where Giraut uses the word "Senher" to address God, Folquet uses "Senher" to address both secular lords (in strophe one, line 5) and God (line 16).

In addition, both poems similarly refer to Mary. Folquet refers to her twice, first in the opening line of the poem, where he links God and Mary and again in the first line of strophe two, where he says: "Senher Dieus que nasque de la Verge Maria." (16) The speaker of "Reis glorios" refers, in strophe five, to "...Deu, lo filh Santa Maria." (23) This particular similarity is not surprising, since such references to God and Mary

must have been very common. Indeed, the speaker of the alba "Ab la gensor" also evokes this same parent/child paradox inherent in the Christian scheme when he speaks to the watchman, and like Giraut's narrator, refers to God as the son of St. Mary: "Dieus ti maldia/Lo filhs Sancta Maria."(19-20)⁶³ Yet the resemblances between "Vers Dieu" and "Reis glorios" are striking, especially since "Reis glorios" is considered by most scholars to be a profane work. Indeed, a comparison between them reveals more clearly the religious nuances which pervade "Reis glorios" and which add to the apocryphal overtone and heightened effect of that splendid poem. Yet do not such similarities between the poems also suggest that the line between the secular and profane cannot be firmly or exclusively drawn, and that these poets were consciously manipulating language, motifs and conventions in order to deepen the meaning of their works?

An interesting variation Folquet plays on the alba theme of secular love is evident in the following passage. Where most albas speak of lovers having to rise, Folquet says:

Estatz sus e levatz,

Senhor que Dieu amatz! (4-5)

Stand up and rise,
Lords who love God!

Folquet addresses those who love God, not those who, as in Raimon de las Salas' "Dieus, aydatz," love one another:

Sus levatz,
Drutz c'amatz.... (23-24)⁶⁴

"Dieus, aydatz" also contains elements similar to those in Folquet's lyric. It is, in fact, the most patently religious alba in Woledge's corpus. The poem begins, as does "Vers Dieus," and "Reis glorios" with a prayer to God; here the speaker asks for a peaceful dawn:

Dieus, aydatz
s'a vos platz,
senher cars
e dos e verays,
e vulhatz
que ab patz
lo jorns clars
e bels c'ades nays
nos abratz,
car solatz
e chantars
e voutas e lays
ay auzitz
d'auzels petitz
pels playssaditz. (1-15)

God, aid us
if it please you,
dear lord,
sweet and true,
and grant
that with peace
the bright

and beautiful day which is soon born
embrace us,
for conversation
and song
and warblings and lays
I have heard
from the small birds
in the hedges.

"Dieus, aydatz" adapts erotic alba motifs, but inverts their application: here it is not the beloved, but God, who is "dos" ("sweet"); the speaker asks to be embraced, not by his beloved lady, but rather, by the peaceful and beautiful day (bestowed by God's grace) about to be born. The request that day "abratz nos" bears dual significance: it can mean "embrace us" as translated above; but it can also mean "light us up" or "illumine us." The chorus of singing birds accompanying day's advent is a heightening of a typical erotic alba motif, where a lover or watchman reports his hearing of the birds' instinctual response to day's imminence. The parallel with the erotic alba can again be drawn in strophe two, where the speaker urges:

Sus levatz
drutz c'amatz
que sem pars
er bels jorns e gays. (23-26)

Arise up
lovers who love
for without equal

will be the beautiful and fair day.

As in strophe one, it is the day which is evoked in the most laudatory language, seeming to substitute for the beloved in the singer's prayer: here the beautiful and fair day will rise "without equal."

But "Dieus, aydatz" is considered an alba by Woledge while "Vers Dieus" is not because the second strophe of the lyric is an appeal to true lovers to part, and especially because the third strophe is narrated by a lady reluctant to do so.

There are, however, echoes in Folquet's lyric, not solely of the most religious secular albas. Like the pious speaker of "Vers Dieus" who observes: "...la nuech ten sa via" ("night holds its course") (7), the very earthy lover of "Us Cavaliers" also notes: "Doussa res, ieu tenc ma via." (31)⁶⁵ He, like Folquet's night, must hold his course and go on his way. The narrator's exhortation in "Vers Dieus": "Estatz sus e levatz" (4) echoes (or vice versa) a line of "Quan lo rossinhols escria": "drutz, al levar!" (6)⁶⁶

Finally, there is nothing in the refrain of "Vers Dieus" which could not be appropriated for a secular poem and could, conceivably, have been taken from one:

La nuech vai e'l jorns ve
Ab clar cel e sere
E l'alba no's rete,
Ans ven bel' e complia. (12-15)

Night goes and day comes
From a sky clear and calm
And dawn for us does not delay,
But comes fair and full.

The motif of night going and day coming are frequently used in the genre as is the reference to day being "clar". The refrain of "Dieus, aydatz," for example, reads, in part:

L'alb' e'l jorns
clars et adorns
ven, Dieus aydatz!
L'alba par
e'l jorn vei clar
de lonc la mar
e'l ab'e'l jorns par. (16-22)

Dawn and day
bright and beautiful
come, God help us!
Dawn appears
and I see the bright day
along the sea
and dawn and day appear.

In "Us cavaliers" the lover says:

Doussa res, ieu que farai?
Que'l jorns ve e la nueytz vai
Ai! (4-6)

Gentle one, what should I do?
For the day comes and the night goes
Ah!

And in "Quan lo rossinhols escria" the speaker says:

Qu'ieu vey l'alba e'l jorns clar. (7)

For I see dawn and bright day.

We must conclude that the alba is rife with overlapping sacred and secular images and this is to be expected:

Where there are religions of Love and Light it is inevitable that dawns, both sacred and secular should overlap. 67

Not only is there a tradition of God and Christ being equated with light, but given the medieval allegorizing mentality, both secular and sacred interpretations might be applied to the very same text. Like the Song of Songs, around which developed allegorized sacred meanings, texts originally secular were spiritualized and given Christian sanction. The day, daystar, watchman, cock and morningstar of the Bible figured variously in Christian hymns for centuries and in languages both secular and profane.⁶⁸ The Resurrection, too, has powerful associations with dawn and interestingly, Segal has traced the development of the Hebrew verb "to seek the dawn" into "to seek God."⁶⁹

Hatto goes so far as to propose that in the alba the link between sacred and profane was in the refrain, and that in Germany ("where dawn-refrains

are the exception") the link was provided by the watchman. He concludes:

the religious kind [of albas] were not parodies, they were complementary and opposites--palinodes to their worldly equivalents. 70

The relationship between secular and sacred art is complex and subtle, and as a theme itself pervades much medieval art. Just as spiritual relationships may be expressed in the language of physical love, so physical relations can be rendered in spiritual terms. This development is quite evident in troubadour poetry and all the poetry that it has subsequently influenced. The love-poet and the theologian, as Dronke notes, share a single sphere of discourse:

...the theologian like Bernard, who is unafraid to use the sensual imagery of the Song of Songs because it need not even for one moment be understood in its foul human sense, and the poet like Guinizelli, who sees this same imagery as reflecting the divine precisely because it shows human love with such fullness and splendor -- these in one sense understand each other perfectly: the language they use is the same. 71

In our zeal to classify and categorize, we often forget that the boundaries between sacred and secular may have been much more fluid for medieval poets than they may be for us today. Love, like

poetry, can be sacred or secular, and sometimes it may be both. This very ambiguity is frequently either intentional or significant in a work of art. The task is not to choose the one or the other as though they were mutually exclusive, but to recognize that for many a medieval artist they were part of a continuum of life and providence.

Furthermore, the relationship between human and divine love has been a great preoccupation of poets. The poet strives to endow the beloved with a divine essence, to embody her as an incarnate image of celestial love.⁷² That some albas are ambiguous enough to be "border-line" indicates a basic synthesis of religious and profane language and image. Thus, Folquet de Marseille's lyric can be viewed as an intentional echo of the secular alba, and "Reis glorios" takes on further implications, deeper resonances, when viewed within the full repertory of possible contexts.

The intermingling of sacred and secular imagery and significance finds its culmination in Dante's Divine Comedy, where the sacred and secular become actually fused. In the Purgatorio, Dante uses the dawn topos twice. He opens Canto IX with an

evocation of the ancient mythological deities:

La concubina di Titone antico
gia s'imbiancava a balco d'oriente,
fuor de la braccia del suo dolce

Now she who shares the bed of old Tithonus,
abandoning the arms of her sweet lover,
grew white along the eastern balcony (1-3)⁷³

Dante diverges from his courtly predecessors and instead turns to the classical figures of Aurora and Tithonus. Such allusions are never made in the courtly erotic alba.⁷⁴ Here Dante merges, not secular with sacred, but classical with contemporary, cosmic with mythological. In harkening back to his Latin predecessors, Dante chooses the tradition followed by Propertius rather than Ovid, and portrays Aurora leaving behind a beloved husband, "suo dolce amico." But here, as in the alba, Aurora grows white. The speaker almost incorporates Aurora and Tithonus into the Christian cosmology, as though even they have been subsumed into the Almighty's scheme and are not simply disreputable pagan deities. A few lines later, the narrator continues:

quand'io, che meco avea di quel d'Adamo,
vinto dal sonno, in su l'erba inchianai
lá 've già tutti e cinque sedavamo.
Ne l'ora che comincia i tristi lai
la rondinella presso a la mattina,
forse a memoria de' suo' primi guai,
e che la mente nostra, peregrina

più da la carne e men da' pensier presa,
a le sue vision quasi è divina,
in sogno

when I, who bore something of Adam with me,
feeling the need for sleep, lay down upon
the grass where now all five of us were seated.
At that hour close to morning when the swallow
begins her melancholy songs, perhaps
in memory of her ancient sufferings,
when, free to wander farther from the flesh
and less held fast by cares, our intellect's
envisionings become almost divine--
in dream (10-19)

Here Dante introduces a divine/earthly dichotomy in relation to the dawn-theme, contrasting his own human lineage (Adam's burden) with legendary and divine time.

Dante's references to sleep and night are also "enlightening". Prudentius and St. Ambrose make references to night's loosening of man's self-control and its weakening of his consciousness of sin which is what makes it a treacherous region. Sleep, for them, is equated with death. But Prudentius also speaks of our wandering "in insubstantial dreams"(88) which provides another opportunity for error in a realm in which man has little or no conscious control. Dante, however, in this passage, suggests that sleep and dream are not necessarily to be equated solely with death; sleep frees consciousness but this is not necessarily a

danger. The visions dreams provide "become almost divine" because they originate from "our intellect." Whereas for St. Ambrose man's lack of conscious control over dreams threatens man's purity, for Dante the relaxation of conscious control actually allows the intellect greater control, making our visions not necessarily threatening, dark and evil, but rather, illuminating--divinely inspired.

The supreme fusion of sacred and secular dawns occurs in Dante's ecstatic vision, this time not a dream, in the beautiful passage at the end of Purgatorio where he finds Beatrice:

Io vidi già nel cominciar del giorno
la parte oriental tutta rosata,
e l'altro ciel di bel sereno addorno;
e la faccia del sol nascere ombrata,
sì che per temperanza di vapori
l'occhio la sostenea lunga fiata:
così dentro una nuvola di fiori
che da le mani angeliche saliva
e ricadeva in giù dentro e di fori,
sovra candido vel cinta d'uliva
donna m'apparve, sotto verde manto
vestita di color di fiamma viva.

I have at times seen all the eastern sky
becoming rose as day began and seen,
adorned in lovely blue, the rest of heaven;
and seen the sun's face rise so veiled that it
was tempered by the mist and could permit
the eye to look at length upon it; so
within a cloud of flowers that were cast
by the angelic hands and then rose up
and then fell back, outside and in the chariot,
a woman showed herself to me; above

a white veil, she was crowned with olive boughs;
her cape was green; her dress beneath,
flame-red. (XXX, 22-33)

Of this passage vibrant with color and image, Faithfull comments that Dante "weaves a synthesis of the Ideal Church, the mystic woman symbol and the rosy dawn."⁷⁵ Dante, unlike Giraut de Bornelh,⁷⁶ conflates the image of God and Sun (instead of opposing them) and creates a rich evocation of the intensity and magisterial power--the potent brilliance--of divine beauty, and hence, of God.

In the Paradiso, Dante again uses the dawn topos. In Canto X, he associates dawn and love, but emphatically not the kind of adulterous love of the alba:

Indi, come orologio che ne chiami
ne l'ora che la sposa di Dio surge
a mattinar lo sposo perché l'ami,
che l'una parte e l'altra tira e urge,
tin tin sonnando con sì dolce nota,
che 'l ben disposto spirto d'amor turge;

Then, like a clock that calls us at the hour
in which the bride of God, on waking, sings
matins to her Bridegroom, encouraging
His love (when each clock-part both drives
and draws),
 chiming the sounds with notes so sweet that
those
with spirit well-disposed feel their love grow.
(X, 139-148)

In these lines, Dante blends the sexual and sacred

in an image which analogizes the Church's relationship with Christ to human marriage. But Dante also blends the mechanistic with the cosmic, analogizing the minute mechanisms of a clock to the cosmic wheel which encircles the entire universe. The same principle of harmony which governs the clock governs man as well as the universe. The driving and drawing of the clock parts--an image of attraction, reciprocation, of balance--is a microcosm of the way love, almost as a gravitational force, holds the universe together. The masculine and feminine counterparts fit together in an interlocking exchange which can engender even deeper love.

The second dawn-reference in the Paradiso opens Canto XXIII:

Come l'augello, intro l'amate fronde,
possato al nid de' suoi dolci nati
la notte che le cose ci nasconde,
che, per veder li aspertti disiati
e per trovar lo chibo onde li pasca,
in che gravi labor li sono aggrati,
perviene il tempo in su aperta frasca,
e con ardente affetto il sole aspetta,
fiso guardando pur che l'alba nasca;
così la donna mia stava eretta
e attenta, rivolta inver' la plaga
sotto la quale il sol mostra men fretta:
sì che, veggendola io sospesa e vaga,
fecimi qual è quei che disiando
altro vorria, e sperando s'appaga.

As does the bird, among beloved branches,

when, through the night that hides things
 from us, she
 has rested near the nest of her sweet
 fledglings
 and, on an open branch, anticipates
 the time when she can see their longed-for
 faces
 and find the food with which to feed them--
 chore
 that pleases her, however hard her labors--
 as she awaits the sun with warm affections,
 steadfastly watching for the dawn to break:
 so did my lady stand, erect, intent,
 turned toward the part of heaven under which
 the sun is given to less haste; so that,
 as I saw her in longing and suspense,
 I grew to be as one who, while he wants
 what is not his, is satisfied with hope.
 (XXIII, 1-15)

The bird, which came up in a dawn-passage cited
 earlier, is here no longer the melancholy,
 backward-looking swallow mourning its ancient woes,
 but rather the joyous and proud matriarch who
 eagerly awaits the coming dawn. Night, for her, is
 not the time of union with, but of separation from,
 her loved ones. It is a time of obscurity, when
 things are hidden from our sight. The themes of
 absence, of loyalty, of longing, of the
 impossibility of possession here are all alba
 themes, but Dante has clearly redefined the issues.
 In this passage and what follows, Beatrice's face
 is equated with the sun itself. Faithfull notes:

the last cantos of Paradiso, as
 Dante's soul approaches nearer and
 nearer to the final version of the

`Supreme Light' of the universe, are
conceived of in terms of a mystical
cosmic dawn. 77

Dante observes, metaphorically, the conventional
alba theme, for he has lady and lover part before
sunrise. Faithfull comments:

[Beatrice's] departure leads to one
of the tenderest scenes of the whole
poem, and the only one in which Dante
uses with her the endearing, intimate
thou-form of address. But there can
be no sorrow, only a loving prayer of
thankfulness to her for having aided
the healing and freeing of his soul,
for having prepared the way for his
ultimate acceptance into the eternal
Society. 78

Besides overlapping religious and secular
themes, there are also poems with parting-lovers
motifs that are thematically similar to albas, but
in which no dawn impends. The lady of one of Peire
D'Alvernhe's lyrics sounds somewhat like the lady
of an alba when she laments:

Fort mi pot esser salvatge
quar s'es lonhatz mos amis,
qu'anc joi de negun linhatge
no vi que tan m'abelis;
trop viatz
fo'l comjatz

It is cruel pain to me
that my friend took himself away,
for I never knew another joy
that gave me so much pleasure;
too quick
was the parting 79

One of Châtelain de Couci's lyrics begins:

A vous, amant, plus k'a nulle autre gent,
est bien raisons que ma douleur conplaigne,
quar il m'estuet partir outreement
et dessevrer de ma loial conpaigne;

To you, lovers, more than all the others,
It is right that I lament my grief,
for I must, absolutely, go away
and part from my true love; 80

Woledge prints two poems in his appendix (numbers 2 and 3) which he does not consider albas, but which contain elements linking them to the genre, and which other scholars have considered part of the genre.⁸¹ Giraut Riquier, for example, writes of a lover tossing and turning in his bed from the pain of "pleasing amorous grief," and who longs to see dawn:

Ab plazen
Pessamen
Amoros
Ai cozen
Mal talen
Cossiros,
Tant quel ser no puesc durmir,
Ans torney e vuelf e vir
E dezir
Vezer l'alba... 82

With pleasant
Amorous
Pain
I suffer
Anxious pain and sorrow
Such that at night I cannot sleep,
But keep tossing and turning in my bed
And I desire
To see dawn.

The second poem Woledge cites is a single strophe,

possibly a fragment, of an alba characterized by Jeanroy as a "fragment d'un caractere didactique, où le mot alba est amené d'une facon très forcée":⁸³

Drutç qui vol dreitement amar
Deu regnar ab cortesia
E's deu de lausengier garder
Ab sen et ab maistria
Que son joi saubutz non sia,
E's deu enan lo jorn levar
Cum al venir ni a l'anar
No'l ve on can ve ni vai.
Que de fin amador s'échai
Que's leu enan l'alba. 84

The lover who would love rightly
Must live courteously
And must guard against slanderers
With skill and with cunning
That his joy may be unknown,
And he must rise before day
So that he may not be seen
When he comes and goes.
For it is fitting that the true lover
Should rise before dawn.

The strophe is reminiscent of the section of Le Roman de la Rose in which the lover is given advice about visiting his lady secretly before dawn.⁸⁵

The anonymous Old French lyric, "Un petit devant le jor," which, according to Woledge "seems to have been rather popular in the 13th century,"⁸⁶ has sometimes been included in the corpus of albas because in it the lover has to leave his lady at dawn so that they will not be seen conversing. But

Woledge does not include this poem in his corpus of albas, and in fact, finds it surprising that Jeanroy did list the poem as an aube. These lovers have not spent the night together in joyous union, but rather have been conversing through the windows of a tower within which the lady has been imprisoned. Woledge comments:

Here the link with the dawn-song lies chiefly in the fact that the lover has to leave at dawn because of the danger of their being seen talking together. 87

The adaptation of the alba by authors of longer narrative, rather than lyric, poetry extends its significance further. The fact that albas "grow out of imagined events rather than an imagined state"⁸⁸ provides a possible explanation for the use of albas and alba themes in narrative literature. One important difference between lyric and romance modes is summed up by Goldin: "The romance being narrative, the lovers and those who witness their relation are in continual movement; the lyric is expressive, the pattern static."⁸⁹ This difference is apparent in comparing the courtly alba lyric with the "alba" which is embedded within a narrative. Saville notes:

The alba eventually found its way into

narrative poems, notably the Filostrato of Boccaccio and Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde. Shakespeare used it in a narrative (Venus and Adonis) and in two plays (Romeo and Juliet and Troilus and Cressida); and, as a lyric or as part of a larger form, it has made occasional reappearances throughout the later history of European literature--in Donne, Goethe, Wagner, and Yeats, to mention only the best-known examples. 90

Mario Roques, editor and translator of Aucassin et Nicolette, finds, in addition to other features, that "le gracieus episode de la 'gaite' apparait comme un transposition dramatique d'un chant d'aube."⁹¹ The passage occurs when Nicolette, after escaping imprisonment, comes to take leave of the still incarcerated Aucassin. In a scene that thematically resembles "Un petit devant le jor," the lovers converse through a whole in a prison wall. They are aided by a watchman on the tower who warns them of danger by singing a public song in which is embedded a special message for the lovers. Woods analyzes the passage from Aucassin et Nicolette in comparison to "the usual aube pattern" and concludes by corroborating Holmes' interpretation that the romance was a "mocking satire of certain stock themes, already hackneyed, which the minstrels were exploiting everywhere."⁹²

In romances, alba passages often serve to

heighten and isolate the sexual union between the hero and his beloved. Albas embedded in narratives often serve pivotal and central roles, marking the transition from the lovers' union to their separation. The courtly lyric gives us no hint of how the lovers have come together; however, in the longer narrative, such as Troilus and Criseyde, we learn all about the hero's wooing of his lady, her hesitations, fears and doubts, her eventual acceptance of her lover, and even about the trickery that might be involved in engineering their first rendez-vous.

The lyric, "Waz ist für daz trûren guot," by Dietmar von Eist is an example of a Middle High German lyric which resembles the alba in its presentation of speeches by two separated lovers. The lady who speaks in stanza one, laments for her departed love, and speaks of "the watch" as well as of her loyalty to the memory of her lover:

Waz ist für daz trûren guot,
daz wîp nâch lieben
manne hât?
gerne daz mîn herze erkande,
wan ez sô betwungen stât,
alsô redete ein frouwe schoene.
vil wol ichs an ein ende koeme,
wan diu huote.
Selten sîn vergezzen wirt in minem
muote.' (1-4) 93

`What is good for that mourning,
 which woman has for her
 beloved man?
 Gladly my heart would know that,
 because it stands so oppressed.'
 Thus spoke a beautiful lady.
 `Very much do I want to bring
 [my desires] to an end, except
 for the watch.
 Never is there a forgetting of him
 in my mind.'

The final stanza, which may have been a later addition, is spoken possibly, but not necessarily, by the lover and concerns his love for a beautiful lady for whom he suffers great torment. The poem begins with the theme of separated lovers, but its link to the conclusion of the poem is so obscure that some critics consider the final stanza a later addition. There is no mention of dawn in the poem, but its first two stanzas resemble the kind of lament which occurs in the tageliet. The emphasis on the pain of love overshadows the pleasure that might be derived from the relationship. The lady grieves: "mîn herze ist unerlôst" (6) ("my heart is not free from care"). And the narrator (who is possibly the lover) adds:

... owê minne,
 der dîn âne mohte sîn, daz
 waeren sinne. (7-8)

... alas, Love,
 Whoever would be without you, that

would be quite reasonable.

The problem of generic classification is not unique to the alba, but pervades much of medieval lyric. Generic distinctions, in general, seem to have been less rigid during the time such poems were composed or perhaps our notions of generic distinction are terribly unrefined. It is only after the brilliant flourishing of the early lyrics that generic and other distinctions became more fixed and codified (in such works as the De Doctrina Compondre Dictats or Las Leys D'amors). Genre theory itself has become a subject of inquiry and interest. Poe believes that:

The standard definition of the alba presupposes that one can delineate a genre as though it were a stable entity, whereas we have come, in recent years, to realize that 'genres' to the medieval mind, insofar as they were consciously perceived as such, were dynamic, hence subject to continual revision. 94

Classification does seem particularly problematic with respect to the alba perhaps because of its marginality. Poe, too, notes that the alba underwent a number of changes "as evinced by the striking contrasts among the members of the corpus" and she posits that the alba "was a dynamic concept moving across erotic, didactic, burlesque,

and pious registers."⁹⁵ There certainly seems to have been little pressure exerted on alba authors to force their lyrics into a particular genre, or to make them comply with specific rules of composition or theme.

Chapter One: The Perimeters of the Genre

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- 3 Dante Alighieri, De Vulgari Eloquentia, in Dante Alighieri, Opere Minori (Milano: Rizzoli Editore, 1960), p. 376; and Sally Purcell, trans., Literature in the Vernacular (De Vulgari Eloquentia) (Manchester: Carcanet New Press Ltd., 1981), p. 41
- 4 Anonymous, Las Leys D'Amors in Monumens de la littérature romane A.F. Gatién-Arnoult, ed., (Toulouse, 1841-1843); can also be found in Carl Appel, ed., Provenzalische Chrestomathie (Leipzig: Reisland, 1907)
- 5 Alfred Jeanroy, La Poésie Lyrique des Troubadours, 2 vols. (Toulouse and Paris, 1934), II, 62; referred to henceforth as Jeanroy, Troubadours
- 6 Saville, p. 3
- 7 Jeanroy, II, 296
- 8 Ibid.
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- 10 Frederick Goldin, Lyrics of the Troubadours and Trouvères (New York: Doubleday, 1973), p. 124; referred to henceforth as Goldin, Troubadours
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- 17 Ibid. p. 96 and Hatto, p. 379
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- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 379
- 22 Marshall, p. 96
- 23 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 348
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- 28 Hatto, p. 97, Woledge in Hatto, pp. 347-48
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Woledge, in Hatto, pp. 347-348, 388n, Hatto, pp. 97-98
- 31 Pierre Bec, "L'aube française Gaite de la tor: Pièce de ballet ou poème lyrique?" Cahiers de civilisation médiéval 16(1973) 22
- 32 Bec, La Lyrique Française, p. 98
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- 37 Ibid.
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- 42 Woledge, in Hatto, pp. 345-46
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- 46 Woledge, in Hatto, pp. 375, 380
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- 49 Saville, p. 75
- 50 H.J. Thompson, ed., Prudentius 2 vols. (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press; and London: William Heinemann, 1969) I, 6-12
- 51 I quote Lockwood's fine translation of these lines from his article in Hatto, p. 278
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- 53 Wilhelm, p. 64

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- 55 Hatto, p. 431, 771
- 56 St. Ambrose, in Hatto, p. 276; K. Schenkl, Sancti Ambrosii (1897)
- 57 Saville, p. 214
- 58 For a detailed discussion of the aubades in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, see final chapter
- 59 Ruggieri, Cultura Neolatina III, 191-202 and Hatto p. 378
- 60 Hatto, p. 94
- 61 Folquet de Marseille, Le troubadour Folquet de Marseille (Cracow: S. Stronski, 1910)
- 62 Giraut de Bornelh, "Reis glorios," Adolf Kolsen, ed., Sämtliche Lieder des Trobadors Giraut de Bornelh (Halle: 1910, 1935) I, 342-47; II, 95-96; Pillet-Carstens 242.64
- 63 Anonymous, "Ab la gensor," Karl Bartsch, ed., Provenzalisches Lesebuch (Elberfeld, 1855), p. 102; Pillet-Carstens, 461.3; Istvan Frank, Repertoire métrique de la poésie des troubadours, 2 vols., (Paris: Bibliothèque de L'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, 1953-57), 63; further references to the Repertoire métrique will be cited as Frank
- 64 Raimon de las Salas, "Dieus aydatz," Pillet-Carstens 409.2; Karl Bartsch, ed., Provenzalisches Lesebuch (Elberfeld, 1855) p. 101
- 65 Bertran D'Alamanon(?) or Gaucelm Faidit(?), "Us cavaliers si jazia," Pillet-Carstens 76.23; Woledge notes in Hatto that the two manuscripts are very similar and that Carl Appel's text (which he reproduces) in Provenzalische Chrestomathie (Leipzig: Reissland, 1930 [6th ed.]), p. 91, gives the manuscript variants; further references to Provenzalische Chrestomathie will be cited as Appel

- ⁶⁶ Anonymous, "Quan lo rossinhols escria," Appel, p. 90; Pillet-Carstens, 461.203
- ⁶⁷ Hatto, p. 87
- ⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 94
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 90
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 94
- ⁷¹ Peter Dronke, Medieval Latin and the Rise of the European Love Lyric, 2 vols., (2nd ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), I, 62
- ⁷² Frederick Goldin, The Mirror of Narcissus in the Courtly Love Lyric (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1967)
- ⁷³ Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980-82)
- ⁷⁴ I have not checked other genres or medieval Latin poetry for such allusions.
- ⁷⁵ R. Glynn Faithfull, in Hatto, pp. 96, 405
- ⁷⁶ Giraut de Bornelh, "Reis glorios," (1-2)
- ⁷⁷ Faithfull, in Hatto, p. 391-92
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 392
- ⁷⁹ Peire D'Alvernhe, "Fort mi pot esser salvatge" in Goldin, Troubadours, pp. 166-69
- ⁸⁰ Chatêlain de Couci, "A vous, amant....." in Goldin, Troubadours, p. 350-51
- ⁸¹ Woledge, in Hatto, pp. 376-77
- ⁸² Guiraut Riquier, "Ab plazen" Woledge, in Hatto, p. 376; Pillet-Carstens 248.3
- ⁸³ Woledge, in Hatto, p. 376, n. 18

- 84 Anonymous, "Drutç qui vol dreitement amar," Pillet-Carstens 461.99a and Woledge, in Hatto, p. 376
- 85 Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, Le Roman de la Rose, ed., Ernest Langlois, 5 vols. (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1914-1924), 2516-54
- 86 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 349
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Dronke, p. 167
- 89 Frederick Goldin, "The Array of Perspectives in the Early Courtly Love Lyric," in In Pursuit of Perfection (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1975), p. 51
- 90 Saville, p. 2
- 91 Aucassin et Nicolette, Mario Roques, ed., (Paris: 1936), pp. 14-17
- 92 W. S. Woods, "The 'aube' in Aucassin et Nicolette, eds., John Mahoney and John E. Keller, Medieval Studies in Honor of Urban Tigner Holmes Jr., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965) p. 210
- 93 Dietmar von Eist, "Waz ist für daz trûen quot," MF 32,1
- 94 Poe, p. 144
- 95 Poe, p. 148

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL AND GENERIC CONSIDERATIONS

For many troubadours and their contemporaries, "love is the supreme ethical condition"¹ and so becomes "the enactment of courtliness."² Both the canso and the alba focus on differing aspects of this enactment of courtliness. The term "courtly" is, however, problematic for many scholars because it remains vague, undefined. Since the term amour courtois is a modern, that is, a nineteenth century, coinage rather than a term of medieval origin, there has been considerable contention surrounding its meaning. As Siverstein notes:

The uses of courtly love have been legion among scholars and critics alike in the last half century and more. 3

Indeed, there are those who would prefer to discard the term altogether because they find it an "impediment to the understanding of texts," a piece of "fictitious history,"⁴ or that it has "no useful meaning."⁵ The term "courtly love" has been variously described as a phrase "with no specific content," as a "game" or "code," as a "literary convention" or an "intellectual exercise" and even

as a "social reality."⁶ The descriptions, definitions and characterizations of "courtly love" go endlessly on as each reader of medieval poetry feels compelled to define the meaning the term has for him or her.

In defense of the validity of the term, the contributors to In Pursuit of Perfection explain in their Introduction:

The term courtly love is modern, but the concept is not. Although amor cortes occurs rarely in medieval literature, it has its medieval equivalents which occur frequently: 'fin'amors' in Provençal, 'fin'amore' in Italian, 'hohe minne' in German. 7

And Goldin explains that the term "courtly love"

although it is in widespread use today as a scholarly term, was hardly ever used by the medieval poets, for whom the 'courtly' element was too obvious to need mention. 8

Although most students of medieval literature have some sense that such a concept as "courtly love" exists in the works, these definitions of the concept vary from student to student and from text to text. And the variation from text to text, at least, is how it should and must be:

The poet's response to courtly love varies, depending on his point of view as well as on the genre in which he chooses to work, but whatever his attitude, whatever the genre,...he does deal with it. For medieval writers, courtly love is real. 9

The diversity of the poets' own viewpoints about courtly love explains why so little scholarly consensus can be reached about the meaning of the term--our interpretations vary precisely because the poets vary. If we are reading our texts carefully, we will arrive at differing definitions and characterizations for each text. As it has been summed up, there is a distinction to be drawn

between an established doctrine, a rigid system of rules of behavior, which did not exist, and a mode of thought, expressed in literary conventions, which can be traced through so much medieval literature from the twelfth century onward. The concept is not a simple one, but rather a cluster of personal feelings and social values, all of which can be found in the early troubadour and minnesang lyrics. 10

Some critics base their definition of courtliness on the presence of a specific court in the area around which a particular work of literature was written. Thus Jackson defines courtly love in German literature as "love at court....written for audiences at court which thought of themselves as possessing a superior culture."¹¹ Others would define it as a theoretical concept. For example, Nichols suggests that courtly literature "presents a gap between the

everyday world and the world of love."¹² Still others define courtly love as a mode of behavior.

No one knows how the "laws of love" came to be invented, although, here, too, theories abound. And there are also many hypotheses as to the audience for whom these "laws" were formulated, and who, presumably, understood and accepted them. But it does seem clear that it was the poet himself who fashioned much of the law, lore, and lure of love--and who adjudicated, either omnisciently or through the lovers he created in his works, the faithfulness and adequacy of the lover's obedience to these "laws." In inventing these ideas of love, and in creating lovers who adhere to them, the poet becomes the designer of the game and the fashioner of its rules. Each poet is the creator of his own, unique game, even if this game is part of a larger tournament in which all poets participated. Therefore, although certain "rules" of love such as are codified in Andreas Capellanus' De Amore or Guillaume de Lorris' portion of Le Roman de la Rose could be derived from earlier courtly literature, "the poets who wrote the early lyrics followed no set pattern."¹³ What these poets shared with each other was an idea of love as ennobling.

The canso, considered the most exalted genre of courtly poetry, is a poem about a humble, faithful lover's hopeless but endless and unrequited love for an exalted, distant, idealized and inaccessible lady.¹⁴ Her privileged inaccessibility is conferred upon her by her noble birth and superior social status, her virtues and accomplishments (her beauty and grace, for example), and very often, her marriage. Unattainable, she is not only the social, but also the moral and spiritual superior of her wooer: "She was perfect, and between her and the lover stretched a vast social, legal and moral distance."¹⁵ The lover, in the canso, acknowledges and laments the conditions which obstruct and prevent the requital of his beloved, for these are conditions beyond his control and which he has no hope of altering. His canso explores various facets and permutations of this experience which may range from praise, idealization and worship of his lady to complaint of the abject misery and suffering which he undergoes through love of her, to lament about the despair and hopelessness he feels, to celebration of the worth of his aspiration, and even to a disembodied hope of

reward which leads to an exhilaration and uplifting of spirit.

Although he suffers, the canso lover actually promotes those very conditions he deplores and which obstruct the adored lady's recognition of him. There are several reasons why he does so. First, he has chosen his lady because she is part of the elite community -- a community so exalted he cannot enter it. The community may be elite economically, but more significantly, the lady comes from an elite community socially as well, for she is not just a member of the court, but she is also very likely part of a marital unit (this is less requisite in the canso than the alba, but is a significant factor in both genres). The marriage unit is truly exclusive, and the aspiring lover is an outsider no matter what his economic or social position. The canso lover considers his lady amongst the morally superior as well. The lady in some way, then, exemplifies the exclusive system.

Second, rigid societal structures give the lover comfort; from them he derives a sense of permanency and reliability. His reliance on the fixity of these structures enables him to ascertain his own standing, giving him a standard against

which to measure himself. Familiarity with the system may reveal to him a way of winning recognition from those within it. In this way, the lover gains the opportunity, perhaps his only one, to insinuate himself in the system, and thus elevate himself. Piere Vidal implies this when he has his singer/lover say:

....que sciensa
m'a donat e conoissensa,
per qu'ieu sui gais e chanataire.
E tot quan fauc d'avinen
ai del sieu bell cors plazen,
neis quan de bon cor consire.

...for she
gave me the understanding and the craft,
because of her I am courtly and a poet.
And everything I do that is fitting
I infer from her beautiful body. 16

The courtly poet uses his familiarity with the way the system operates to his advantage. By knowing the rules, perhaps he can work his way into the community.

Furthermore, in contemplating and serving her, he ennobles himself:

The early courtly lyric explores the possibility that in his love for a lady, a man might search for an ideal which could refine his being....Even among courtly persons he has the potential for a special courtliness--and he asks his courtly audience to recognize the validity of the ideal he seeks, to endorse the idea of perfection which he sees in a woman and pursues in

himself. 17

In proclaiming his beloved's superiority, indeed, her perfection, he reveals himself a man capable of discerning perfection. He proves himself a man who knows what true worth is. He can point to it and proclaim it to the glory of its possessor. And the more valuable he can prove the object of his love to be, the greater his own worth becomes.

The lover can even, oftentimes, confer worth, for he becomes its arbiter. Especially in Middle High German poems, the poet's self-consciousness about his capacity to discern worth develops into an awareness that he is actually creating it. Walther von der Vogelweide warns:

du solt aber einez rehte wizzen, frouwe,
daz dich lützel ieman baz geloben kan.

But, lady, understand one thing:
no other man can sing your praise so well.

18

As Goldin observes, the narrator of the song

has to wonder...whether all those glorious virtues he worships in her are really hers, or whether, erring like Narcissus, he is in love with an image of beauty and perfection that originates in himself and is accidentally reflected by the lady, as by a mirror.... 19

Because he himself conceives the lady's glorious virtue, and has actually "chosen her to grace with

it,"²⁰ such a poet confers value on his lady. Without him, she would be nothing: "ir leben hât mînes lebennes êre: stirbe ab ich, sô ist si tôt" ("her life receives glory from my life: and if I should perish, she is dead")²¹ or:

daz ir muot sô hôhe stât.
jon weiz si niht, wenn ich mîn singen
lâze, daz ir lop zergât.

She does not know: when I leave off singing,
her praise will die away. 22

In involving himself so deeply, in contemplating and singing of his beloved's perfection, he ascends toward it, much as a contemplative ascends toward the God he so assiduously studies. Indeed, Heinrich von Morungen is not the only poet who analogizes his devotion to his lady to a religious service, but he is certainly representative:

hêt ich nâch gote ie halb sô vil gerungen,
er nême mich hin zim ê mîner tage.

Had I struggled toward God with half
so great a will,
He would take me to Him before my death. 23

The lover strives toward the lady who rises before him as an image of perfection. Such striving ultimately lifts him to a state close to moral and spiritual equality with her. Like all mere mortals, he strives to attain the nearest possible

proximity to the source of all perfection. He is therefore perceived by others as a valuable man.

All his contemplation and striving is manifest in his canso which stands as their record, proof of his merit as a worthy disciple; and the song testifies that he deserves renown as a man of worth. His ability to strive toward so exalted an object lends him a fraction of the very worth he discerns in the lady: that glory he so persuasively bestows on his dompna, thus reflects back onto him.

The canso lover stands on the fringe of an exclusive, privileged society, singing its praises. He can peer within--to its court, its heart. But he cannot enter as a franchised and equal member. He cannot enter as lord or as husband, only as meek and supplicant servant--as an outsider. In the canso scenario, the lover's song, his art, is the only vehicle by which he can enter the lady's presence. His canso alone may penetrate the unseen barriers which exclude him--social class and structure. It serves as substitute for physical entry. His words can approach an elite audience he otherwise cannot near; they can penetrate the

depths of his listener's--thus his beloved's--mind, heart and soul. His words may also function, then, as substitute for physical intimacy, even sexual contact, with her. At the same time, his canso constructs a world of words which does contain him and the lady. His words are his only power, but in his battle for recognition, they serve him mightily indeed. They provide access to a world from which he is otherwise excluded, and they allow him to build that world anew, with himself at its very center.

In a sense, the lover's song can be conceived of as an equalizing act. By it, he can enter territory in which he does not "belong." He becomes a licit interloper. Although fixed social conditions cause the lover's grief, by insinuating himself into these conditions, adjusting to them, and then adjusting these conditions to himself in such a way as to ennoble himself, he does, in some very significant way, alter the unalterable. While he laments such fixity, the lament actually enables his elevation into that very society. He makes room for his song and thus for himself within it, and, however slightly, he thereby does succeed in altering it.

The scholarly community's confusion about "courtly love" (and the "courtly" in general) increases in relation to the alba. If the canso is generally considered to be the most exalted genre of courtly poetry, the alba has often been considered one of the least. The lady's eager requital of her beloved--her active interest in and enjoyment of sexual pleasure--and her outspoken response to the deprivation of pleasure necessitated by his departure, all contributed, according to certain critics, to the folk-like simplicity and sensibility of the genre. Some have claimed that because they or others before them have derived its origins from religious, classical or folk sources, that the genre never enters the category of the "courtly" poem.²⁴ Even some scholars who have accepted the validity of the term "courtly love" and who hold the canso to be its exemplary model, still find that the alba lacks the attributes of a courtly poem. Saville explains that scholars who saw the alba as having folk origins categorized the type of love in the alba as "natural" as opposed to the "artificial" and unrealistic type of love found in the canso.

Chaytor, while not denying the courtly status of the alba, wrote:

Some of the popular themes were retained by the troubadours, the alba and pastour-elle, for instance, and were often treated by them in a direct and simple manner....But in general, between troubadour poetry and the popular poetry of folk-love, a great gulf is fixed, the gulf of artificiality. 25

Thus, although Chaytor seems to make an exception of the alba by allowing that the gulf between folk and troubadour poetry is narrower with respect to the alba than to most other "folk-love" poetry, he nonetheless finds the troubadour treatment of the dawn-song theme "direct and simple"--a holdover from popular song--as opposed to the artificiality generally evinced by most "courtly" poems. Rieger sees the alba as a blending of the folk and the courtly--a folk poetry clothed in a courtly raiment.²⁶

Saville and some other scholars disagree with the view that the alba is necessarily part of folk poetry. Saville criticizes such views as being distorted by the critics own "preconceived and erroneous idea about the values of the various social classes"²⁷ at the time albas were composed. Saville counters the claims that the alba is

uncourtly, asserting,

The manners [the alba] shows are as refined, the feelings as idealized, the atmosphere as aristocratic, as any we may find in the chanson. 28

Forster notes that "the courtly alba is a splendidly contrived device for dealing with sexual intercourse between lovers of equal--that is, courtly--social status in a discreet manner."²⁹ Both these critics view the alba as a courtly genre, but base their definitions on different factors. For Forster, social class is the defining value. For Saville, the courtly consists of a code of behavior which encompasses those qualities he cites: refined manners, idealized feelings and an aristocratic atmosphere. Another definition, proposed by Goldin, also bases the poet's idea of courtliness on a code of behavior: courtliness is "the way a man loves."³⁰ A courtly lover is thus a man whose identity as courtly resides in his behavior and in his adherence to certain principles which he considers the "laws" of love.³¹ Payne suggests that courtliness resides

in the manner in which the poet idealizes sex: either by freezing it in an indefinite postponement (as Keats much later did) or by preserving it in a reminiscence (as the alba poets did). Either way, it is kept alive by 'killing' it

into art. 32

Jackson has remarked that the

contrast between the poetic ideal of the unattainable lady and the reality of the passionate lady, between the noble pretense and the indulgent action reiterates the problem inherent in courtly literature from the beginning. 33

As does the canso, the alba tackles this major issue. The alba poet presents a situation strikingly different from that portrayed by the canso poet, because the alba poet dramatizes an attainable lady and a realizable, happily consummated, mutual love relationship. Both the alba and canso are emotive, genres in which experiences and expressions of both joy and sorrow are explored. But the cause of the suffering arises from dissimilar, almost antithetical circumstances. Unlike the canso, where suffering results from the unalterable conditions of nonrequital, the pathos of the alba is a direct result of the requital: the lovers suffer because they will have to part at some point after their happy union. The threat of imminent dawn encroaching upon the lovers' clandestine union disrupts their joyous meeting. The lover's recognition of inevitable change thwarts present happiness, and

this awareness is the impetus for the alba's lament. For the canso lover, it is the recognition of the impossibility of change, change which would descend upon him as a grace, that ultimately provides the occasion of his lament. The lover's agony in the alba is caused by transience and mortality, natural events--compounded by the fixity and rigidity of social conditions.

The canso lover laments the rigid system which deprives him of requital and which has yet impelled his love in the first place by creating and fostering the lady who exemplifies that system. Alba lovers of both sexes do not, however, find these same conditions as stultifying. Their union testifies to the fact that the social conditions which keep the lover apart from his beloved in the canso, can, at least temporarily, be transgressed and altered. The same social conditions exist for the adulterous couple as for the canso wooer, but the alba couple eludes the obstacles which bar the lady's requital.

In the alba scenario, it is the existence of the husband which is the greatest obstacle to the love affair. The husband in the alba, who bears the unvarying appellation of gilos, is negativity

personified. From the lovers' point of view, he represents the serious, authoritarian, oppressive world. Stern, responsible, joyless, possessive, oppressive, he rules the castle. He is the figure most feared and hated by the lady and her lover in the Old Provençal and Old French dawn-songs (strikingly, no tageliet of this period ever mentions the lady's husband). He never actually appears in an alba, and his existence is ignored in the tageliet. But although he never materializes on the scene, he nonetheless has an important function.

Marriage, although not always looked upon positively in Christian doctrine³⁴ was, at the least, socially and legally accepted. Although abstinence and chastity were considered the greatest virtues, marriage was regarded as providing "a remedy for a necessary evil."³⁵ According to Hugh of St. Victor, it was also the only sacrament that existed before the Fall, so the marriage ceremony accrued sacred significance.³⁶ Marriage also restrained and confined the lawlessness of venereal disease."³⁷ By the eleventh century, marriage had not only become

acceptable, but had become the only acceptable channel for sexuality. Duby explains that in Bishop Bourchard of Worms' questionnaire in his Decretum (Book I, section 94), marriage is plainly seen as

a remedy against sexual desire, bringing order, discipline, and peace, and removing men and women from the sphere where unions are free, unregulated, disorderly. 38

During the twelfth century, laws of marriage were codified³⁹ and throughout the Middle Ages and in all its classes, it was arranged: "marriages were a matter of negotiation, conducted and concluded by the father" or other family elder.⁴⁰ Being a business arrangement, marriage was public and dilligently sanctioned by all legal authorities. Eventually, marriage evolved, in Church ideology, into a "barrier against disorder, a bulwark of public peace."⁴¹ Unlike a romantic liaison, it was not a game but an "order and therefore subject to discipline from external sources."⁴² Marriage is acceptable because it is controllable; it can be legislated:

Just as the relationship between God and Adam was transposed [by medieval thinkers] ...into the relationship between superiors and inferiors in the hierarchies of heaven, so it was to be transposed in the relationship between husband and wife; he

was to 'cherish' her, she to 'revere' him. 43
The law regarded the husband as dominant, and the wife as his dependent.⁴⁴ The marriage rite itself became an assertion of an hierarchical order implying the husband's superiority over his wife. Marriage was "an association in which the two partners were unequal."⁴⁵ Legally, the husband was the proprietor of the couple's property and that property included his wife. As Sharar notes in The Fourth Estate:

The married woman...was under the guardianship of her husband....As Beaumanoir wrote...`Since she has entered into marriage, she has no authority from her own will alone.' 46

The lady is thus the legal subordinate of her husband, and at least a rung beneath him in the social hierarchy. In essence, both the lady and her adulterous lover are the husband's legal inferiors. Neither wield as much power as the lord. In some ways, they may both be disenfranchised or dispossessed "classes."

If we reconstruct for a moment the fictional social hierarchy depicted in the alba, one thing becomes clear: the gilos is really the all-powerful player in the dramatic triangle, even though he is always off-stage somewhere behind the scene.

Threatening to come charging in on the adulterous couple, the gilos is the lord and master here. If not for the gilos, there would be no need for the alba and the adulterous situation would be dissolved.

The relationship between the lovers in the alba, however, is not unequal. Saville writes that "the relationship of the man and woman in the alba is one of equality." The lover and the lady, he continues, "are evidently on the same social level"⁴⁷ (my emphasis). Leonard Forster concurs with Saville, observing that the alba is "a splendidly contrived device for dealing with sexual intercourse between lovers of equal--that is, courtly--social status in a discreet manner."⁴⁸ Both critics assume, without substantiating, the social equality of the lovers. This is one of the reasons why they consider the alba a courtly genre: because both lovers are members of the "courtly"--that is, the aristocratic--class. Although I agree that the lovers are presented in the alba as equals, the issue is more complex than these critics would lead us to believe and necessitates exploration of several important alba themes.

As we have previously noted, the canso lady stands greatly superior to her lover. In all ways she is nobler and worthier and indeed, it is vital to the worth of both that she is so, for how else can the lover's praise of her be meaningful? How else can she be glorified, or he ennobled? Love elevates the lover primarily because he serves a lady of superior quality:

Tot iorn meillur et esmeri
car la gensor serv e coli

Each day I am a better man and purer,
for I serve the noblest lady in the world[.] 49

In the alba the distance which divides canso lady from her suitor has clearly dissolved. The lovers address each other as "friend," a word which doubles as a synonym for "lover" in Old Provençal, Old French and Middle High German, and are described as friend with friend ("amic d'amia").⁵⁰

Is the lack of distance between the lady and her wooer merely due to the fact that there has never been any distance between these "friends" in the first place? Have lady and lover always been of equal stature? Should we assume (as Saville and Forster do) that the social inequality between the lady and her suitor which exists in other lyric genres--the canso and the pastourelle, for

example--no longer exists in the alba? To the contrary, I think it much more likely (especially considering all of the social commentary embedded in the alba and its situation)⁵¹ that a dissolution of the distance between lady and lover is an inherent trait of the genre which occurs as a result, not as a precondition, of the sexual union between them.

It is abundantly clear that the lady of the alba, like that of the canso, is a member of the elite class.⁵² But there is nothing in the alba to indicate that her lover possesses an equally high status. In our albas, he is described by a limited number of terms: cavalier, compagno, and ami; friunt, werder friunt, ritter, an werden man. He is a "süezer gast." But only once among all the references and addresses to the alba man, does this lover bear a title: in "Ab la gensor," the lady addresses her lover as "N Esteves" (25) ("Lord Steven"). Yet in the other genres we find many and frequent references to "seynor" or "herren." And in one alba, the gilos himself is called "seynor."⁵³

The lover is at least one notch below the lady

in status because she is linked to the powerful male through marriage, while the lover is a total outsider. He is a transgressing interloper, invading another man's terrain. He uses, legally steals, the lord's property (his wife's body). The one reference to the lover as "süezer gast" ("Von der zinnen,"[26])⁵⁴ ("sweet stranger" or "guest"), thus actually applies to all of these knights. In essence, both the lady and her adulterous lover are the husband's legal inferiors. Neither wield as much power as the lord. In some ways, they may both be disenfranchised or dispossessed "classes."

The description of the lover in the alba as cavalier, compagno, and ritter is not gratuitous. The lover must be a rover, one who rides, for that is how he has arrived at the lady's dwelling since he does not belong there. At the very least, we know he does not belong in her chamber, even if he does have a place somewhere in the castle complex. Cavalier or ritter is an apt term, indicating as it does, the lover's mobile position within the establishment. He has no fixed position. The compagno of troubadour poetry has been characterized by Duby as part of "a relatively new and still fluid class, the knights," many of whom

were landless sons of noble families.⁵⁵

Carefully planned medieval marriages, especially among the upper class, often took a great deal of time, prolonging the bachelor's period of eligibility or "youth" while a suitable match was awaited. Younger sons of large families were often not married at all because considerations of family power and property, superceding all other considerations, often dictated that only the main branch of the family (the eldest son) be permitted to multiply. Younger sons were, therefore, "condemned to a prolonged period of 'youth,'"⁵⁶ which, for Duby, contributed significantly to the rise of the youth- and bachelor-oriented emphasis in troubadour poetry. If such a knight comes from a neighboring estate on which he had a high status, as Duby suggests in his description of the jovens, assuredly he forfeits much of that status when he enters the estate ruled by another (according to Duby, he might be sent to a neighboring manor, one often owned by a paternal uncle, to receive training), and he forfeits all of that status if he does so surreptitiously.

The alba lover might fit into this class of disenfranchised youths. Unpropertied himself, such a "youth" perhaps displaces his own jealousy of the lord's property onto the lord in whose service he might find himself employed. The lover of the alba not only covets the lord's material property, but also his wife. The use of the word "gast," therefore, is somewhat euphemistic, if not downright ironic. The lover may be the lady's guest, but not one invited by her lord.

A "rider", and therefore leading a life in which he ventures outside the boundaries of home, the knight may explore foreign territories beyond his native domain. The alba lover often speaks of riding off; the lady frequently expresses her fear that he will be hindered in his efforts to see her again. He is on dangerous ground--literally and figuratively--when he attempts to steal or misappropriate the property of the more powerful lord. The accusations of theft that alba lovers make against the dawn or the watchman are personifications and metaphors--that is, they are rhetorical figures-- but they also signify a concern, perhaps sometimes even obsession, with property and rightful ownership.

The alba lover appears to be unattached, a rover or "youth" (although he is never referred to in the lyrics as jovens); but his decision to enter the affair may be no less arduous than the lady's, for he, too, in the fictionalized context of the alba, risks reputation, if not life, in trespassing onto another man's land--and lady.

Although the background of neither lover is given, we assume that the lady is married because of the frequent mention of the gilos, the legal guardian of the lady's body. The lady's decision to enter the affair would seem more difficult and dangerous than her lover's, since it is she who betrays a legal bond. Law dictates the inviolability of the marriage bond and breaking it is a very serious infraction. Benton notes:

...both Roman law and the Germanic codes punished adulterers very severely. The penalty provided in the Theodosian Code (XI,36,4) was that the violators of marriage should be sewed in a leather sack and burned alive, but Justinian tempered this to give the woman a scourging and send her to a nunnery, from which her husband might release her if he chose....The barbarian codes often provide the penalty of death, or permit a father or husband to kill an erring daughter or wife, and a husband could kill his wife's seducer without incurring vendetta....The law of King Aethelbert of Kent, written around 600, provides for a reasonable, if expensive, composi-

tion: 'If a free man is with the wife of a free man, he shall pay [the husband] his wergild and buy a second wife with his own money, and bring her to the other man's home.' 57

In the south, adultery was treated as a capital crime, equivalent to homicide, bloodshed, theft and rape. In southern France, according to Benton, the common penalty was that the adulterers be "paraded naked through the town" often tied together "shamefully," but as in Kent, the punishment could be averted by the payment of a large fine, although records are not detailed enough to tell us how strictly any of these penalties were enforced.⁵⁸

In the north, where the legal system was less rigorous, adultery was an ecclesiastic offense rather than a secular one, the most severe punishment being scourging. But it seems that censure was easily avoided for at least long periods of time.⁵⁹

The legal system, however, did not encompass the entire range of penalties for adulterous lovers. Benton also describes forms of private vengeance that could be taken:

the tradition of private vengeance was so strong that violators of marriage still ran grave risks. In a letter of 857 which became part of Gratian's Decretum, Pope Nicolas II referred to a husband's

right 'according to secular law' to kill his adulterous wife....Even in the late thirteenth century Beaumanoir notes that if a husband has publicly warned a man to stay away from his home and then finds him lying with his wife, he can with impunity kill both of them or the man alone, so long as he does it immediately and in hot blood. 60

Shahar, too, also cites Beaumanoir as her source for the information that "a husband was allowed to adopt any measure he considered appropriate in order to reform his wife. He could punish her in any way he chose, but could not injure or kill her."⁶¹ The Eructavit, a translation and commentary on the forty-fourth psalm dedicated to Marie de Champagne, states that the custom of the world (as explained by Benton) is that

when a woman deserts the love of her husband for another, either through sin or through a mistake, even though she fully repents her husband has no obligation to take her back and she would in fact be better off in the grave. 62

In some parts of southern France the lord could confiscate all the goods owned by the male adulterer, and the trespasser's body was at the lord's disposal. Benton notes that wives were frequently treated more gently than their seducers who could be punished by death, mutilation, or castration.⁶³ The concern with being seen together

or being spied upon that the lovers manifest (and which will be examined later) is important in this context. As Duby explains:

The shame [of being caught red-handed] had to be public and established in order to be legitimately avenged. The husband had the right to kill. 64

Unlike the canso lady, the alba lady allows neither social nor legal injunctions to hinder her requital of her socially inferior lover's attentions. Through union, the lady, rather than descending to the lover's lower rank, enables him to ascend momentarily to her own superior status. He therefore does achieve the fulfillment and sense of perfection for which the canso lover yearns. The love union has had an equalizing effect as both lovers meet on a plane of mutual, responsive passion.

The fact that the alba allows the lovers to unite, permitting the knight to achieve momentary fulfillment through union with his lady, seems to make the alba the most socially subversive of the lyric genres. Many lyric genres are concerned with class issues. The pastourelle, for example, often demonstrates the clash between classes because the lady--or as she is more often referred

to, the girl--in it is of a lower social class than the knight who "woos" her. Pastourelles portray the chance encounter--and often attempted seduction--between a traveling knight and a country girl he meets upon the way. The genre has been defined by Piguet as:

une chanson dialoguée dans laquelle un
gallant d'une classe élevée tente, avec
ou sans succès, de séduire une bergère. 65

Forster, too, notes that the difference between the social classes of the seducer knight and the girl who is his object "is decisive for the genre."⁶⁶

It is clear from the contexts of various pastourelles that the knight encounters not a courtly or aristocratic lady, a dompna, but a "toza" or a "vilana" as Marcabru calls her in his "L'autrier jost'una sebissa."⁶⁷ As Gerhardt observes:

s'il y eut jamais une personne sans
importance, c'est bien la bergère de la
pastourelle française. 68

The randomness of the encounter is emphasized by phrases which suggest the indefinite and casual nature of the meeting such as "l'altrier" ("the other day"), for example, which consistently begins the poem.⁶⁹

The biting humor of the pastourelle often

results from our surprised expectations, as the peasant girl battles for respect amid the onslaughts and clever ruses of her social superior. Gerhardt notes that: "courtly virtues do not apply" to the genre.⁷⁰ Indeed Las Leys D'Amors defines the genre as one in which man and woman can deceive or mock one another for the purposes of general entertainment.⁷¹ Yet it is the crass behavior of the knight in the pastourelle and his courtly comportment in the canso--a genre in which courtly virtues do apply--which enables us to interpret by contrast, the meaning and effect of the pastourelle. The pastourelle maintains the status quo.

The alba goes farther than the other genres in its exploration of social class issues because it allows the adulterous pair to unite successfully, to enjoy their illicit union, and to ignore or elude the status quo and without undergoing societal censure and punishment. The alba actually inverts or redefines values in such a way that a desirable, aristocratic lady--the very symbol of her class--perceives a socially inferior male as more refined, more worthy of love, indeed, more

"courtly," than the reigning, politically powerful seynor. And she has deliberately and freely chosen this man as the preferred partner.

It becomes clear that wealth and courtliness are unrelated. The alba lady finds her presumably less economically advantaged interloper more favored with regard to those qualities she does value, qualities attainable by a man of any economic status: fine appearance, discretion and restraint, good speech, gentleness, trustworthiness, respectfulness and fine manners. The unfranchised lady and her lover-knight--needing perhaps to find a way to attain status--substitute a new kind of status, one which is attainable by them, in place of the older, more conventional or established kind which bars them from recognition. Despite his inferior social position, the lover is a very "courtly" man. Indeed, he is the very embodiment of courtliness. He is called, in various albas, "cortes" and a "fin'amics."⁷² He is a man of many "virtues."⁷³

The discrepancy which arises between the demands of social law and the desires and obligations of love is a prevalent, though sometimes subtle feature of much medieval poetry.

The alba, though not explicitly, is as much concerned with the conflict between love and society as is the romance where this theme receives pronounced expression. The alba seems to be an earlier, tentative exploration of the very issue which soon begins to dominate medieval romance.⁷⁴ The alba, like the romance, hinges upon the opposition between lovers and society because it sets up an implied contrast between a rapturous, gratifying and self-centered realm of love and the often raptureless and even base mundane world.

Because the love affair is adulterous, the danger of discovery by the lady's husband or his coterie of spies circumscribes it, confining its expression in place as well as time. The love relationship exists outside legal and social ordinance; exposure would therefore bring, at the very least, disgrace; at the worst, death.

The alba situation polarizes the interests of the lovers and society. The community strives to enforce obedience to the laws they have adopted for the benefit of social order. Society demands from its citizens not only rational self-control but in addition, willing subordination of personal desire

to public good. The social organism, as it is implicitly presented in the alba, is based upon certain principles of law, particularly those of marriage and property which outlaw extramarital romantic liaisons.

According to such diverse sources as Marie de Champagne and Andreas Capellanus, the marriage relationship does not provide an atmosphere wherein romantic love--that is, love which is freely willed, freely given and freely received--can flourish. By their definition, the institution of marriage precludes an ideal, ennobling love since it forges an obligatory bond between spouses which intrinsically prevents the free bestowal of love. Insofar as social law prescribes marriage, and insofar as marriage is an institution of property and possession, it prohibits love. Marriage is viewed as sanctioning a form of prostitution:

The love viewed in courtly imagination as the source of all beauty in life and manners because freely given by the lady, became after marriage not a free gift (which only a superior can award) but a duty of obedience from one who has sunk from lady into mere woman. 75

As Moshé Lazar has noted regarding marriage:

Ils cherchaient moins en elle la beauté et l'intelligence, qu'une femme qui assurât continuité du lignage...le

corps de la femme appartient à son
maître. 76

The basis of marriage is a legal contract; the relationship is a matter of possession and interest. The lady of the alba "S'anc fui belha" gives us our closest glimpse into the situation when she speaks of having been "given" to a boorish mate "completely because of his great wealth."⁷⁷ Thus, it is only adulterous love or love outside the strictures of marriage that can accommodate emotional and passionate attraction between man and woman.

But romantic love within such a social system acts as a disruptive, perhaps even violent force, by favoring individual attachment over social obligation. The society must, for its own welfare, work to discourage, if not eliminate, such disruptive love, for it is a threat to the stability and integrity of the tightly knit and well organized community. Society views extramarital love as irrational, violent and chaotic, for the powerful impulses and passionate inclinations of romantic love foster an implicit rejection of conventional authority. As Duby observes:

In adultery, sin took many forms: an oath was broken; the priestly benediction spurned. A wife who went astray committed a theft....And the consequences were so ghastly that a husband's first duty was vigilance. 78

In fact, so great is the rift between society and the lovers, that the latter exist not only in contradistinction to, but in actual defiance of, society's sanctions.

The influence of these or some such analogous views upon medieval literature is pervasive. Indeed, it is at the time of the composition of the alba that these ideas were being formulated in literature for the first time. The alba contributes heavily to and reflects this new conceptualization of love.

The lovers in the alba acknowledge that society aligns itself with the husband, and that they must therefore assiduously guard their guilty secret. Convention, as well as law, wills the integrity of the marriage bond. Spies, gossips and slanderers litter the alba landscape, ready to report irregularities at home, even if the gilos himself is absent from the scene. The lovers' union, utterly unprotected, is on its own; it is a breach with society. The lovers' resentment of and

resistance to the husband and society in the alba is a manifestation of the genre's concern with the inherent conflict between romantic love and communal life. The lovers' resistance to the husband and those associated with him--the citizens of the larger, uninitiated and therefore hostile world--is nurtured by the unsympathetic stance to their love which the lovers attribute to these representatives of the community. The martial imagery of certain albas emphasizes the motif of conflict. In "Gaita de la tor," for example, the lover speaks of the "dawn which combats me": "Trop m'a neü/L'aube qui me guerroye" (64-65).⁷⁹ In "Gaita be," the lover accuses dawn of intending to "steal" his joy:

joc novel
mi tol l'alba,
l'alba, oi l'alba! (5-7)

and of wishing to deceive him:

enganar
nos vol l'alba,
l'alba, oi l'alba! (26-28)

In "Reis glorios" and "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir" the narrators both refer to the danger the lover risks from the gilos' or the lausengiers' attacks.

Engaging in a romantic liaison, therefore, necessarily estranges the lovers from the

community. The lovers' energies are directed inward, toward each other, rather than outward, toward social commitment and the preservation of social order. So imperious becomes the love that it leads the lovers to reject and violate social law. Under these conditions, love clearly becomes an anti-social force. For this reason secrecy, discretion and silence become essential values to illicit lovers, because such values provide a reconciliation between the lovers and their social milieu. By secreting and enshrouding their love, the lovers safeguard it from discovery and are able to sustain the relationship without conspicuously infringing on social decorum. Private and public diverge but are kept separately, because secretly, intact. As long as there is no contact between public and private, no collision ensues and each phase of the lover's bisected life can be distinctly maintained and managed.

On a deeper level, however, such values are an actual subversion of social law, for they allow, indeed, encourage, the lovers' division of allegiance. Social law, although ostensibly obeyed, is continually questioned, rather than

adhered to with a deep and sincere belief in its justice and morality.

The lovers' putative compliance with the social code belies the lovers' actual allegiance to love. The love affair which follows this pattern of sustaining itself furtively quietly undermines the status quo by promoting a clandestine, illicit union which denies the very legal and moral basis of the social order. Although the lovers' rejection of social law remains covert in the alba, and never evolves into active or overt rebellion, their rejection does nonetheless cause the lovers to acquire a split, bifocal vision and estranges the passions of their hearts from the scruples of their minds. It prompts dishonesty and dissembling.

It is apparent even though it is not portrayed that the lovers have made a conscious, voluntary choice based on their attraction to one another, to enter into an illicit relationship. Indeed, Marie de Champagne and her "courts of love" took quite seriously the idea of such a choice, and even conceived of it as morally superior to the unchosen, obligatory marital relationship in which each partner was duty-bound to be sexually

available to the other regardless of inclination, attraction, or desire. Sex within marriage was a documented legality, but not a voluntary choice. It was debased.

The erotic alba, as we have thus far seen, animates the conventions of the canso world and redefines some of its issues. It humanizes and rounds out what the canso presents as rigid, hierarchical and ineradicable. The creation of a responsive, rather than distant, lady immediately loosens up the lyric. The alba may be seen, therefore, as a view of the same world depicted in the canso, but it is a view from another angle.

The lady depicted in the alba has often been seen by critics as a "realistic" portrait of an adulterous medieval lady rather than an elevated courtly lady; or she has been viewed as a figure left over from an earlier folktale tradition. An alternative to such views, and one often overlooked altogether in scholarship of the medieval lyric, is the possibility that the poet created this lady ex nihilo, that is, out of his own vivid and fertile imagination. If troubadours, from Guillaume IX on, were so proud of making verse "de dreyt nien,"⁸⁰

why should they not have similarly invented the lady who appears in that verse? Possibly, the alba lady was created as a deliberate transformation or alteration of the canso lady, another troubadour creation, for oftentimes canso and alba poet were one and the same, or were, at the very least, familiar with one another's poems. The contrast between alba and canso lady best illumines for us the alba lady's effect on the meaning of the alba, and on the response of the audience to her.

The alba lady is one the lover--and the audience--can understand. The alba transforms the "motionless and emotionless"⁸¹ canso lady into a living, passionate woman. While still "an emblem of the courtly class,"⁸² she emerges as a palpable, responsive presence from the "impersonality and repose that attend perfection."⁸³ And she does so without diminution of her stature. The poet, like Pygmalion, chisels out of dumb, passive image, a responsive and active lady. He transmutes cold, idealized perfection into a living embodiment of warmth and passion. From the icy perfection and sublimity of the canso lady, or from the manifold possibilities of his own creative resources, the alba poet molds a distinctly human and humane

presence.

I do not mean to suggest that the alba lady has become a three-dimensional or realistic character in the 19th century "realistic novel" sense. There are, however, certain aspects of the alba poet's portrayal of his lady that set her apart from the portrayal of other female "types" not only in troubadour and later poetry, but also in earlier poetic models.

The humanization of the alba lady is accomplished by the poet in four ways: by her voice, by her risk-taking, by her sexuality and by her grief. The idealized and distant canso lady rarely, if ever, speaks: "She is always isolated in splendor."⁸⁴ If she were to speak, she would no doubt crack the image in the glass which mirrors her perfection. She would cease to be an unindividuated image:

Most of the time the singer sees nothing of her but the image in his heart, and his song recounts his responses to that image rather than any experience he has shared with her. She thus appears as an emblematic figure, a mirror of all the virtues that distinguish the courtly class. 85

If the beloved canso lady were to speak to her worshipper, she would immediately descend to the

human level. Like Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott," the canzo lady must remain within the fixed and static confines of art. Her future, like that of Tennyson's unnamed "Lady," would be equally fateful, if she were to try to move outside of it. She would automatically lose her portion of sublimity and no longer be purely ideal. Indeed, for Walther von der Vogelweide, neither the exalted, demanding lady, the vrowe, nor "the sweet girl of the open meadow,"⁸⁶ the vrowelin, are real: both are dream images which "vanish in the daily light."⁸⁷ In effect, her speech in response would make her mortal rather than immortal, human rather than perfect:

when she is seen up close, as everyone else
is seen, she is only like everyone else. 88

And in speaking, she would only seem more so.

Jackson sees the canzo as a masculine attempt to either retrieve or discover the female point of view:

The canzo is written from the point of view of the man...[He] does not know what the woman's point of view is. A great deal of what is said in the canzo is really a search for the woman's point of view and the means to express it. The lover persona does not know how the lady reacts to his feelings....[and] tries to find a way to produce a response. The point of view of the canzo is thus a purely masculine at-

tempt to find the key to a woman's response, a verbal voyage into the unknown.

89

"Woman's Song" has recently become a focus of scholarly attention and research. Plummer explains:

Because many of the [woman's] songs are older than much of the courtly (e.g. troubadour) poetry, it has been suspected and argued with both learning and fervor, that such female-voiced song is the source of the courtly poetry. 90

A similar argument proposes that female-voiced songs are "the only remnants of precourtly popular song....whose roots stretch back intact into the late classical period."⁹¹ Troubadour or courtly poetry, according to a theory put forth by Theodor Frings, grew out of "a fertile, female-voiced, universal and vernacular poetry."⁹²

There is a medieval Latin and vernacular poetry where women are presented as speakers. These speaking women are presumed to be creations primarily of male poets and thus they "constitute a projection of woman's erotic experience,"⁹³ since most of the women portrayed speak either about men or love. In medieval Latin love poetry, women are of a generally limited spectrum although "the lyrics all agree in presenting this experience as

unhappy because of either frustration or desolation and abandonment."⁹⁴

If one tradition of female-voiced medieval poetry presents women's unhappy love experience in a sympathetic light, the other and most common tradition in medieval Latin poetry is an antifeministic one which invites scorn of women and in which they are portrayed primarily as victims of "male predation."⁹⁵ The very use of the Latin language, as Schotter points out, indicates that these poems were by and for an exclusively male population, and furthermore, by attributing Latin to a female voice, the authors were achieving irony at the unlettered woman speaker's expense.⁹⁶

Another, perhaps related, type of "Woman's Song" is the Latin and vernacular pastourelle mentioned above, in which the knight or cleric attempts to seduce a rural country girl or shepherdess. In the pastourelle the girl speaks on her own behalf and often wittily. Sometimes the songs satirize her gullibility or display her obvious greed or stupidity; oftentimes, however, they evince her unlettered resourcefulness and cleverness.

The women of the fabliaux speak as well,

scheming either to enact or prevent seduction. The fabliau woman is usually married, and it is her perpetually deceived husband who is often the object of derision. These fabliau and pastourelle ladies are purposefully presented as naive, illiterate, unrefined or coarse. Their speech reflects a lack of elegance and finish--their "non-courtliness." And often it is the consequences of their sexual romping (pregnancy, abandonment or discovery by the lady's husband) which is either the impetus of the song, or its subject. Such actual consequences of a love affair never enter into the courtly songs about the idealized dompna.

Medieval Latin poetry does have a tradition which invites sympathy for the lady, echoing classical works, particularly the Heroides, which presented compassionately something of the woman's point of view in love. These songs present sympathetic portraits or laments by women about being abandoned by their lovers. But these songs are solely concerned with depicting the lady's grief and often regret about her past and of the lonely and desolate solitude which now awaits her, rather than with any of the positive or ennobling

effects of love stressed by the canso tradition.

The alba poet, too, presents a picture of a woman in love. Indeed, the narrative voice of many albas is that of the lady herself. As Jackson has noted:

the poet persona is presenting a woman's point of view in the alba, in contrast to the presentation of the man's point of view in the canso. 97

Saville has written:

In her passions, her exclusive concern with love, her upholding of erotic values above all others, and her violent opposition to reality, the lady of the alba merely shares the qualities attributed to women by almost all of the literary traditions known to the Middle Ages. 98

Yet the courtly poets were experimenting with a new kind of lady in their poetry--an ideal lady--and the alba lady, who is courtly, does not merely recapitulate the typical repertory of the female qualities. She takes on new and vital characteristics in the alba. Saville observes:

This mutual love relationship we see in the alba is scarcely unique in Medieval Literature. It is found with great frequency in the romance (e.g. Chretien de Troyes, Gottfried's Tristan). 99

Saville is correct in associating the kind of love relationship presented in the alba with those found in the romance. However, he fails to see that for

the lyric, this relationship is unique, and that perhaps medieval poets were so drawn to exploring this type of love, that they began to do so in their romances as well. The germ of the kind of love presented "with great frequency" in the romances Saville refers to may be in the very albas he dismisses for not being unique in reference to this particular aspect! The alba lady is not, as Saville would have it, merely an extension of the preexisting literary female "type" who is portrayed, in the epic for example, as a marginal character--wife, betrothed or helpmate to the hero--a provident and supportive minor figure. Nor is she the traditional opposite of the good woman, the witch-like, immodest, evil creature that often threatens the hero or his marriage. Indeed, it is in the alba lady's voice that the poet succeeds in capturing something unique and new about the experience of love.

The alba poet accomplishes the humanization of the lady without demeaning her. Rather, he redefines her and in so doing establishes a new type of lady whose real (and realistic) and natural desires and emotions are not caricatured (as they are in the pastourelle or fabliau). This lady is,

even with all her feelings, respected and sympathetic. The alba lady's humanizing characteristics serve, for the most part, not to diminish but rather to increase her dignity and stature (exceptions to this will be discussed below). Breaking through the fixed and static strictures of courtly life, she moves in a vibrant world. Not passive or impassive, she is presented as a woman grappling with a spectrum of emotions, facing painful decisions. By allowing her to speak for herself, to demonstrate her recognition of loss, to confront danger, to participate in the sexual, and to face up to her pain, the poet bestows on his alba lady true human dignity. This lady wills to act in the world--a realm of contingency and mutability, accepting the pain and loss consequent to such full participation.

Forster comments that in the alba:

the only way in which [love's] consummation may be treated is one which concentrates attention, not on the night of love (which in the best examples is barely indicated), but on the lament of the lovers because they have to part. In this way the senses have their due, but there is no coarse dwelling on sensual detail; however passionate the poetry, an atmosphere of discretion and delicacy is preserved. The safety valve for repressed sensual desires has been found and

maintained on a courtly level and integrated into the convention. 100

Forster here claims that the alba functions as a discreet and therefore "courtly" celebration of sexual consummation between lovers of the same class, but that the overt sexuality of the affair is undercut by an actual avoidance of attention to it. Yet, in general, the alba really is explicitly sexual and sexually explicit. Forster gives no indication of which "best examples" he refers to, but in most albas, the lovers are described as "ab" or "bi" ("with" or "by") their beloveds. And in many a form of the word "jazer" or "lac" is used to describe the reclining position of the lovers. But further, one need only glance at "En un vergier," "S'anc fui belha," "Entre moi et mon amin," and all of Wolfram's tageliet to see the frank and often detailed manner in which the sexual affair is explicitly depicted. Even so, Forster is correct in noting the "discretion and delicacy" of the atmosphere of the poems, although that is not a function, I would contend, of a veiling of the sexuality of the relationship, but a function, rather, of the way in which the poets present the lovers as inherently refined, delicate and

discreet. These lovers demonstrate that even sexuality and passion can be depicted and explored with dignity and decorum.

The alba lady's explicit sexuality does not in any way suggest a falling off of her courtly status, as it would in the case of the canso lady. The qualities which humanize the alba lady--her voice, anger, desire and grief--do not undermine the exalted stature of the lady herself, nor the elevated tone and quality of the alba. The lady is very clearly a "courtly" lady; that is, she is part of the aristocratic elite, whether by blood or marriage and her behavior is, in all ways, distinguished and fitting.

The portrait of the alba lady is a (presumably) male attempt to embody an idea, if not a fantasy, of a lady. Unlike so many of the ladies who speak in medieval poetry, she is a positive presence. The mere interest in her and emphasis on her emotions by a poet is striking, if not remarkable. And his allowing her a voice of her own--even if it is only a vehicle for his ideals--is significant. The alba poet may not have succeeded in capturing the essence of womanhood or the totality of the female experience, but he takes up the rarely

assumed task of attempting a sympathetic portrait of a sexual woman. And he seems to understand her, to be partial to her point of view. As Jackson notes, the poet, by his very decision to write albas, is biased in favor of the lovers.¹⁰¹ We might speculate that perhaps he is, to some extent, allowing a woman to express a point of view which he possesses. Indeed, we might even consider that he is creating an image of his ideal female sexual partner, a woman who is beautiful but also responsive, who thus possesses aspects of both the ideal and the real. In effect, the alba poet is aligning himself with the lady, whether he is allowing her to speak for herself alone or as a mouthpiece for him. Even if not quite accurate, even if stylized, the attempt to reproduce a humanized, sympathetic lady is itself noteworthy. Such an effort calls rare attention to the feminine aspect of experience, an aspect, for the most part, otherwise sorely neglected.

My focus on the humanization of the alba lady attempts to highlight the contrast between her and the canso lady especially, as well as ladies of other courtly lyric genres. The lover, in the

alba, however, is no less humanized than the lady. But he is portrayed in a sympathetic and humanized way in other genres, whereas the lady is not. The knight's exemplification of sympathetic qualities is not the result of innovative treatment unique to the alba, but the portrait of the lady does manifest such innovation.

Many definitions of courtliness have in common an emphasis on style--a concern with art and artful behavior. For Gaston Paris, the coiner of our illustrious but problematic term, courtly love "was more than mere passion; it was an art, in the medieval sense of a mental and moral discipline."¹⁰² Saville's focus on "refined manners" and Goldin's description of courtliness as derived from the "way" a man loves, both emphasize the great concern on the part of courtly lovers and their creators with style.

The adulterous courtly lovers freely choose an unconventional type of relationship, yet they do so with a concomitant interest in style. Love, in the alba, is not animalistic lust even though it is clearly passionate, sexual and pleasurable, because there are factors inherent in the lovers' conception of love itself which make them refine

and cultivate the relationship.

One such factor is the self-discipline which Goldin indicates is essential to the courtly lover: "The lover's patience and obedience represents the courtly man's self-discipline."¹⁰³ Self-discipline involves the restraining of impulse. Courtliness imposes the condition that impulse not be allowed immediate expression, but be directed by a series of movements that not only diffuse its intensity, but also transform its spontaneous, often crude instinct into refined, graceful and elegant gesture. The mastery of impulse consists of a self-disciplining restraint which produces a more elaborate and decorous--and therefore less natural--expression and manner. It is through suffering, devotion, self-restraint and self-denial that a man establishes his courtliness.

Wherein, one must wonder, would obedience and self-discipline lie in a genre whose whole being is devoted to the defiance of legal rule and social hierarchy, and the gratification rather than denial of desire? Paradoxically, the alba does encompass these almost antithetical movements. But this should not surprise us, for as Newman notes,

courtly love itself, "is a doctrine of paradoxes, a love at once illicit and morally elevating, passionate and disciplined, humiliating and exalting, human and transcendent."¹⁰⁴ Perhaps because of its overt rejection of social law, the alba has sometimes been considered a "realistic" lyric, an outgrowth of an actual life-situation, rather than as an artistic achievement, a carefully crafted and conscious effort. However, the genre evinces manifold proof that it is primarily courtly and that art and artifice are significant aspects both of the lovers' relationship and of the poem itself.

Alba lovers, although in a different way than canso lovers, practice self-discipline. Unlike the canso lovers, they do experience emotional fulfillment and the gratification of appetite and desire rather than practicing chastity or "amor de lonh." In fact, pleasure and its opposite become the guiding lights of the lovers in the alba; desire becomes their frame of reference. This is evinced by the repeated emphasis, which we shall examine in the next chapter, on pleasure and the pleasurable in the lyrics. In addition, the lovers are, it is true, defying the conventional world--

that is, those people who believe in the suppression of desire and impulse. As Scaglione observes:

Once caught in the web of social conventions, human beings aspire to break away just as the bird in the cage longs after the freedom of woods and prairies. 105

The lovers do wish to free themselves in order to explore their own emotions and sexuality.

Alba lovers are not, however, necessarily mere pleasure-seekers, unprincipled, or randomly rebellious. Although they do react against convention and societal strictures, although they form an illicit union based on pleasure, gratification and fulfillment, their actions are nonetheless, as presented in the alba, based on principles. These principles may differ from those adhered to by others in their community, but they are not therefore to be lightly dismissed.

Self-discipline is not only practiced by alba lovers, but indeed, is another of the predominant values of the genre. And alba lovers, like their canso counterparts, undergo severe suffering. After all, their song, though implicitly a celebration of union, also laments the painful

anticipation of parting.

The most obvious way that lovers practice self-discipline is in their patience and discretion. Although this is not fully demonstrated in their song, it is most certainly implied by the very nature of their plight. The genesis of the love relationship is rarely portrayed in the alba. The only reference to the inception of the affair is made in "Ez ist nu tac," where the lady speaks of how her lover wooed her "with soft words...sweet kisses."¹⁰⁶ The alba begins in mediis rebus, with the lovers already very much together. The audience often is not informed whether this is the lovers' first meeting or one of an ongoing series. But unless such a fact is mentioned in the poem, it becomes irrelevant, for each meeting is unique and a new experience for the lovers no matter how many times they have met in the past, and they never can know whether it will be their last. Whatever dilemmas or hesitations the lovers may have had about entering into their dangerous liaison, these have been vanguished by dawn, when the alba is sung. However, it is a "given" of the poem, even if the poet does not render the lady's hesitations or the knight's sufferings or his importunities

while courting her. The lovers must love in so secret a way that no one will be able to discover or even suspect it, and this requires planning, mutual trust and discretion. The lovers must practice patience in awaiting the safest time for their tryst.

But there are other, more significant and profound ways that alba lovers practice self-discipline. Their entire relationship, as presented in the alba, is based on an interweaving of freedom and control. And refinement, too, is a value the lovers share. They refine and cultivate their emotions so that at one and the same time they can liberate and explore but also control and direct them so that such freed emotions do not get out of hand.

Goldin observes:

Noble men and women cannot love like birds without becoming less than noble; they will always long for a love which is rare and difficult and fosters worthiness. 107

In the alba, the "dignity of obstacles"¹⁰⁸ is no longer provided by the inaccessibility of the canso lady or her refusal to bestow the glance of acknowledgment on her suitor. But an obstacle

nonetheless appears in the song, now in the form of the disruption of the love union caused by the dawn. The lovers must confront their lack of control in planning and executing their next rendez-vous. They compensate for having so little control over external aspects of their relationship, by refining those aspects of the relationship they can control--such as their own behavior.

The lovers in the alba do not willingly obey legal and social rules, yet they do adhere voluntarily to stringent laws of love which circumscribe the kind of love (illicit and sexual) in which they participate, even if it is they themselves who are formulating those very rules. Indeed, it is important to the lovers in the alba that they have rules to follow.

The "laws" of love may not only provide a fixed, while flexible "norm" for the unconventional love-affair, but in addition, they also help the lovers channel their passions into a form that makes them less anarchic and chaotic. Such "laws" allow sexual love to flourish, while simultaneously directing it so that, because it does not overtly threaten the status quo, it may actually continue

to thrive.

In taming erotic impulses, a love code allows Eros expression outside the sexual sphere. Having a code of conduct which defines and circumscribes a love affair also has the effect of socializing the erotic, allowing for its infusion into the social realm. The disciplining, taming and educating of passion allows it to emerge more fully into society. A more public expression of desire is possible because at the same time that such rules admit passion, they also restrain it. Courtliness is revealed by the assurance of the lover's expression of his desire, because he also thereby displays his mastery of it. Social interactions are, thus, actually eroticized by the love code.

Such social interaction becomes a sort of extended sexual foreplay. Desire can now be prolonged and refined. It becomes socially acceptable, a suitable subject of "polite" conversation. Long before we read about how "speaking of love" became not only acceptable but also capable of conferring distinction at Bercilak's court in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, it had become, as in the joc parti, a form of amusement

and recreation, a permissible, even admirable pursuit.

The references in the alba as in other courtly poetry to "medixans" (literally "bad speakers," the term covers the spectrum from bad mouthers and slanderers to gossips) also point to the importance of speaking well. The medixans are the opposite of those who value speaking well; they are the uncourtly, the rude, the indiscreet, the liars. Like the vilan spouse of Cadenet's alba lady, such men threaten or boast--they abuse language, inflating and misusing it. Their poor use of language is an indication of their noncourtliness because it also represents aspects of their larger behavior, and of their treatment of others generally. It is appropriate that the enemies of courtliness and of this kind of love are designated as bad speakers, for speech is one of the qualities that sets the two groups apart. Through their eloquence in song, the lovers attempt to overcome the slander of the medixans, to persuade the hearer to choose the courtly point of view over that of the slanderer's. The listeners in the audience are convinced of the sincerity and authenticity of the alba characters' love because of their ability to

sing about it so well.

The distancing and channeling of emotion into socially acceptable forms makes such emotion an acceptable subject not only for public conversation, but also for poetry and song. On the one hand, Eros comes to dominate the social, but on the other, the social--now in the form of love conventions and codes--so imposes on Eros that it conventionalizes sexual behavior.

The "love code," then, is a cluster of obligations and rules the poet invents which, because it allows the lovers to aspire to goals that exceed (though also include) the personal, provide a means through which lovers may be elevated and ennobled. Playing the "role" of lover helps distance the lover, enabling him to channel his emotions into a desired form. Thus can love and sex become proper subjects for song and verse.

Dedication to the love code requires rigorous self-discipline. As Goldin explains:

The code required a man's whole life--his random thoughts, the welter of his experience, the accidental succession of his movements--to be reformed into a devoted service. 109

The lover's aspiration to fulfill the code's

requirements often seem, however, to create a situation in which it takes predominance over his actual interaction in human relationships. In other words, acting on behalf of "Love's glory" becomes the primary motive, even more important than engaging the beloved as an individual.

The striving to fulfill the role of lover gives rise not only to the objectification of the love object, but also to a stylization of expression. Role and its fulfillment become essential components of the "love code," and we see a great commitment to such roles in the alba as in other "courtly" genres.

The characters' great emphasis on role may even lead to an autonomization of role. Role takes over, subsumes the individual, so that he actually becomes a function of it. The lovers can attain emotional fulfillment from the enactment of the role of lover rather than from the relationship with the beloved. They are gratified by their ability to enact a role--by the image and appearance they create.

Although the alba lady is humanized, she is nonetheless also stylized. The poet emphasizes the lady's emotion, proclaiming it for its own sake.

Yet, in this explicitness, in his over-emphasis and intensity of focus on her emotional state to the utter exclusion of most of her other aspects, he paints a distorted and stylized portrait. In exploring her emotional life, the poet humanizes the alba lady. Such an unrealistic concentration upon her emotion, however, produces a stylized lady. Insofar as he limns her in such a pointed, exclusive and intensive fashion, he stylizes her. The portrayal lacks integration. The courtly lady is acting out the role of lover.

The portrayal of the husband is even more of a stylized depiction, for he is a caricature. His unvarying appellation (gilos) accentuates his grotesqueness. He is eternally possessive, ugly, angry, suspicious and vengeful. Through the distorted view offered by this exaggerated portrait, the poet renders powerfully the extent of the lovers' loathing of this politically potent antagonist. The epitome of the mundane, profane and displeasing, the negative and sordid, the gilos exemplifies all that is ignoble. He is the very antithesis of the idealized lover.

The molding, cultivation and stylization of

emotion may have the effect of predetermining it. Behavior itself becomes ritualized, codified, even game-like. The emotions the lovers express may be authentic, but in many of the poems they no longer seem spontaneous, simple or purely natural, although in the past critics have thought of the alba as being a genre which was particularly simple and natural. The code of etiquette the lovers obey is extrinsic to their passions. To enact a relationship according to a role is, in some sense, to subordinate behavior to a code rather than to the relationship. But it also directs behavior. One relates to another not in terms of one's feelings for them or who they are but rather in terms of the propriety dictated by role. A code of behavior external to the relationship, defines it nevertheless. Etiquette supercedes or overrules considerations of affection, love, desire and feeling even when these emotions seem to dictate the relationship itself. The lovers mold their passions through the imposition of this extrinsic, artificial code of behavior. They have subjugated their emotions to an abstract pattern. Another way to view it is that the poet has imposed a mode of expression onto his actors which molds their

expression of sentiment, subjugating his creations to an abstract pattern. Any way it is viewed, however, the natural is subsumed by the imposed pattern. People become their role; considerations of role overrule and outweigh all others. Relationships are reduced to roles and become depersonalized and one dimensional. Genuine emotion becomes ritualized. Human relationships, becoming stylized, are transformed into art. And it is the imposed, abstract pattern, the making of life into art, which, along with all the other aspects we have examined here, makes the alba a courtly genre.

Despite its anti-sociality and the risks involved in pursuing the furtive affair, love is, within its own province, attractive, compelling, dynamic, and not without justification and rationale. Indeed, love engenders a morality of its own, in contrast to conventional social morality. It is the conflict between these two moralities, one based on private passion and personal fulfillment, the other based on personal sacrifice and communal identification, that the alba explores.

Alba lovers believe in an ethic of authenticity. They follow their own inner

promptings, allowing their emotions to direct them. The lovers have to struggle with impulses which lead them away from the conventional path. In obeying these divergent impulses, the lovers still outwardly adhere to social rule, but they realize that certain social bonds, like the one of marriage, seem unjust if not immoral. They favor the unrestricting, mutual, equalizing and emotionally satisfying love relationship over the dictatorial, authoritarian hierarchy of marriage. Sex for them is a pleasure rather than a duty. The lovers can distinguish between the authenticity of their own feelings and the hypocrisy of laws which dictate artificial, because insincere, bonds. Such bonds become obligatory, and thereby meaningless.

The lovers in the alba may be alienated from their society, they may violate its legal injunctions and pit themselves against the forces of time and nature, but they do not believe that they are morally culpable. This is evinced by the invocations of God which are continually made not only by the watchman in poems such as "Reis glorios," and "Dieus, aydatz," but also by the lovers. Saville comments:

What the poets are saying is 'My God, help me to enjoy the illicit pleasures of the wicked, fallen, sinful, flesh-dominated world, and may He shower his blessing on me and my acts.' 110

Lazar writes:

Considérée du point de vue de l'Eglise, la fin'amors est une conception immorale, anti-religieuse, perverse et dégradante. Malgré les affirmations de Jeanroy, Scheludko, Wechssler, Casella et de nombreux autres médiévistes, la lyrique provençale ne doit rien à une quelconque influence chrétienne Chaque foi que les troubadours mentionnent le nom de Dieu, des Saints et de la Vierge, c'est pour leur demander de les aider à conquérir la dame, à obtenir de celle-ci la joie d'amour et la récompense promise. Dieu est avec les amants. Il n'est pas avec les maris bernés. Il fait triompher le droit de la fin'amors contre la loi et l'éthique religieuse. 111

Lazar, like Saville who speaks of a "non-rational compromise" between things secular and sacred, believes that the medieval audience accepted a "double veritée." And Father Denomy has written that the courtly love of the troubadours is not moral or immoral, but amoral--that is, completely detached from Christian morality.¹¹² But these critics overlook the sincerity with which the speaker invokes God and the piety such invocations demonstrate. Scaglione observes:

The appearance...in the early romance lyric of a type of morality in obvious conflict with Christian teachings, is to be regarded as the first recognition of a duality of

standards, rather than as an indication of an actual change in mores. Nevertheless the very fact that such a lack of conformity with the ecclesiastical viewpoint had not been openly, theoretically stated before entitles us to regard this literary phenomenon as a most impressive formal reaction, if not revolution. 113

In the alba, there is a spiritual and moral involvement on the part of the lovers with each other and their idea of love. In fact, the lovers demonstrate that although they can hope to hide their illicit affair from human eyes, they cannot conceal it from God's--and their invocations reveal furthermore, that they do not wish to. In fact, as Lazar observes, the lovers believe that God is on their side. They feel only righteous indignation at attempts by the gilos and others to impede their love.

Hence, the originators of the alba seem to be presenting their lovers with an alternate moral model in mind, one which replaces what might be considered an unjust or immoral condition (the marriage of convenience, for example) with a more equitable one. Certainly, no alba is sung from the point of view of the fals amador or lausengier. And indeed, the poet generally exalts the lovers'

audacious choice of passion and love over security and safety. He often paints his lovers as brave, gallant and clever in their determination to forsake what they (and possibly he himself) regard as a mundane marriage and ordinary life for a new, and in his opinion, more elevated experience and vibrant life. Saville notes that "the situation of the alba itself is full of conflict":

...on one side we have love, on the other side hate, hostility, aggression, whether coming from the lovers or directed at them. These two contrary emotions...are neatly divided in the alba, into the two moral worlds of inside and outside. The inside world, dominated by the lady, is the world of love, the emotion that seeks for unity, and an increase in being; the outside world of society, symbolized by the husband, is the world of hate, the emotion that seeks for separation and destruction. 114

Whether the lovers are forsaking one convention --society's--for another already established one--that of fin'amor--is difficult to determine in the alba. For although fin'amor conventions seem established in the poems themselves, it is not clear whether the lovers in the poems are the forgers of the new love-oriented code, or whether they are adherents to an already extant alternative. They seem at one and the same time, to be creating "courtly love" as they re-enact its rituals and

roles.

The new love-centered morality, based on experience internal to the love affair rather than external to it, implicitly challenges the traditional and conventional morality of the community. Hence, the love union not only causes the lovers to withdraw from society, but also implicitly denies the validity of social law. Social convention imposes the criteria by which status in the community is assessed and conferred. The love relationship in the dawn song, however, temporarily suspends and even overthrows these criteria. Social law, with its rigid, hierarchical distinctions, is thwarted by the more potent momentum of love.

The lovers' separation from their communal milieu engenders new orientations. Such distancing involves the lover's reassessment of his position vis-a-vis the rest of the world. The lover suddenly sees himself as different, separate, distinct. This is most clearly evinced in alba settings. The lovers of albas which occur outdoors have left society or the court for the natural realm. They are secreted in a grove under a tree,

are playing alone in a wood, or trysting beneath a blossom. The sounds of nature surround them; the occasional watchman's voice sometimes infiltrating is the only other human "presence." In albas that occur in the lady's chamber the lovers are also secluded from the community, attempting to bar entrance to the rest of the world. Their separateness from the rest of the world is volitional, but it also implies their sense of alienation. This newly discovered point of view on the part of lovers may engender or reflect a very significant alteration of their world, and also of themselves in relation to that world.

A concern with individuality in the alba coincides with the emergence, documented by historians, of a new sense of individuality arising in medieval culture between 1050 and 1200. Colin Morris who has focused on "The Discovery of the Individual," during this era, cites political, religious and literary evidence of a rise in self-awareness among medieval people. Politically, the ascendancy to power of lords, scattered in their castles, who had secured "more effective control of their local areas,"¹¹⁵ contributed to this discovery of the individual. The government came

to depend on "the loyalty and courage of the upper nobility,"¹¹⁶ which produced a greater valuation of personal qualities of loyalty and courage and therefore an emphasis on individual character. The Church, too, contributed significantly to the discovery of the individual, especially in the shift of focus from Christ as God triumphant to Christ as suffering man--to Christ's humanity; the new emphasis on the bridging rather than the establishing of the vast distance separating man and God was manifest also in the reenactment of the mysteries. Monastic reformers "withdrew from society in order to cultivate the possibilities of their own inner selves,"¹¹⁷ the inner self gradually becoming more and more an object of spiritual contemplation. This movement toward self-contemplation and self-understanding pervades not only religion, but contemporary literature as well.

In literature, too, Morris perceives, as have others, evidence of the discovery of the individual during this time. Aristocrats, dependent upon the personal valor of their knights for protection and safety, and on fidelity to the ties between men,

became literary patrons. Therefore, an elaboration of the chivalric code in literature--paralleling the loyalty and courage encouraged in social conduct by nobility and government alike--focused on individual prowess and achievement in battle as well as on courage and fidelity to an honorable code of conduct. The interest in the heroic individual likewise engendered an interest in his personal character and relationships.

One of the most remarkable and important developments of the period, the emergence of lyric poetry--a poetry of self-expression--is a striking example of the discovery of the self. Morris notes:

The poet is striving to express a common human experience, and is doing so by putting himself in the position of the person who suffers or desires. So direct an assertion of personal feeling was new, at least as far as surviving verse takes us. 118

The analysis of "the affections" and of the various stages of love were newly embarked upon poetic endeavors. Morris cites "the inclination to find in personal relationships the summit of human experience and the source of good."¹¹⁹ The concern with personal experience and interpersonal relations as well as self-analysis is manifest in this

literature. In fact, writing itself became a more introspective activity. Scaglione has observed:

One effect, and not the least conspicuous, of the Provençal school of poetry on later literature was to rejuvenate the customarily stiff and stale world of medieval culture with a breath of fresh air. It was a contagious lesson in freedom from prejudice....the impression of a new start was none the less profound. 120

Morris's stimulating exposition does not focus with sufficient specificity for a student of medieval literature on these literary examples, nor does he engage in any detailed definition of what he actually means by individuality, but his work certainly provides a launching place for further exploration in this area. Not only does medieval literature of this time reflect a growing awareness of individuality, but it is also groping toward definitions and distinctions of a finely tuned psychological and philosophical nature. The alba participates in this exploration and in many ways attempts a complex understanding of the meaning of individuality. The alba is not only part of this movement, and a reflection of it, but it also and most strikingly, recapitulates and acts out the actual human struggle toward individuality and individual identity.

There is a variety of aspects of the exploration of individuality to be found in the alba. The genre constitutes significant and extensive inquiries into the nature of aloneness, individuality, individuation, self-expression and identity. This exploration is spurred by the dilemma engendered by the conflict between the lovers and society. The poem addresses the idea of being or becoming what one really is. It concerns the divergence from the norm as well as implicitly focusing on the distinction between behavior and emotion, doing and feeling.

The simplest and most obvious facet of the exploration of individuality involves the lover's obeying of his inner promptings, an obedience manifest in the decision to enter an illicit relationship and to diverge from the conventional, collective way. This decision immediately individualizes him to the extent that he has taken a step outside of the usual or even acceptable action. He is now a furtive lover, and this constitutes a new or at least additional identity for him. In troubadour poetry, this particular identity becomes significant in itself, and begins to attach itself to a new group of individuals--a

new community which shares divergent values. This community is not quite rebelling against convention because whatever resistance "courtly lovers" feel, they nonetheless outwardly conform to existing social structures and they do not actively seek to abolish or change such structures no matter how ardently they fulminate against them. But this small group of lovers also recognizes that convention does not accommodate the passionate aspect of their being--and in this demonstrates that the lovers have become aware of their inner beings, or at least of those parts of themselves that society fails to recognize.

The act of choice which each lover makes is an individual one. The lady's situation, as we have seen from the historical point of view, differs from that of her lover's. She must consider her particular situation, her husband and his possible whereabouts, the practicality of meetings. The dangers she exposes herself to, though possibly similar in consequence to those her lover may face, differ nonetheless, in terms of the variables of her life. And even were both lovers to suffer identical fates, each would undergo their sorrows

individually and alone. Thus, as even a brief historical survey of the penalties for adulterers demonstrates, the lovers' considerations are not light nor slight: in the fictionalized scenario of the alba, both lady and lover place their lives in jeopardy by engaging in the illicit affair.

Each member of the relationship, alone, makes a conscious and risky decision to enter a relationship sanctioned neither by law nor society. Each lover is thereby emotionally distanced from his ordinary, everyday behavior. Probably for the first time in his life, the lover is truly alone because he or she has severed, even if only covertly, a communal bond. The lovers dissociate themselves from their environment; even their skill in avoiding detection reveals their keen awareness of the fact that they are divergent and that they risk danger. In so doing, the lover has become indirect, duplicitous. He redirects his allegiance from society to a new entity--the love relationship. This immediately creates an intensified sense of isolation which entails as well a heightened sense of self-awareness and vice versa. In enacting divergence from others, the lover becomes more fully acquainted with himself. Not only

is he different by his actions, but inherently by his very desires and values. Although he thus breaks with society and becomes duplicitous in actions, he also nonetheless becomes one with himself; he aims his actions in the direction of his desires. Self-awareness has caused a movement away from community. And he experiences a heightened awareness of society as it contrasts with his own new sense of self.

Alba characters present an unembarrassed portrait of human subjective response. Those albas which present the dramatic, unmediated speeches of its characters, give the audience a glimpse into the lovers' subjective experiences. Regardless of our personal attitudes and responses to the lovers' dilemma, we are free to explore and even identify with the intensity of their heightened emotions.

The illicit nature of the relationship contributes to the intimacy between the lovers. They would have dared defy law only if their love for each other was of the most powerful kind, for the risks they take may truly cost them their lives. Saville observes:

for the alba...it might be said that the reason for the element of adultery is

that the consummation of an adulterous love is that much more in opposition to Christian morality and medieval social conventions and thus the love is that much more separated from all other value systems....The stronger the opposition to the love, and the more sources of opposition there are, the more powerful the love must seem if it dares to defy such enemies....Adultery is a way of making the love affair of a man and woman into an independent world of value, a competitor of that other, established world. 121

Love is so potent a force that their lives are meaningless without it and therefore the lovers risk their lives in order to experience it.

The bond of secrecy intimately unites the lovers and they are further united by their hostility toward the gilos. Such a bond also serves to strengthen their dissociation from society. Each meeting must be a closely guarded secret, entrusted to none but perhaps a very close or sympathetic third party in the character of the watchman. The illicitness of the relationship increases their dependency on each other, for they must trust one another only--and utterly. Violating legal and communal ties, the new bond reduces their meaning, taking precedence over all else, and therefore personal devotion becomes an essential feature of the relationship between lover and lady.

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The dawn-song is also, in many ways, a genre of transition. Transition is ramified in the genre in three converging directions: the temporal, the experiential and the spatial. On the most apparent level, a temporal transition from night to day is the impetus for the invention and singing of the alba. Dawn signals daytime, the waking, working world and everything that world connotes. For the illicit lovers who narrate the alba, this includes the departure of the lover from his lady's chamber.

Time is at once the locus, focus, turning point and backdrop against which the alba's drama unfolds. The events of the poem are bound and encircled by time. No matter how stridently they fulminate against it, the lovers are caught in time's web.

The Roman goddess of dawn, Aurora, is described by Ovid as she who upholds the double portals of night and day:

quod teneat lucis, teneat confinia noctis
122

The portal she upholds, like the gate Chaucer's narrator describes in Parlement of Foules, and

through which he is subsequently pushed by Africanus,¹²³ spans and encompasses dual realms. Aurora's gateway encompasses a span of time, for through it night flows into day. Her gate marks the point in time at which night and day are equal in strength. As a threshold marks a boundary or border, so Dawn bounds time, apportioning it into these two contrasting parts. Aurora's arch signifies the terminus of night, and also the incipit of day.

Neither night nor day can be individuated nor extricated from the other at dawn, although day will gradually break free from night and each will assume fully distinguishable and identifiable traits as time draws on.

Jackson has noted that

Time and space are not aspects of the lyric which have elicited much critical comment....But in love poems...time and space are not concrete.... 124

He furthermore comments:

The alba, by definition, must be set at dawn and by convention it is set in a castle room or even on the battlements. These are not true temporal or spatial definitions....The time and space are set in order to endow a definite situation with its own conventions....As John [sic] Saville has shown, it is the contrast between the attributes associated in literature with light and darkness that are

important, not the fact that events take place at dawn. 125

While I agree that dawn has a symbolic function in the alba, I believe that the fact that events take place at dawn is very important. In the alba, dawn is sometimes equivalent to day, but at other times, dawn is clearly depicted as distinct from day, being solely the incipient, early first light, while day is the full effulgence.¹²⁶ Although on a literal level dawn functions, in the poems, as the first light of day, it also has symbolic meanings (which are not solely based on the contrast with conventional literary associations of light and dark) that bear significance and contribute to the complexity and meaning of the alba.

On the symbolic level, dawn and its metaphorical movement mime the experience and actions of the illicit lovers about whom the alba is written. Although it is never explicitly depicted as such in the alba, dawn is the time when night and day are intertwined. Night and day, like lovers in an intimate embrace, cannot be clearly distinguished from one another. Neither can they be strictly delineated because they are fused and merged. Both physically and psychologically, the

lovers are also intimately united. But at dawn, although they are still embracing, the lovers have to come to terms with the "undoing" of their embrace. Dawn therefore not only represents the time of intermingling but also initiates the unravelling of night from day and signals thereby the gradual ascendancy of day. It is not until Arthur Broke's The Tragicall Historie of Romeus and Iuliet (published 1562) that we are treated to an actual depiction of this cosmic movement in the love-parting context:

As yet he saw no day, ne could he call it
 night,
With equall force decreasing darke fought
 with increasing light. 127

Broke presents the equal strength of both forces while simultaneously demonstrating the eventual outcome of the struggle in the words "decreasing darke" and "increasing light."

The lovers, too, must extricate their emotions and their limbs from one another to become distinct, two differentiated beings, each with his own personal boundary. Paradoxically, then, dawn signals simultaneously both union and separation, and becomes a viable symbol of the plight of illicit lovers, who, in order to continue their

relationship in time, must disrupt its continuity. The alba, like dawn itself, is Janus-faced. It commemorates and prolongs the love-relationship while its ostensible subject is parting.

Ovid images the dawn as a goddess who is both dawn and its gate keeper.¹²⁸ Dawn may mark the first tint of light or color in the dark sky, but it is also the very flux of time itself, for dawn is not static. Rather, dawn keeps moving until full day arrives. In Ovid's Metamorphoses, Aurora upholds a threshold which clearly delineates endings and beginnings. It differentiates night from day. But Aurora, as in Amores 1.13, is also portrayed as a goddess who moves--indeed, the poem is predicated on the lover's complaint that she moves too swiftly. Her movement signifies the change from night to day, a movement which itself consumes a span of time. On the one hand, dawn can represent a border, a permanent gate. On the other hand, it represents transience, the flux of time. Dawn is not only a marker of time, but also its very vehicle.

The experiential threshold is the point at which the changes in objective, external reality are apprehended by the lovers. The process they

undergo of internalizing temporal change and of allowing its full impact to take effect is the central drama of the alba. Mundane reality, in the form of day, challenges the ideal, yet transient ecstasy provided by night. It inevitably, naturally, conquers the idyllic realm of love. As the lover of "Ez ist nu tac" reluctantly acknowledges, "der tac wil niht erwinden" (23) ("day will not hold back").

The lovers experience the onslaught of day as a threat to the pleasure and fulfillment of their union. Their private, subjective world, when filtered through the light of day, appears untenable. Nichols has suggested that courtly poetry presents a gap between "the everyday world and the world of love."¹²⁹ That gap is nowhere more explicit than in the alba, and clearly "dawns" on the audience as well as on the lovers. The lovers must move from the world of love--enclosed, joyous, peaceful and fulfilling--to the "real" and raptureless world of action and responsibility. Ecstasy flees and, as in tales of otherworldly figures--vampires, ghosts or banshees--vanishes in day's light. When day breaks for the lover of

"Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê,"¹³⁰ it does so startlingly because it was somehow unexpected. Indeed Heinrich's tageliet, like most dawn-songs, never takes us beyond the refrain "dô taget ez." The audience is left with a feeling comparable to that experienced by the sudden dispersal of a marvelous dream.

The motif of day scattering joyful visions, is not found only in the alba. It appears as well in other courtly poems such as Walther von der Vogelweide's "Nemt, frowe, disen kranz" in which the narrator recalls his tryst with a very noble young girl. As the poem proceeds, we come to realize that he is reminiscing, not about an actual past event, but about a wonderful vision. In a phrase which recalls Heinrich's refrain, "dô taget ez", the narrator says: "dô taget ez und muos ich wachen" ("day broke and I had to wake up").¹³¹ Indeed, the theme of day scattering dreams and visions has been frequently employed by storytellers and poets alike from ancient times. And it is a theme made familiar to us in diverse forms: from Milton's devout and solemn sonnet "I dreamed I saw my late espousèd saint" to Bram Stoker's popular tale, Dracula. Hatto observes:

A common variation of the dawn-parting poem is to be found in the situation in which the dawn dispels merely the dream of enjoyment, not the reality. This is a minor literary genre in its own right, and depends upon two poems which came down from antiquity under the name of Anacreon. The poet dreams of being made happy by his beloved, but awakes (and tries to dream again). 132

It is no surprise, therefore, that such a theme appears as part of the alba. But the disillusionment alba lovers experience in their song is more real--for, although in retrospect their tryst may seem too wonderful to have been true, nevertheless, they have not dreamed or invented the love affair their song celebrates. Instead of moving from "insubstantial dreams" (as Prudentius had phrased it--"vanis vagentem somniis")¹³³ to reality, the alba lovers move from being in the very tangible presence of the beloved to being alone, left with only insubstantial memories, promises or other tokens of the lover's real existence.

Realistically, the dawn "surprises" no one in the sense that a spy or jealous spouse might. Dawn is, a naturally gradual process of illumination, enlightenment. This is apparent in our metaphorical use of the word to describe someone's in-

ipient "glimmer" of understanding when something "dawns" on him. Yet alba lovers are incapable of viewing the cosmic cycle in which dawn is merely a component of a gradual, ongoing and very predictable process. Instead, they view dawn as swift and sudden. The particular dawn about which the alba revolves is perceived differently from all previous dawns--predictable and uneventful as those were. The lovers avoid recognizing dawn's imminence, trying to elude dawn by shutting themselves off from all signs, and therefore all awareness, of it, and hence they belatedly bemoan its fleet approach.

Day's advent must, in some way, be confronted, no matter how desperately the lovers try to ignore it. The lovers must consider alternatives and make the choice which will determine whether they will part voluntarily, keeping their love secret and protected so that they can continue to enjoy it; or whether they will recklessly throw all caution to the winds in a self-destructive denial of the consequences of being caught. In not bowing to the hegemony of social law, they may in the long run face the consequences of having to bow to social

"justice," and face ruin, perhaps even death, as a result. This latter choice is apparently never taken in the alba--because it is not a real choice-- just as Troilus's proposals to Criseyde that they run away together rather than that she go over to the Greek camp is not a real alternative in their world. The couple somehow manages to part just in the nick of time. They are certainly never apprehended while the lyric is in progress, and the listener, involved in the fictionalized plot, has every reason to assume that the lovers escape unscathed. Suspense is nevertheless sometimes created for the audience along with a growing anxiety for the lovers' safety, as the lovers are undergoing the process of deliberation, weighing desire against necessity.

The lovers generally go through a stage in which a longing for stasis in the paradisaical world of love is awakened and expressed. In response to the first inklings of temporal change, the lovers often attempt to create a timeless existence--the kind of existence that a child, perhaps, experiences before he is old enough to apprehend the passage of hours and days. But the lovers can only sustain this feeling temporarily, for they realize

it is a fiction. They try to ignore the passage of time in an attempt to autonomize the present. Thus, they can feel, for a while, like dwellers in Eden, with no contingent cares, for they have occluded every reminder of objective reality.

There is a paradoxical element in the lovers' relationship to time. On the one hand, the exclusivity of their passion not only opposes the natural world, but such passion also creates a vibrant world of its own where the natural order of things becomes irrelevant.

The lovers' self-absorption seems to indicate a disregard of time. Yet, paradoxically, time is so precious to the lovers that it needs to be watched continually. Time needs such watchfulness not only because the lovers must be informed of precise moments of departure, but also so that the lovers will not separate before it is absolutely necessary.

Such priceless time cannot be extended nor can it be wasted. In fact, the awareness of the pending disruption of love by time actually inspires and makes more acute the pleasures enjoyed, as Wolfram openly acknowledges in his tageliet. The lovers'

concern with time is so great that in many dawn-songs the lovers employ a watchman literally to watch the visible signs of time's progress exhibited in the natural movement of night to day. Though the lovers attempt to shut out the imposition of time, they are nonetheless acutely aware of it, for the watchman is often a physical manifestation of their psychological obsession with time. Through this guardian of time, the lovers watch the world so that the world will not watch them.

A connective and mediatory figure, the watchman stands at the crossroads of several pairs of opposing forces. He mediates between the lovers and nature, the lovers and society, and the lovers and God. Sometimes he even mediates between the lovers and the putative and real audience of the poem itself. Saville observes that medieval literary watchmen

serve as a point of contact between an inner center of civilization, surrounded by walls, and the external enemies of that civilization. They do not usually take any action themselves to repulse danger: they are, above all, channels of information. 134

The watchman as herald of dawn simultaneously deals a death knell to the love union. His role varies

among albas from one of friend and sympathizer of one of both of the lovers, to one of neutral annunciator of time, to one of active enemy of adulterous love.

The watchman sets the action in motion. His cries dramatically recalling the lovers to reality, serve to alert them to the coming of dawn. He functions symbolically as a transmitter of natural and social imperatives to the lovers, who, enclosed within their own vibrant world, attempt to ignore any reality but that of their love. He represents that element in the lovers' consciousness that recognizes the impossibility of repressing consciousness. The watchman disrupts the love-relationship by forcing the lovers to acknowledge the advent of dawn. He precipitates the entry of time, nature and society into their edenic domain of love.

Even in the role of guide, however, the watchman remains objective in the sense that he himself is not immediately endangered by the lovers' actions, and so he is not emotionally involved to the extent that his judgment is clouded. His clear-sightedness is an essential element of his role. In this role, he mediates

between the audience and the lovers.

Saville, recognizing the watchman's role vis-a-vis the audience, comments:

In short, [the watchman] is in the position of the audience of the alba, who accept the supreme value of love but at the same time remain aware of the ineluctable reality of society, nature, and time. The watchman's knowledge and sympathy are those of the audience.... 135

Like Chaucer's dreamer in the Parlement of Foules, or his narrator in Troilus and Criseyde, the watchman in the alba often plays more the part of poet than lover. Shapiro notes: "Like the songbird, the watchman is a metonymy for the poet."¹³⁶ Robert O. Payne notes that Chaucer, at the opening of Troilus and Criseyde, "declares himself no lover, but a servant of the servants of the God of Love,"¹³⁷ and who, poised on the brink of the world of love, sings about rather than participates in love affairs of his own. Through his good counsel, through his words, the watchman, like the poet, uses his clear sight, his foresight and his knowledge to direct and guide lovers. Shapiro observes:

The watchman both parallels and duplicates the poet vis-a-vis his creation, thereby demonstrating the eruption of poetic self-consciousness into the demesne of narrative. 138

He achieves self-expression, not in love, but in song, and in fulfilling a courtly identity or assuming the role of counsellor. The watchman helps the lovers orient themselves to their situation. He encourages the lovers to think of future prospects. In poems where he is present, the watchman helps to restore a realistic and practical perspective to the lovers.

Like the dawn which is comprised of night and day but is neither, the love unit is comprised of man and woman, but is neither. Rather, the unit becomes an intertwining or blending, a fusion of both. While it is true that love, in the alba, has an individuating quality, it is also true that once the relationship is sexually consummated, the lovers enter a union in which they merge, and indeed, display an intense desire to become one with each other. The desire to merge with the beloved is a motif which pervades the alba. The union, in a sense, establishes a personality, an individual identity, of its own which is comprised of the lovers and of which they both partake. Both are essential to the union; it is incomplete and unfulfilled without each one.

While the lovers are together, the social basis of their identities is dissolved. Social roles are temporarily immobilized, sometimes even reversed. The social role each possesses in the community is discarded along with other social trappings, such as clothes, and therefore our lovers are often impossible to categorize in terms of class or status, except through their own sense of decorum and speech. Social class emerges as an issue in the genre only in its negation: it appears utterly insignificant to the lovers. When the lovers unite in bed, each is denuded of social identity. The lady is no longer the cold and distant courtly superior of her wooer.

The psychological transition all alba lovers undergo involves the reconciliation between subjective and objective worlds. The lovers struggle with two conflicting states of mind. They have deliberately repressed an overriding concern with objective reality which dictates the temporal limitations of their love, and have imposed a temporary forgetfulness of time in order to perpetuate and enjoy their subjective experience of love. They seek to deny the brevity of the time they are allotted: "wer hât si sô kurz gemezzen?"

("Ez ist nu tac," [22]) ("who measured it so short?") and to ignore the perception of its passage. Subjective desire facilitated by darkness diverges from objective fact as time's movement is obscured until dawn.

The alba presents these two competing consciousnesses and dramatizes the war between them. The lovers oscillate between a consciousness of time and a repression of that consciousness undergoing a ritual in which all their protests, denunciations, denials and vituperations eventually resolve themselves into an acceptance of the necessity of parting.

The psychological transition mediates between temporal and spatial transitions. The conflict between love and necessity is resolved on the psychological level. Awareness of temporality impels the lovers' apprehension of the necessity for departure. The mind, fluctuating between subjective desire and objective necessity begins to apprehend reality--and in advance of its crushing consequences, the mind both struggles to repress this awareness and rises to self-preserving action.

The drama at dawn portrays the crucial de-

cision-making dilemma, the moment when the mind resolves to act in accordance with necessity. The lovers repress their awareness of reality in order to enjoy love, but they must nonetheless also have the capacity to allow reality to reassert itself in time to save themselves from harm. If not, the secreted world of love would come into direct and shattering collision with social law, and would be utterly and violently desecrated and destroyed. The psychological transition internalizes temporal, objective reality. The lovers, in deference to their prudent considerations, adapt themselves for the next transition--the spatial one. In order to perpetuate the union in time, the lovers must disrupt its continuity. The psychological transition prepares them, allowing them to make the spatial one. The temporal, objective inevitability of parting can only become a reality if the lovers have gone through the psychological transition or adaptational stage which actually enables the spatial movement to occur.

The love union temporarily encloses, embodies and represents the lovers. It wraps them within a protective, nurturing shell. It, like dawn, symbolizes their temporary inextricability. Yet, the

dawn induces a generative act, for at its advent, the lovers are compelled to loosen their intimate embrace. As in Genesis, two beings are individuated from the body of one. The lovers are forced apart, sent separately on a journey into time and space.

The unravelling of night and day at dawn mirrors the sexual disengagement of the lovers. The movement apart which first disunites their bodies will gradually increase until the lovers are much further apart in space, until they are no longer able to touch or even see one another at all.

Many albas have no real physical setting--they occur in a seemingly autonomous realm, disconnected from the rest of the world. We usually assume that this realm is the lady's chamber but often, as in other courtly love poems, we are given no clue at all about where the song and its action take place. One of the effects of the lack of specific references to and descriptions of locus is that place is relegated to utter insignificance, for if it mattered at all, it would be mentioned somewhere in the poems. Yet rarely do we glimpse the least shred of evidence as to just where the lovers are secluded. We only know that they are safely hidden

in a haven in which the outside world may not see or even hear them or vice versa.

Such a deliberate exclusion--or even expulsion--of the natural from the purview of such poems is striking. The poem's disregard of place, like its evasion of time, serves to make it insignificant and thus to isolate the love-union, so that its meaning cannot be overridden by such factors as time or place. But we could also view the absence of references to place as the deliberate repression of temporal and spatial contexts in order to emphasize the importance of the here and now--in order to autonomize the love-union. No competing factors of interest could possibly exist. Place and time do not signify enough to be mentioned. As Donne succinctly renders it, the dawn-song situation inspires a kind of love which "makes one little room an everywhere."¹³⁹ In the alba, the lovers seem to have so successfully transformed the world around them that until day and parting they need not countenance its existence.

In the albas in which we are presented with the rare glimpse into illicit love's environment, the settings are usually pastoral and simple. They

portray a utopian moment in which the lovers escape the demands and drudgeries of ordinary social obligations and frolic in a greenworld. The references to "el jardi"(14) as well as "un vergier"(1) and "els pratz"(10) in "En un vergier" or "un boix"(2) in "Entre moi et mon amin"¹⁴¹ underscore the allusion to the Edenic realm where the lovers meet. But harm exists here, as in Eden, despite the seeming imperturbability and imperiousness of the scene to any form of discordance or danger. Danger impinges on the periphery and intrudes onto the scene. Lady and lover play within delimited enclosures in "En un vergier," while the watchman and the gilos on the outskirts of the horizon, spy enviously, determined to disrupt the union. Dawn, hovering progressively nearer to the center of the scene, threatens to reveal and rout the lovers. As in Eden, evil lurks beyond but inevitably manages to infiltrate the garden recesses.

In most albas, the natural is expunged until the lovers feel its threat in the form of dawn. The ultimate aim of exiling nature is to forestall the inevitable decline into mere matter. The dawn's threat signals, not only love's disruption,

but decay and death in a more general sense as well. One purpose of the lover's concern with etiquette and artifice is to transfigure the natural, sublimating impulse into art. Refinement, artifice, is ultimately the transcendence of nature.

The relationship between nature and art in the alba genre involves an attempt to transform natural, physical love into refined, courteous fin'amor. It attempts to instill into spontaneous and natural behavior an element of elegance and sophistication, to imbue instinct and passion with conoissensa: knowledge and skill. It aims for a controlling rather than supressing of emotion. The transmutation of nature into art is man's attempt to accept nature's decay and mortality by discovering and extracting nature's enduring and eternal truths and beauty. And the poet does this through art. Through the medium of song, the agony of parting is transmuted into a poignant pleasure.

Dawn clearly points out to the lovers their own transience and mortality. Nature, while she constantly shifts, flows and erodes, altering the face of the earth (as well as the faces of those we

love), is nonetheless, an undeniable and permanent presence--unlike ourselves, who as Bede so consummately taught us long ago, are really only temporary guests at the warm banquet hall. Dawn represents the fact that nature is inexorable movement, continual flux and change, but the larger cyclical pattern also demonstrates that there is fixity in this natural or cosmic law.

If dawn is unalterable fact, cold, hard reality, permanent and unchangeable, it serves, then to contrast with the love relationship, because it is mortal and so can be lost or destroyed as well as because it is illicit and therefore continually threatened by exposure. Dawn, as an agent of natural law, is irreversible, immutable, ineradicable, but the love relationship is illicit and therefore outside law. Insofar as dawn is an agent of law, it conjoins itself to social law; both are necessary and irrefutable. In the alba, dawn becomes, in a sense, the agent and enforcer of social law. Dawn brings with it the recognition that change is inevitable. Dawn signifies that such peace and joy are on the verge of collapse and the lovers must prepare to leave their perfect tryst behind. Against such potent forces as nature and society,

love is doomed to destruction, defeat and death.

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The alba captures, in a sense, not the movement itself implied in the word transition, but rather the pivotal moment. Especially in the Old Provençal and Old French poems, the poem obeys the lovers' demand for stasis because the alba actually presents a moment of stasis--a tableau wherein all potential conflicts are held at bay.

By emphasizing the pivotal moment in the process of transition--that is, dawn--the song so encompasses a multitude of possibilities that it generates an esthetic of potentiality. The alba presents an inherently untenable situation, one which cannot continue, and pinions that surcharged moment fraught with a highly condensed amount of discrepant aspects at its moment of greatest intensity. Freezing such a moment, the poet allows the lovers and their audience to experience the encounter of two incommensurables: desire and necessity.

The lack of movement in the alba also contributes to its stylized feel. The situation the

alba portrays is fixed, basically unvarying. The treatment of the plot remains, according to Jackson, "perfectly consistent" within the genre.¹⁴² The situation materializes similarly if not identically, in all the poems, the lament engendered by the same circumstances. Saville speaks of the dramatic quality of the alba, and about the way it moves:

The alba is dramatic and it proceeds...by cause and effect. It is not the subjective expression of unchanging feelings (the chanson) but the objective narration of changing events. 143

But Bec convincingly counters with the assertion that:

le ou les personnages n'agissent pas: ils chantent et ils plaignent. Ils se trouvent tout au plus imbriqués dans une situation lyrique, non une action. 144

And Hatto adds:

The Minnesinger of this period with few exceptions are more given to stylization and are less explicit than the Troubadours in their references to the world of sights and sounds 145

Movement, if there is any at all, is ritualistic rather than natural. Expressions of feeling, desire and love are enuciated and enacted according to the code of etiquette. This code ritualizes the expression. Going through the gestures becomes an immortalizing metaphor for experiencing the

emotions. The relationship may thus seem to collapse sometimes, as it does in "S'anc fui belha," into a series of roles or a code that supplants the relationship.

Although dawn sets day and the poem into action, it has brought constriction and loss of freedom to lovers; and its effect is immediately felt in the lack of freedom of movement demonstrated in the poem itself. After dawn, each member of the poem is doomed to pursue his or her own narrow path.

Stylization, in the alba, is apparent in the art of the poem's construction as well as in the elements already mentioned. The poet's presentation of his material is as stylized as his characters' presentations of themselves. The genre's lack of descriptive words for the people, scenes, and settings--the who, what and where of the poem--is as striking as its obsession with the why and when of the poem. The lovers are presented devoid of personal qualities. Only one, "N Esteves" of "Ab la gensor" is actually named. The "players" are not described in terms of individual characteristics but are instead presented, as in many other courtly lyrics, in only the most generalized, stereotypical

and idealized terms; the ladies are beautiful, sweet, noble, pleasing, good, and loyal. The lovers are also beautiful, sweet, noble as well as being worthy, gay and courtly. They all lack individuality although they embody the ideal of courtliness, or indeed, because they embody that ideal.

The song holds the fleeting moment still, freezing it so that we can view it, but also prolonging and extending the moment by so protracting it. The act of articulation itself consumes a span of time and transforms the slender, finite crisis instant into an entire lyric piece--one that not only consumes time in its recitation, but that may also be repeated, enduring into the future.

Prior to the commitment the lovers must make to one response or action, they are free: they can consider a multitude of potential actions. Their emotive and physical responses can be freely expressed as their choices will be freely willed. The moment depicted in the alba is directly before decision becomes imperative and potentiality lost to reality and then history. The crisis moment is pregnant with conflicting impulses as desire and necessity wage their war within the minds and hearts

of the lovers. Once a decision is made, however, consequences will follow. Reality will swiftly replace desire.

The alba is symbolically concerned with mediality as well as transition. The genre not only concerns itself with a passage from desire to necessity or from innocence to wisdom (as have been mentioned previously and will be explored in greater depth below), but it also centers on the mediatory stage between these conditions. Augustine tells us:

Thus, no mortal may become wise unless he passes from foolishness to wisdom. If the passage itself is foolishly made, it is not well done--but this sounds like senseless talk, for if the transition is wisely made, then the man was already wise before he passed from folly to wisdom. This is no less absurd. From this we understand that there is an intermediate state which we cannot call by either name. Thus when the first man passed from the citadel of wisdom to folly, the passage itself was neither wise nor foolish. This is similar to sleeping and waking. Sleeping is not the same as going to sleep, and waking is not the same as being fully awake. There is a passage from on to the other. 146

One cannot attain wisdom without passing through this medial stage which Augustine describes, interestingly enough, as a stage akin to waking but before complete awakening. The alba does not generally depict the arrival at full maturity and

wisdom implied by the idea of being fully awake, but there are certain indications in the poems, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter, that point toward the notion that the lovers are well on their way to a new or broader comprehension of the human condition. The alba as a genre of potentiality, is also, then, a genre of becoming. Georges Poulet's summary of the medieval attitude towards the passage of time is apt:

The Christian of the Middle Ages felt essentially then, that he was a man who endured. Nevertheless, within him and around him, he was unable to keep from seeing change. If he felt sure of his own permanence he was at the same time constrained to notice a profound lack of permanence. Paradoxically, he felt himself to be a permanent being and a transient being, a being who never changed and a being who always changed....To change was to pass from potentiality to actuality. 147

This change is the implicit action of many an alba. In the performance of the song itself additional aspects of mediality and transition are apparent. The union enjoyed at the song's opening is often rendered in the past tense at the poem's conclusion. Criseyde has "forgon"(III, 1442) her joy at the close of her three stanza aubade, a lyric which begins with present love and pleas for the future.

The lack of sequential, narrative structure in most Old Provençal and Old French dawn songs leads to an experience of atemporality which the audience, too, shares. The staticness also gives the poems the feel of frozen action. They may not be framed by sequential narrative movement, or by events which move in a logical or chronological sequence, but they are "framed" nonetheless, by their unmoving and permanent stasis. It does not matter which strophes come first, or which last--all action is preserved and past; all action is memorialized.

Often, in these poems, the refrain returns us again and again to the same starting or ending point--usually implying that on some level these are identical--and initiating a cyclical pattern that stays with us long after everything else has faded from memory. The alba refrain accrues significance with each repetition. By the final strophe, the annunciation of dawn takes on additional, sometimes menacing, implications. One night of love has come to a close. However, there is also a subtle warning, implicit in each recitation of the refrain, that love, for all its joys, must also have its ending, for dawn, paradoxically in this context, constitutes expiration rather than commencement.

The dawn initially signifies a literal dawning of day, but by the conclusion of the alba, the dawn acquires more symbolic weight. A recognition that this parting in some measure signifies a more final one occurs as the clear light of day approaches. Love fuses a union between two separate bodies, but a union not everlasting.

An obsession with the passage of time is also manifest in the refrain. It is through the insistent reiteration of the refrain that the actual structure of the poem conveys not only the fact that time moves swiftly, but also that this movement gathers momentum as it hurls forward. Consequently, the refrain generates a sensation of the inexorable and ever-accelerating flux of time.

Paradoxically, it is also true that the refrain signifies, not only time's movement--and its acceleration--but its cyclical nature as well, simultaneously implying permanence and stasis. What is being made permanent in the refrain, however, is not the love relationship itself, but the fact of its transience. It is dawn's fleet approach which is continually reiterated, so that no matter how often the lovers manage to meet together or to shut

out reminders of dawn, at every one of those meetings and even during them, the cyclical natural process will at some point emerge as a dominant intrusion into that meeting. No matter how often the lovers attempt to ignore the overbearing and destructive consequences of dawn, reminders of its imminence will continually re-emerge.

The song itself bridges the gap between union and separation. The watchman's or bird's song often recalls the lovers to reality; such songs are true reveillés and serve to rouse the couple in the poem from the realm of love to that of the real world. Yet the alba, as the lovers participate in it, also serves to perpetuate the union, creating an abstract prolongation of it. The secret, private affair is given a public monument through the song which becomes both its celebration and extension. The song makes love itself permanent by transcending the actual, transient love-meeting. The sexual pleasure as well as the agonizing sorrow of love is transformed into another form of expression--one that is at once beautiful and through continual reenactment, permanent--lyric.

It is ironic that a genre of love poetry

explores so deeply the motifs and emotions of aloneness and loneliness. Although the alba celebrates the consummation of a mutual, reciprocal love, it also serves as a lament for its ending. Because of the great intensity of the love, and of the closeness it has brought, the loneliness felt afterward is much keener and more acute than if the lovers had never been together at all. Having experienced the summit of joy, the absolute intimacy and union of sexual love, the contrast with the anticipated separation and solitariness is terrifying and agonizing. The alba presents vividly the dread of this separation, a lament which is a song of mourning for departed love.

Jackson finds the alba poet particularly sympathetic to his lovers:

The mere fact that the poet is aware of the events in the alba implies participation, and his sympathy with the lovers rather than with those who seek to thwart their love renders any 'objectivity' dubious. 148

The participation of the audience may not be overtly invited in every alba, but it is clear that such participation is one of the singer's aims.

Through various means, the poet endeavors to join his lovers with a fictional community of other

such lovers. In this way, his lovers are no longer part of an isolated or outcast enclave. The lovers move from the private circle of a "society of two" to the larger community of "courtly lovers" represented by the sympathizers in the audience. This communal aspect gives the song a larger significance--it comes to represent a general outcry against certain societal strictures as well as certain facts of the human condition.

The communal aspect of the love relationship draws the lovers into a larger, sympathetic group which shares the same ethic or code. This code may vary with each poet, for it is not the details of the code--which being flexible are always in the process of being created, formulated and adapted to varying situations within the poems--that signify, but the very fact that a code exists. It is the quality of the love that certifies its place within the courtly milieu. It is the refinement, respect and discipline which is present not only in the canso but in the alba as well, that identifies it as "courtly." The love code provides a vehicle by which the passionate spirit of the lovers can be not only contained, but also channeled and propelled

toward a new and worthy goal:

For lovers, [the] greater being is love
itself, which they feel must transcend their
moment and join them with all other lovers. 149

The "courtly" community provides a forum for nonconformists, established so that they, too, can--by adhering to a new, nontraditional set of criteria--be regarded as successful and worthy, as citizens of an elite community united by exacting regulations and exalted ideals.

Jackson suggests that the canso audience, rather than constituting the actual audience of the poem, is really comprised of "a theoretical audience, postulated by the poet as part of the song, one which will enable him to pose questions and answer them."¹⁵⁰ The object of the canso singer's performance, Goldin observes, is to win the courtly audience's acceptance, "for only as they recognize him as one of their own is his nobility revealed....The friends are close around him, a circle of courtliness that he enters through his song."¹⁵¹ Jackson, too, discusses the importance for the critic of considering the role of the audience in the poet's plan, and he specifies particularly the Provençal, French and Italian poets as having a "clearly envisioned" though probably

fictionalized, audience who function "as an integral part of the poem."¹⁵² This audience is one the poet can manipulate and direct to his advantage. This is also true of the alba.

The singer's blatant broadcast of his/her "secret" love affair transforms it from private relationship into public event. Although alba lovers anticipate a hostile and antagonistic societal response to their love--the response of the gilos, his spies and the other slanderers--as singers they nevertheless seem also to expect their lament to evoke the sympathy of their friends, the elitist group which they aspire to. It is among the community of sympathizers that the lover's song resounds with meaning, redeeming him from "the exile"¹⁵³ that his alienation from traditional values has entailed. And it is this "courtly" and elitist community which names and prizes him not only in the canso, but in the alba as well.

Surrounding the circle of fictional sympathizers, is another hypothetical, but larger circle: the circle of the colder and practical community, those who accept and perpetuate mundane reality and who willingly live under its hegemony.

These enemies of Love, opposed to illicit relationships, are unsympathetic to the passionate impulses and actions of the smaller, inner circle of elite sympathizers. Circumscribing both these audiences in an ever-widening arc of perspectives is the "real" audience of the poem--that is, the actual medieval as well as future listeners and readers of the song. The hypothetical or imagined audience which does not exist outside of the fiction, has an effect on the real audience of the poem, for its existence influences the real audience and also serves to blur the boundaries between reality and fiction.

The poet designs a situation which enables him to associate himself with the courtly, elite audience. By creating a polarized fiction (the sympathetic companions versus the gilos and his coterie), the poet can assert his allegiance to the sympathetic sector--to those who identify with the idea of courtliness which he upholds (if not invents)--just as he has aligned his invented lovers with this same faction. The poet thus substantiates his own identity as courtly, uniting himself with the sector in which he is seeking acceptance and entry, through their mutual sympathy for the vrai

amans and through the ethic they all share. In this way, he demonstrates his comprehension of, and sympathy with, the elite, courtly values of the class he aspires to. His design verifies his eligibility to become an integral part of that class, as his lovers become an emblem of it.

Chapter Two: Theoretical and Generic Considerations

- ¹ Frederick Goldin, Troubadours, p. 6
- ² Ibid, p. 10
- ³ Theodore Silverstein, "Guenevere, or the Uses of Courtly Love," in F. X. Newman, The Meaning of Courtly Love (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1973) p. 89
- ⁴ F. X. Newman, The Meaning of Courtly Love (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1973) p. x
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Ibid.
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- Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourellen (Leipzig, 1870) p. 27; Hatto, p. 370
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CHAPTER THREE

THE CONTINENTAL ALBA

The extraordinary range of the alba lady's emotion is reflected in the variety, intensity and flexibility of her verbal responses. The alba lady may voice one long, unbroken lament: a soliloquy in which she longs for the impossible or rues the future. Or she may engage in a dialogue with her lover, the watchman or both. In some albas, the lady and watchman both speak, but clearly not to one another, or at the least, not in direct response to each other's words. She speaks in many modes and can move from one to another with ease. Through her speech, she expresses manifestly human qualities and emotions: joy, resentment, anger, sorrow, loneliness. Utterly unlike the canso lady, the alba lady is so vehemently involved in action that she forswears all signs of passivity; she sings out her joys and cries out her agony. Thus she praises, pledges herself and wishes--all indications of her desire and love for her man. But she can slip into a more aggressive mode in which she curses, commands, or even threatens. In her grief, she makes complaints and laments, even appeals.

The alba lady's emotional range is reflected in passages such as the first strophe from the aube "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir," a song of intermingled love and hate:

Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir,
Nulle rien ne doi tant hair,
K'elle fait de moi departir
Mon amin cui j'ain per amors.
Or ne hais riens tant com le jour,
Amins, ke me depairt de vos. (1-6)

When I see the dawn of day come,
I ought to hate nothing so much,
For it makes depart from me
My love whom I love with love.
Now I hate nothing so much as day,
Love, which parts me from you.

Although she expresses her hatred, she can still address her lover endearingly as "Amins." The range from love to hate encompassed in the lady's song expresses not only the full spectrum of her deeply felt emotions, but also their flexibility as she moves from love to hate and back again with fluidity. The first four lines of the strophe use words for love three times (once as a verb, once as a noun, and once as an address to the object of the feeling--he whose being embodies the very concept) and the word for hate once. The words love and hate are then reiterated in the last two lines of the strophe, which serve throughout the poem as the

refrain. The intertwining of love and hate is significant, for the intensity of her love may be said to actually engender her feelings of hate. Her range is extended by the use of the intensifiers "nulle rien" and "tant" in the strophe and repeated similarly in the refrain "ne hais reins tant com le jor."

Strikingly, the lady of "En un vergier," the earliest extant alba (discussed in detail below), is not described until the final strophe of that poem. It begins with a description of the scene, but merely states in the most generalized terms: "tenc la dompna son amic costa si"(3) ("the lady held her lover at her side"), without describing either of the lovers. The following strophes consist of a monologue by the lady in which she speaks either to or about her lover. The poet does not intrude with authorial comment or extraneous descriptions, allowing the lady to "speak" for herself. How we view her, until the final strophe of the lyric in which the narrator re-emerges, is based primarily on our response to her own words.

The alba lady's humanity is drawn out also by the realism of her self-portraiture as she speaks of her plight. She makes no attempt to conceal or

gloss over her responsibility in the affair. Rather, she often brags of her eager participation in the affair. Cadenet's lady, in the alba, "S'anc fui belha," gives us a unique and vivid, though succinct, portrait of her motivation for taking a lover. The manuscript evidence for this alba is particularly problematic because the ten manuscripts that contain copies of it differ widely from each other, especially in reference to which strophes they include and the order in which the strophes are placed. In its simplest form, the poem is narrated solely by a watchman; seven of the ten manuscripts, however, introduce the lady's speech. Woledge, in his textual notes, explains the difficulty of conjecturing what the original form of the poem was,¹ and reprints Appel's text from Der Trobador Cadenet, which opens and closes (minus the tornadas) with the lady's speech. Appel's text (which serves as the text here) consists of 5 strophes plus two tornadas. In Cadenet's alba, the lady speaks most explicitly of them all about the marital situation:

S'anc fui belha ni prezada,
ar sui d'aut en bas tornada,
qu'a un vilan sui donada
tot per sa gran manentia;
 e murria
s'ieu fin amic non avia

cuy disses mo marrimen
e guaita plazen
que mi fes son d'alba. (1-9)

If ever I was fair or prized,
I am turned from high to low,
for to a boor I am given
all for the sake of his great wealth;
and I would die
if I did not have a noble lover
to whom I could tell my sorrows
and a pleasing watchman
who makes me a dawn song.

Cadenet gives the lady the opportunity to tell her side of the story. She starts with a description of her pre-marital status. Her worth and beauty seem to her part of a now remote existence, and the words "s'anc" ("if ever") emphasize that she is speaking of a time that feels so long ago that it seems almost past recall, or as though it occurred in a previous existence altogether, one whose reality she has begun to doubt. With a shift to present in the second line, she speaks of "now" ("ar"). In quick succession, the lady presents a before and after--and the central event around which she has been transformed is her marriage. Her beauty and worth were not guarantees against her having to marry for money and she has been "turned" by this union from prized to "bas." Even though she has not changed in essence, her worth has been diminished to almost nothing, and her life is devalued because of her

marriage. The words "sui tornada" are tellingly pivotal. She has not changed, but rather, she has been turned. Before she was up, now she is down--and this happened by the mere "turn" of events in her life, not by anything she has done. If she previously faced a future of hope, she has been wheeled around to the opposite direction, and now looks backward, onto her happy past. Of course, we can also interpret her "turn around" as a vertical rather than horizontal turn--that is, as a fall.

Marriage demeans her, first of all, because she has been literally "given away." To compound this, she was given away for money, sold, so it seems, into the union. Third, even though he is wealthy, her spouse is characterized by her as "un vilan," indicating that his wealth has not blinded her to his actual lack of worth. She has values other than those based on material possessions; she has her own, perhaps different, set of standards by which she judges others. Her husband, because he is a vilan, cannot know how to esteem her; he cannot appreciate her true worth. Finally, because she is married, the qualities for which she was valued when she was single may no longer be considered valuable

or necessary. She has been removed from the sphere where her worth was properly acknowledged. Her beauty and worth, like her husband's wealth, were assets--bargaining chips--which made her (as it did him) a desirable match. But once married, her spouse has little left to offer such a lady. Hence, this lady is capable of acknowledging certain conditions about society and confronting the reality of how these exigencies have effected her life.

The lady's explanation of her plight makes her seem a victim to it. All the verbs of the first half of the strophe are in the passive voice: events happened to her. Her beauty and worth were bestowed upon her with the same passivity as was her undesirable husband. These "gifts" have caused her fall--another event which happened to her. The passive voice conveys the suggestion that she has had little or no say in the marital arrangement. Evidently, she did not choose her spouse, or at the very least, she did not choose him for his personal attractiveness. The arrangement is purely mercenary. Historically, as we have seen, this was a typical medieval marriage arrangement, but it is a rare moment in the alba, for it is the only time a poem in the genre portrays the custom--as well as

a lady's reaction to it--even if these were typical of the time.

The lady's descent from high to low is so painful that the central line of her strophe expresses the short, simple sentiment "e murria" ("and I would die"). The conditional mood intervenes, slicing the strophe in half. The lady has moved from remote pre-marital past, to indicative present, speaking of her current condition. She now moves into an imagined future (or rather non-future), and what would have happened to her but for some good fortune.

Her shift from the passive voice of the first half of the strophe to the active voice in the second half is telling; she speaks now about how she rescued herself from her desperate situation--by having a lover. Her active, present possession of a lover sustains her. Her "fin amic" serves as a contrast to her "vilan" spouse, just as her passivity in the first half of strophe one contrasts with her active response in the second half. Her lover is a man who understands her and in whom she can confide. The lady also speaks of the "guaita plazen" ("pleasing watchman"), an essential ally who

calls out the time of dawn in order to warn the lovers that their time together is running out. Interestingly, not only does the watchman make the lady his alba, as she declares, by calling out the dawn, but he also makes an alba by singing the next strophes of the poem (which will be examined shortly).

The lady explains her plight to us from her own viewpoint, justifying her adultery by presenting it as a response to the unfair victimization she has undergone. We may even admire her for taking her life into her own hands and actively coping with the situation to her own satisfaction.

The second time she speaks (strophe four in Appel's text), her tone has shifted from the merely explanatory to the defiant and aggressive:

Ja per guap ni per menassa
que mos mals maritz me fassa,
no mudarai qu'ieu non jassa
ab mon amic tro al dia,
 quar seria
desconoissens vilania
qui partia malamen
 son amic valen
 de si, tro en l'alba. (37-45)

Never through bluster nor threat
that my wicked spouse might make me,
shall I not fail to lie
by my lover until day.
 for it would be
an ignorant vulgarity

if one should part badly
her worthy lover
from herself, before dawn.

The lady's determination to continue the love affair almost takes on heroic overtones. Although reckless and imprudent, the lady presents her steadfast clinging to her man until the last possible moment as laudable: she will cling to her lover's side until day no matter what threats her husband makes. Her love affair is so vital to her existence that she is prepared to defy whatever obstacles he might put in her way. The lady uses strong language, beginning the strophe with "ja" ("never") and calling her husband "mals" ("wicked"). Her use of the construction "no mudarai qu'ieu non jassa" ("I could do nothing else but lie") shows tremendous determination: her actions are guided by a strong will. Although she stubbornly defies and vilifies her spouse, she nonetheless values such a refinement of manners that even under the anguish of being forced to part from her lover, she will refuse to do so "malamen" ("ignobly"), for her fin'amic--unlike the vilan "mals maritz"--is "valen" and must be treated with concomitant dignity.

The lady reveals that she follows some "law" of love--she values conoissensa and acting in ways

which will prevent anyone from accusing her of behaving "malamen." Thus, she subordinates the threat of danger to the higher principle of "love propriety." She values courtesy, implying that to banish one's love before the moment of utmost necessity would be a discourteous, even ignorant act. By using words such as desconoissens, valen, malamen, vilania, she frames her love relationship in a courtly context, justifying as well as intensifying her illicit affair. In the process, she inspires these terms with renewed vigor and vitality.

Not only does the lady of "S'anc fui belha" risk danger, but she does so defiantly and with the backing of the "laws of love," she does so in style. She would be unworthy of the title of courtly lover, if she behaved otherwise, at least in her own eyes. She may break the vows of her marriage bond, she may most vehemently vilify her spouse, but this does not constitute vilania. Only her comportment toward her fin'amic concerns her. The values she adheres to dictate a careful and calculated refinement, style, courtesy and grace, the type of behavior which would distinguish her

from her vilan spouse as well as from all others who, like him, do not value elegance, refinement, courtliness.

Although her tone is explanatory not self-pitying, aggressive rather than manipulative, nevertheless, one of the lady's aims must be to inspire compassion in those who hear her song. So persuasive is her self-portraiture and so sorry her plight as she paints it, she succeeds in procuring the sympathy of her listeners. That she succeeds is testament to the efficacy and power--the eloquence--of her voice.

How representative Cadenet's lady's economic inferiority is of other alba ladies cannot be determined, for she alone gives us any glimpse into a past, background and motivation for straying from her marriage. But although Cadenet's lady's economic status may not be representative of all alba ladies, her emotional plight certainly is. The alba lady's virulent anger, directed sometimes at her husband who ubiquitously hovers on the periphery of the scene, sometimes at the watchman who may be either friend or foe, and sometimes even at dawn itself, clearly distinguishes her voice from all other "courtly" lady's voices. Here is a

lady capable not only of feeling intense emotion, but also of expressing it most emphatically. Although refined in manners (as demonstrated by other things she says and does, and by other descriptions of her in the alba), she can clearly and vehemently express her rage and hatred.

Her anger and defiance are demonstrated, for example, in the invitation she makes to her lover in "En un vergier": "Tot o fassam en despieg del gilos"(11) ("let's do it all in spite of the gilos"). In Raimon de las Salas' "Dieus, aydatz" too, she is undaunted by the power not only of the gilos, but of an entire host of armed enemies:

Non crezatz
Per armatz
Que jogars
De mon amic lais,
Qu'e mon bratz
Jauzen jatz (49-54)

Do not believe
That for fear of armed men
I would leave the games
Of my friend
Who in my arms
Rejoicing lies

Threats alone cannot sunder lady and lover. The aube "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" begins with the lady's assertion of her anger: "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir/Nulle rien ne doi tant hair"(1-2)

("When I see the dawn of day come/Nothing can be more hateful").

The alba lady is not too proud to resort to accusations of those she resents. The gilos is the main object of derision, scorn and defiance in albas in which he is mentioned, but the watchman, too, whose "clamor" ("schalle")² distresses the lady receives his share of abuse; he is maligned for his poor form and inconsiderateness, if not for more malignant intentions. The dawn, too, as in some of the classical antecedents to the genre, is accused of cheating and envying the lovers, but nowhere in the medieval alba is dawn presented as Aurora, in her mythologized aspect. In a unique variation, the lady of "Ez taget unmâzen shône," a later tageliet (c.1300) by King Wenceslas II of Bohemia, actually tries to bribe the watchman to silence, and remarkably, from the point of view of the entire genre, she succeeds.³

In some albas, the semantic vehicle of the lady's anger is the curse. The lovers of "Ez is nu tac," assume the efficacy of their own speech to such a degree that they call down curses on their enemies: "gevlouchet wart dem tage" (28) ("there was a cursing of the day"). Sometimes the lady's

anger is so powerful that she feels its weight will
carry enough force of its own accord:

Dîn lîp der mueze unsaelic sîn,
wahtaere, und al daz singen dîn! (12-13)⁴

Your life be damned
Watchman, and all that singing of yours!

Or, as in "Friuntlîchen lac," she threatens:

wê geschehe dir, tac,
daz dû mich lâst bî liebe, langer blîben
nieht. (6-7)

Woe betide you, Dawn,
since you do not permit me to remain
any longer by my lover.

In these instances, the lady's speech attempts to
take on the power of the hex.

Conversely, however, the lady also demonstrates
her frustration and feeling of impotence by
invoking the supernatural. She has no real power
to change the situation or to affect future events,
and expresses her impotent rage in seeking
supernatural aid. She beseeches God in "L'abe
c'apiert au jor" to punish anyone who tries to
disrupt her union:

Et sachiés en bone foi,
Ke malz nos fait, Dex li dont prix,
Ki moi et vous depairt, dous amins! (12-14)⁵

And know truly in good faith,
That he does us wrong, God give him recompense,
Whoever parts you and me, sweet love!

The lady even asks God's reprisal against the enemies of her love. The lady asks God to perform as an instrument of "justice," to intervene on the side of love. In "Ez ist nu tac," the lady invokes divine protection for her lover, actually asking God's aid in perpetuating the adulterous affair:

der hôhste vride müeze in noch
an mînen arn geleiten (12-13)

May the highest peace yet again
lead him into my arms

The lady uses the phrase "der hôste vride," literally, "the highest peace" in speaking of God, conflating both his power and his ability to provide fulfillment in one expression.

Although she speaks, the alba lady is not devalued by that act. She has not, through speech, lost her desirability, nor has she descended to the lowly status of the pastourelle shepherd girl. And even though she often says less than kind or courteous things in anger, she does not lose stature in the eyes of her lover nor her audience thereby. Her stature is of a kind that cannot be diminished through her actions because she is depicted as an inherently "courtly" lady and her actions are thus always appropriate.

Aside from her speech, another element which

contributes to the humanization of the alba lady is her willingness to confront the danger which accompanies the love affair and which adds also to the intensity of its pleasure. As we have earlier noted, the canso lady, fixed in her position atop the pedestal faces ominous dangers if she dare attempt to step out of her preordained place. Indeed, in some sense, she would no longer exist, but would be altered irrevocably. In the alba, the lady does dare to step out of her fixed, expected role, but rather than forfeit existence thereby, she assumes a more fulfilled, intense and active life. Despite the threat of imminent dawn, warnings by either hostile or friendly watchmen, jealous husbands, envious spies and wicked slanderers, the lady risks safety, reputation and possibly her very life in order to undertake and pursue the illicit affair.

Her courage establishes the strength and depth of her love. In most albas, the lady's attachment to her lover is so strong that she clings to him despite all threats of danger. She actively denies the watchman's warnings, suspecting the world, nature, and sometimes even the watchman himself, of

miscalculating or misperceiving time in order to cheat her. The alba lady of "En un vergier," beckons to her lover "en despieg del gilos"(11) ("in spite of the gilos"). Cadenet's and Raimon de las Salas' ladies, too, vehemently declare their courageous defiance of the gilos and his coterie.

In Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Sîne klâwen," which will be further discussed below, the watchman warns the lady to let the lover depart, but she clings despite all danger, scolding the watchman for his interference. In the first stanza that she speaks, (the second of the poem), the lady complains:

diu solt du mir verswîgen gar.
daz gebuit ich den triuwen dîn:
des lôn ich dir als ich getar.
sô belîbet hie der geselle mîn. (13-16)

You should be quiet completely for me,
I bid you by that trouthe of yours,
For which I will reward you as I dare;
So that my lover remains here.

And in the fourth stanza of the poem she continues:

von dînem schalle ist er und
ich erschrocken ie:
sô ninder der morgenstern ûf gienc
ûf in, der her nâch minne ist komen,
du hâst in dicke mir benomen
von blanken armen, und ûz herzen
nieht. (27-32)

From your noise he and I are ever startled
While nowhere has the morningstar arisen
With intent to warn him, who here is come

seeking love.
Up until now no daylight shone.
You have taken him from me often
From my white arms, not out of my heart.

And in the Margrave of Hohenburg's tageliet, "Ich
wache umb eines ritters lîp," the lady, besides
cursing the watchman, also tell him:

dîn wachen daz waer allez guot
dîn wecken mir unsanfte tuot....
wahtaere, in hân dir niht getân
wan allez guot, daz mir wirt selten schîn.
du gers des tages dur daz du jages
vil sender fröiden von dem herzen mîn.
 (15-21)

Your watching that were all good:
Your waking shocks me....
Watchman, I have done nothing but good
 toward you,
Though no sign of it I see in you.
You desire dawn through which you hunt
Many longed for pleasures from this
 heart of mine.

In her audacious willingness to risk all for the
sake of love, the alba lady may be seen not only as
humanized, but as dauntless as well.

The alba lady's explicit enjoyment of her own
sexuality is another humanizing aspect. The icy
indifference of the canso lady has been melted by
the flames of the alba lady's passion. In the alba,
she is presented as a fully realized woman. She is
not (as she is in the canso) an immovable image nor
is she a paragon of such traditional or epic female
virtues as marital fidelity, wisdom or prudence.

She speaks, acts, moves and is moved.

The alba lady's allusions to her sexual pleasure clearly establish the fact of sexual consummation between her and her "amic." Such physical and emotional intimacy explains and justifies the depth of the couple's sorrow at the thought of the parting that is soon to follow. It is clear that when the alba lady is deprived of her man, it is his warm, palpable body, as well as his other charms, that she misses. Physicality is the very essence of their relationship. As in the Song of Songs, where the bride's desire is presented as being as strong as the bridegroom's, the lady of the alba minces few words in expressing the strength of her desire for her lover. Again, as in the Song of Songs to which "En un vergier," has sometimes been compared, it is the lady of "En un vergier," rather than her man, who actively invites her lover: "baizem" (9) ("let us kiss"), "fassam un joc novel" (13) ("let us play a new game"), and "tot o fassam" (11) ("let's do it all") before their time together lapses.

The lady of the beautiful and simple aube "Entre moi et mon amin" is coyer, more understated,

but no less involved and interested than either her own lover, or other alba ladies:

Adont ce trait pres de mi,
Et je ne fu pas anfruine;
Bien trois fois me baixait il.
Ainsi fix je lui plus d'une,
K'ainz ne m'anoiait. (13-17)

Then he drew himself next to me,
And I was not reluctant;
Three times at least he kissed me,
And I did the same to him more than once,
But that did not tire me.

The lover of "Ab la gensor" recalls the sweet kiss tendered to him unsought by his lady:

Mentre qu'ieu mi jazia
E'n sobinas dormia,
Un dous bais mi tendia
tan plazenmen (7-10)

While I was reclining,
Sleeping, supine on my back
A sweet kiss she tendered me
so pleasingly

The pleasure experienced by the lovers in the alba is clearly mutual, and sought as much by the lady as the man. Thus, the union, communion and deep fulfillment experienced by the lady is manifested by her eager sexual participation in the affair.

If the alba lady experiences love in its fullest, most passionate moments, she also suffers its saddest, most painful ones. One manifestation of her grief is the many impossible wishes she expresses. The wishes proclaim simultaneously her

desire as well as her desperation. In "En un vergier," the lady implores God himself to perform the miracle of altering reality in accordance with her wishes. She desires God to become her agent, the executor of her desires. In "En un vergier," too, she invokes God for the purpose of requesting his aid in Love's cause.⁶ Saville observes:

[the alba lady's] passion is so strong, so much the very essence of her being that from her point of view the realities of day and danger cease to have any reality at all. Her concern is not with what is but with what she would like things to be. 7

But in expressing wishes which contradict reality, the lady implicitly acknowledges their divergence from reality.

The lady may also dream up fantastical resolutions to her sorrow--rhetorical figures known as adynatons--as in "Entre moi et mon amin":

Adonc vocexiens nous lai
Ke celle nut durest sant (18-19)

And so glad we should have been there
If that night had lasted 100 nights.

This sentiment is reminiscent of one in Psalm 84:

For one day in thy courts is
better than one thousand. (10)

And it is a sentiment also found in the canso. The singer of Bernart de Ventadorn's "Chantars no pot

gaire valer," says:

m'esgarda, mas so fai tan len
c'us sols dias me dura cen. 8

but she looks on me so slowly
that one single day lasts 100 for me.

The anonymous poet of "Entre moi et mon amin," however, has changed the time of the wish to night--a very secular inversion of the sacred meaning. Saiz comments that "since the alba is a genre that stresses realism, the lady's wish is never granted."⁹ But this is simplistic, for the genre does not stress realism anymore than it stresses fantasy: the alba focuses, rather, on the clash which occurs between fantasy and reality at dawn.

Because the lovers are pleasure-oriented, their wishes assume great importance. Basing their ethic on the primacy of feeling and desire, alba lovers attempt to make reality accommodate itself to desire, and they fantasize that God, too, will make reality and circumstance accord with their wishes. This partially explains the preponderance of wishes and adynatons as well as the invocations and prayers to God (and an interesting assortment of saints) that the lovers make.

One direction their wishes take is toward

either the prolongation of night, or its actual permanence. The lady of "L'abe c'apiert au jor" voices much the same sentiment as the lady of "Entre moi et mon amin" who speaks of her desire for an extension of one night into one hundred:

Pleüst ore a saint Jaike
Ke nuns ne nos puist veoir ne reprandre
Et la nuit durast trante,
S'avroit chascuns son desir! (6-9)

May it now please St. James
That no one should see us nor blame us
And the night should last thirty,
So that everyone have his desire!

The request for perpetual darkness, like the wish for the prolongation of night (of which it is an extension) is frequent in the genre. The lover of "Us cavaliers" expresses such a desire:

Doussa res, s'esser podia
Que ja mais alba ni dia
No fos, grans merces seria,
Al meyns al luec on estai
Fix amicx ab so que'l plai. (11-15)

Sweet one, if it could be
That day nor dawn never were,
A great kindness it would be,
At least in the place where there is
A true lover with the one he loves.

The lady of "En un vergier" prays to God to insure that the night "not fail", that is, that night perpetually endure and that it not be lacking in its obscuring blackness. She wishes that the

watchman "see neither day nor dawn." And Criseyde wishes night to bind itself "So faste ay to oure hemysperie.../That nevere more under the ground thow wynde!"(III, 1439-1440). She wishes night to fasten itself permanently to its current ascendent position so that day never has the opportunity for resurgence. Night, for all these pleaders, is love's refuge, hiding the lovers and bestowing an anonymity and obscurity which helps veil their illicit activities.

The narrator of Raimon de las Salas' unusual alba, "Dieus, aydatz," wishes, not for a prolongation or perpetuation of night, but for a peaceful dawn. The watchman here asks that God himself make a wish:

Dieus, aydatz
s'a vos platz
senher cars
e dos e verays,
e vulhatz
que ab patz
lo jorns clars
e bels c'ades nays
nos abratz (1-9)

God, help us
if it please you,
dear Lord
sweet and true,
and wish
that with peace
the bright day
and beautiful that is soon born
embrace and illumine us

In asking God to wish for the dawning of a peaceful day, he is actually requesting that God grant such a day and it would be correct to translate the "vulhatz" as "grant" rather than "wish" because God's wish equals God's act. God's wishes, unlike those of the lovers, do come true. The lovers feel their wishes so intensely that they may even believe them efficacious. They think they can succeed in fashioning for themselves an autonomous, anti-natural world in which events will proceed as they desire.

But along with these fantasies, the lady (if it is she rather than the watchman who speaks at least one of the two tornadas at the end of "S'anc fui belha") also voices her despondency more directly:

Anc no vi jauzen
drut que'l plagues l'alba. (46-47)

Never have I seen
a lover pleased by dawn.

The dawn is the impetus for the expression of despondency in "L'abe c'apiert au jor" as well: "mi fait soffrir grant dollar"(3) (the dawn "brings me great grief"). The lady of "Friuntlîchen lac" focuses, not on dawn, but on her newly discovered definition of love, a definition which seems more

prevalent in the tageliet: "daz si dâ heizent minne, deis niewan senede leit" (8) ("that which they call love, it is nothing except the pain of longing"). Her own experience of love is altering her, teaching her something which differs from her expectations. Her subjective view dominates, altering a previously widely accepted definition of love in light of her own personal experience with it. Through personal experience, she has arrived at knowledge. The lady anticipates being overwhelmed by sorrow. And she dreads the duration of time which must pass before she will be able to see her lover again because, says this lady, such empty time will seem endless: "jon weiz ich niht ein ende, wie lange ich dîn enbir" (39) ("Indeed, I do not see an end to how long I must do without you"). She ends her lament: nû lige ich liebes âne recht als ein senede wîp" ("now I lie without love just as a woman filled with longing").

In "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê," the lovers each separately recall their tryst with longing, wondering if "ever again" they will experience such bliss. In this tageliet, each lover renders similar emotions of pain and longing. Yet each lover experiences the pain separately--that is the

special effect of the wechsel, for this poem is both a tageliet and a wechsel. Heinrich uses the wechsel, a Middle High German "song in which alternate strophes are placed in the mouths of a man and woman who may or may not be physically present together,"¹⁰ to indicate the lovers' isolation from the rest of the world and their distance from one another, while at the same time, demonstrating the mutual love lady and lover share. No matter how united they were previously, each individual feels only his own pain. Grief is an emotion often accompanied by the realization of one's aloneness.

As loss weighs in upon her, the alba lady is forced to accept its inevitability. Despite her grief, she must, however reluctantly, accommodate herself to the conditions of humanity: loss and impermanence. In these poems the lovers must reorient themselves to being without their loved ones--they must return to the state of aloneness which preceded the rendez-vous. Love necessarily brings with it the threat of its loss, and the necessity of parting underscores love's eventual dissolution. The lady must come to comprehend these complexities: she must mature. Such

comprehension endows her grief with dignity.

The sincerity and depth of her sorrow transform the lady from the flat one-dimensional canso figure, into a fuller, more rounded one. Her expression of sorrow and dread at the anticipation of dawn elicits the audience's sympathy. She has become the very obverse of the chill and distant canso lady, for fired by love and torn by grief, the alba lady speaks with immediacy, fathoming the depths of her complex humanity.

Because of the alba's concentration on the woman's experience and the fact that many are sung by her, contemporary critics, such as Kaske, Saville, Plummer and Fries attempt to discuss the alba as a genre which exemplifies or adopts certain sex-role stereotypes. Saville, for example, declares that the lady

is much more passionate than the knight; and
much more eloquent in her expression of
feeling. 11

It is true that in a number of albas the lady delivers a monologue or shares her song with a watchman, and that her song is an expressive, eloquent lament of her sorrow. Yet it does not necessarily follow that because the alba lady is passionate and eloquent, her lover cannot be so as

well.

In focusing on the sex-role differences between the lady and her knight, these critics often overlook the many similarities between lady and lover. Interpretations based on sex-role stereotypes tend to reveal the critics' own rather limited familiarity with the actual variety of the genre and with the major issues embedded therein. Such hypotheses ignore many significant factors. For instance, they ignore the fact that there are at least four albas given over entirely to the male voice.¹² And although the male voice does not dominate the tageliet, it does play some part in most of them, as well as in many albas and aubes where the lover does not narrate the entire lyric. Sometimes the lady and lover alternate stanzas, or the lover otherwise gives voice to his emotions as part of the lady's song.¹³ And when they speak, these men, not unlike their ladies, express longing and love for their beloved, sometimes quite eloquently and passionately.

The differences which can be discerned between male and female sensibilities and role are more marked in the tageliet. The knight never sings an

entire tageliet. Indeed, Wolfram von Eschenbach's "anti-tageliet, "Der helden minne ir klage," contrasts with his tageliet in that only in this poem, out of the five which deal with the lovers' dawn-parting theme, a man, although not necessarily the lover, sings the entire song. W.T.H. Jackson observes that Middle High German lyrics in general demonstrate only "minimal interest in the figure of the beloved."¹⁴ Most of Wolfram's tageliet are sung, at least partially, by the lady and in most, the man speaks, too. As to the lover, Hatto comments:

The knight is a minor though quite indispensable character in the [tageliet] poems, some of which are given up almost entirely to the watch or to the lady, though none to him. 15

The tageliet does not abound with wishes and fantasies, but rather, it concerns itself more especially with the anguish caused by the relationship. "Sîne klâwen," for instance, highlights the lady's agony and anguish:

Wahtaer, du singest daz mir manige
fröide nimt
unde mêret mîne klage. (9-10)

Watchman, you sing, that takes many
joys from me
and increases my sorrow.

And even though the final stanza describes the

culminating "minne lôn"(40) ("reward of love") eventually achieved by the lovers before they part, the lady does not share her joy of that parting directly with us; rather, an omniscient narrator relates the activity. The lady herself tells us solely about her pain. The lady of "Ez ist nu tac" is so overwrought with emotion that she can no longer restrain herself from sorrow: "mich sorge niht gemâzen"(51).

Another related motif peculiar to the tageliet is the lady's weeping, an activity never referred to in albas or aubes. In the lovely, short lyric, "Slâfest du,"¹⁶ our narrator tells us, "Diu frouwe begunde weinen" (9) ("the lady began to weep"). In Heinrich von Morungen's tageliet: "dô vielen hin ze tal/ir trehene nidersich"(19-20) ("then her tears came falling fast"). In "Ez ist nu tac," Wolfram von Eschenbach tells us: "Ir ougen naz dô wurden baz"(40) ("her wet eyes grew wetter"). These references depict the quickening of the lady's keen emotional distress which culminates in her shedding of tears. In "Friuntlîchen lac," Walther von der Vogelweide describes the knight parting from a lady he left "weeping bitterly": "und liez ouch sêre

weinde die schoenen frowen guot"(51).

Wolfram von Eschenbach varies and expands the motif in "Den morgenblic." The narrator mentions "des muosen liehtiu ougen/aver nazzen"(5-6) ("bright eyes must grow wet again"). Day's advent causes a dampening not only of earth (as the dew) but also of the lady's eyes. The light in her eyes--like that of the moon--is extinguished by sunlight; she is somewhat deadened by the dawn. Later, the lady's tears "diu beguzzen/ir beider wangel"(16-17) ("moistened/the cheeks of both" of the lovers). Crying, in these contexts, connotes sorrow and pain of course, but also a naturalness, abundance, fecundity, flow, and perhaps, in some cases, implies a deluge--an uncontrollable release of the flood waters of emotion. Such a release is all the more forceful for having been pent up. The specificity of the description of the tears descending onto both lovers' cheeks in "Den morgenblic" adds a realistic as well as poignant detail to the scene. The lovers are so closely embracing that both their cheeks are moistened by the lady's tears. Although she alone cries, both share the consequences of her sorrowing.

Since most albas and aubes present a static

tableau, they do not usually include any glimpse into what the lovers feel after they have separated. Certainly, all the lovers resist parting. But the tageliet ladies are more obsessed with their own bleak future than their Romance counterparts. The tageliet ladies delve into an imagined future, expressing fear of abandonment or of being forgotten--a fear less stridently expressed by the seemingly more confident Romance ladies. Not only does the tageliet lady worry about a future in which she fears that she may be abandoned, or that her lover may not return, but in addition, with the approach of the day that will divide them, the interests of the lovers begin to diverge.

Wolfram von Eschenbach, "without doubt the greatest exponent of the [dawn-song] genre," among poets of the Minnesang¹⁷ wrote a number of tageliet. Of the seven poems which are his only surviving authentic lyrics, five are variations of the dawn-song theme (and of the five, one is the "anti-tageliet" "Der helden minne ir klage" mentioned earlier). Wolfram's tageliet are distinctive in imagery, unconventional vocabulary, style and

variety of metrical forms.¹⁸ Dronke asserts that Wolfram's five tageliet

mark a turning point in the literary development of the genre. Unlike the earlier twelfth-century albas, Wolfram's are written in complex canzone forms. This does not, paradoxically, make them seem more artificial: the formal elaboration is accompanied by an elaboration of realistic detail. 19

There is little unanimity among scholars about the order in which Wolfram's tageliet should appear,²⁰ but in them can be discerned "epic touches revealing the heroic aspects of clandestine love: if the lady risks dishonour, the knight courts death."²¹

In "Sîne klâwen," which many consider Wolfram's greatest tageliet, a struggle between the lady and her lover is implied. Trying to persuade the lady to send her lover on his way before it becomes too light, the watchman says:

ez ist nu tac: naht was ez dô
mit drucke an brust dîn kus mirn
an gewan. (23-24)

it is now day: it was night then
when with pressing on breast your
kisses won him from me.

The watchman claims that the lady "won" the lover from the side of the watchman, subtly implying that there was a struggle between them over the lover, a struggle she won with a kiss. The watchman accuses

the lady of intending to betray the lover by keeping him ignorant of the time. The watchman may even be insinuating in the allusion to the betrayal by kiss--the kiss of Judas--that the lady is willfully and treacherously endangering her lover.

The lady will resort even to subterfuge in order to keep her beloved ignorant of the time. The woman here is far less heroic and far more potentially reckless than her Old Provençal counterpart. The lady's offer of a reward: "des lône ich dir als ich getar/so belîbet hie der geselle mîn"(15-16) ("I will reward you as I dare/so that my lover remains here") reveals a practical, if daring, approach to her dilemma. It also demonstrates her subordinate position to her husband. The lady can only reward the watchman in a limited manner: she is watched by superiors and so she can only "dare" so much. Ultimately, she must either answer for her actions to her husband, or conceal them from him. Like the lady of "Friuntlîchen lac," Wolfram's lady here desires to retain her lover beyond the allowed span of time; unlike her, Wolfram's lady tries to think up practical solutions to her dilemma.

One of the interesting differences between the

alba and tageliet lady is that where the lady of the Old Provençal and Old French poems values mesura and decorum, many a tageliet lady displays little concern with such values. The lady of "Sîne klâwen," for example, is not measured and controlled. Her responses to her situation are extreme, excessive and immoderate as she scolds the protective watchman for coming to warn them of day.

Tageliet ladies are not as flamboyant as their alba counterparts in the flouting of societal convention. The tageliet lady seems involved in a more individualized and personal situation, and makes few claims about what she does for the sake of minne or to prove her courtliness. The overall tone of the alba lady seems much more proclamatory than that of the tageliet lady. The alba and aube ladies stand up for certain principles: they display a certain pride and defiance in their illicit activities which is not present in the tone of most tageliet ladies' speeches.

Instead of presenting a pleasing lady who is concerned with refinement, decorum and style--a typical "courtly" lady--Wolfram portrays just the opposite: a woman who, because of the intensity of her love has lost all sense of proportion and

judgment. The intensity and depth of her love is manifest by her very lack of refinement and measure, by her distraction and anguish, and by her very inability to conceal the traces of her emotion. The rather uncontrolled lady of "Ez ist nu tac" says, "mich sorge niht gemâzen"(51) ("I cannot keep myself from sorrow"). So overpowering are her emotions that even though she faces life-threatening danger, she cannot face the idea of losing her lover.

Is such a shift in emphasis an intentional device on Wolfram's part to demonstrate that minne destroys rather than inspires courtliness in the lady? Indeed, friendship and fealty between men--specifically the lover and the watchman--in the tageliet almost seem to be more exalted and "courtly" bonds than the one we might expect to find between lovers. Or is the ennobling effect of love breaking down for other reasons? Does Wolfram simply not value moderation, or does he believe such measured response to be unrealistic in the dawn-parting situation? Jackson has noted that, in general, the "greatest of the German authors regarded 'love-service' as a thoroughly bad

characteristic."²² The tageliet lady's intense feelings betray her lack of mesura. This immoderation, however, serves to demonstrate the depth of her anguish and thus her love, especially in contrast to the more controlled response displayed by her counterparts in the alba and aube. Unlike alba and aube ladies, the women of the tageliet do part malamen.

A struggle of another kind between the lovers is implied in "Von der zinnen," where the narrator tells us:

Swie balde ez tagete,
der unverzagete
an ir bejagete,
daz sorge in vlôch. (33-36)

However, soon it dawned;
the undaunted man
won such from her,
that sorrow fled.

The idea of struggle and effort implied by the word bejagen ("to win") emphasizes the chivalric and valiant role of the knight. In all Wolfram's tageliet, the prowess of the lover is revealed by his sexual exertions and indeed, furnishes one of the most telling differences between lady and lover.

Many scholars have called Walther von der Vogelweide's "Friuntlîchen lac," undistinguished and derivative of Wolfram's tageliet. Hatto comments:

Wolfram's great contemporary Walther von der Vogelweide (fl. 1198-c.1230) did not escape the influence of either Wolfram's matter or of his style in a not very distinguished venture into this field. 23

But from the point of view of the genre, however, "Friuntlîchen lac," while it does extend and amplify some of Wolfram's motifs very effectively, also displays much originality. In "Friuntlîchen lac," the lady actually tries to detain her lover, who has descried dawn's light, from preparing to depart:

`Friundinne mîn,
dû solt dîn trûren lân.
ich wil mich von dir scheiden: daz
ist uns beiden guot.
ez hât der morgensterne gemachet
hinne lieht.'
`Mîn friunt, nû tuo des nieht,
lâ die rede sîn,
daz dû mir iht sô sêre beswaerest
mînen muot,
war gâhest alsô balde? ez ist niht
wol gêtan.' (9-16)

`My lady love,
leave off your sorrow.
I want to part from you: that
is good for us both.
The morningstar has made light here.'
`My love, do not do that now,
leave off that speech
that oppresses me so sorely,
whither do you go so soon? It is not
well done.

The lady accuses her lover of hastiness as well as unkindness, even crudeness, because he is facing the

practicalities of their situation. He is able to confront reality, to shift orientations from love to society, and to prepare to move apart from his lady and back into the world. His lady is much more reluctant and almost insulted by her lover's very capacity to do so. Since no watchman appears in "Friuntlîchen lac," there is no one else to intervene on behalf of safety and prudence. The lover takes the responsibility for his actions which in many of the other dawn-songs has become the domain of the watchman. Here, the lover himself is active and responsible. But the lady is thereby offended. In order to prove his devotion to the lady, he yields to her wish to stay longer. If the lover asks his lady to "leave off" her grieving, she requests him to "leave off" its underlying cause--his preparation for leaving. Although reluctant, he is capable of leaving, but the lady will not accede to this reality. "Friuntlîchen lac" is the only tageliet of this period in which the lady actively accuses the lover of being hasty as well as unkind, although in several she asks the sort of rhetorical question the lady of "Friuntlîchen lac" asks here: "War gâhest alsô balde?"

Walther also presents the relationship between the lady and lover in terms of domination and conflict: issues which have never before come up explicitly in the tageliet. The relationship between the lady and her man is complex and perhaps more realistic--less idealized--than that presented in other albas or tageliet. The lover addresses the lady when he first speaks to her as "Friundinne mîn"(9); later he calls her "Frowe mîn" (17), "vil liebiu friundinne" (35) and "frouwe" (41). The lady consistently addresses her lover as "mîn friunt" (9, 21, 29) or "friunt" (37, 45). Although we may interpret the lover's use of the diminutive in this context as affectionate, as the lover's use of "gaiteta"(1, 15) in "Gaita be" seems to be, it may also be a subtle expression of a somewhat superior attitude (as it may well be in "Gaita be"), one which might be interpreted as protective, but which also implies difference between them--a difference which may not be solely one of size, but in which size certainly becomes significant. Similarly, the lover of "Slâfest du" addresses his lady in the second stanza as "kint."

The lovers in "Friuntlîchen lac" vie for

dominance. In the above citation, he asks for leave to part, she denies such permission. Although he agrees: "Frowe mîn, nû si,/ich wil belîben baz" (17-18) ("My lady, now let it be so,/I will stay longer"), he will only allow her to rule him within limits--for as long as night holds its sway. As dawn comes ever nearer, he struggles against her dominion with increasing vehemence, until finally he exclaims:

Frouwe, ez ist zît:
gebiut mir, lâ mich varn. (41-42)

Lady, it is time:
Bid me, let me depart.

The circularity of the communication between the lovers in their vying for the upper hand is the result of an effort to remain "courtly" and decorous even during times of frustration or peril. The lady eventually relents:

friunt, wie wirt es rât?
dâ lâze ich dir den strît.
owê des urloubes, daz ich dich
hinnen wer! (45-47)

Friend, how is that advice?
Then I leave the struggle to you.
Alas, the parting that I grant you!

She surrenders command, granting her lover's wish voluntarily.

The lady of this lyric also says:

mîn vriunt, nû volge mir.
dû solt mich schiere sehen,
ob dû mir sîst mit triuwen staete
sunder wanc. (29-31)

my friend, now heed me.
You will see me soon
if you act toward me with trouthe constancy
without fickleness.

This statement may be taken in two ways: as a condition the lady is setting down, or as a prediction of the future. The very idea that the lover might swerve in his loyalty is a motif Walther introduces into the genre, for in no other extant alba, is such an idea suggested. Never before has actual doubt about the lover's loyalty been expressed by his beloved. She asks that her lover heed her. But as her words here show, she is really going to be ruled by his behavior: whether or not she will see him again is not going to be based on her own desires to see him, for they are apparent, constant and assumed. Rather, whether she sees him will be determined by how loyally he conducts himself in the interim between meetings.

Interestingly enough, nowhere in the tageliet does the lover express any fear or doubt as to the lady's loyalty. The idea of treachery is planted in terms that make it clear that if any betrayal occurs, it is expected to be on the lover's, not the

lady's, side. The lady of this lyric also accuses her lover of something else atypical of the genre: of not parting well: "war gâhest alsô balde? ez ist niht wol getân" ("whither do you go so soon? It is not well done").

"Friunlîchen lac" is unusual for another reason as well. The narrator tells us "doch galt er mit triuwen dazs ime vil nâhe lac" ("but he repaid her with loyalty that she lay very near") which Hatto translates more elegantly as: "But he requited her in sincere affection for having lain so close."²⁴ We are told by the omniscient narrator that the lady is requited. Never before in an alba has that kind of information been transmitted by a narrator, a nonparticipant in the love affair. Walther has here expanded the role of the narrator--he has such intimate knowledge of the love affair that he can tell us that the lover is loyal and why. This implies that the audience would not know whether the lover is sincere without being so informed, although usually in the alba we hear the lovers themselves express their mutual feelings or make pledges which attest to them. A question about the lover's loyalty is planted and then removed. It seems that

the love relationship as presented by Walther is less autonomous within the poem, and requires elaboration from the narrator--it is no longer sufficient for the lovers to speak for themselves.

A concern with the lady's honor also becomes manifest in several tageliet. This concern is absent in albas and aubes where the emphasis is rather on appearing courtly and refined. The concern with the lady's honor and reputation is manifest only in the tageliet, and therefore brings the idea of external society much more to the fore. The emphasis on courtliness in the Old Provençal alba suggests that there are a group of initiated outsiders to whom courtly demeanor is meaningful and important. The tageliet's focus on honor is quite different. It is broader, involving not initiated fin'amics (who do not seem to figure in the tageliet), but rather those who would turn an unsympathetic eye toward the illicit lovers.

In Wolfram's "Sîne klâwen," for instance, the watchman advises:

lâz in minnen her nâch sô
verholne dich,
daz er behalte êr und der lîp (19-20)

let him love you later so secretly
that he shall save honor and life.

Honor and life are even joined together as the two vital--and related--concerns. In "Von der zinnen," the watchman advises the lovers to heed him, again coupling life with honor:

die sich minnen
tougenlîche, und obe si prîse
ir minne wern,
sô gedenken sêre
an sîne lêre
dem lîp und êre
ergeben sîn. (3-8)

Those who love each other
secretly, and if they dedicate their
love to good repute,
then they should think a great deal
about his teaching
to whom their life and honor were
given.

In Walther's "Friuntlîchen lac," in which the watchman is absent, the lover himself voices concern for the lady's honor:

ja tuon ichz dur dîn êre
daz ich von hinnen ger (43)

Indeed, it is for your honor
that I am eager to fly from here

The lover is concerned about the lady's future relationship with society, claiming he is rushing off in haste, not out of a real desire to leave, but out of an unselfish, protective urge. With these words, the lover makes clear the couple's divergence from the rest of society, since he realizes that the lady's actions would be held dishonorable by

outsiders. In the Old Provençal and Old French alba, that sort of dishonor is never an issue within the poem, although the good opinion of vrai amans is sought and discovery by others is feared. In other words, although outsiders may view the lady as dishonorable, fin'amics would know that she is just the opposite, and therefore her reputation would not suffer among those who mean something to the lovers. But the lover of "Von der zinnen" is anxious that his lady appear honored in the eyes of all the world.

But even though the differences between the male and female experience pervade the tageliet more than the alba or aube, nonetheless, even here, as we shall see, similarities between them, and the mutuality of their love is often quite explicit.

The lovers address each other as "friend," a word which doubles as a synonym for "lover" in Old Provençal, Old French and Middle High German, and are described as friend with friend ("amic d'amia").²⁵ Or the lovers participate in a "geselleschaft" ("fellowship").²⁶ In "Den Morgenblic," Wolfram von Eschenbach describes the lovers' sexual union as a companionship: "geselleclîche als

si lâgen" (30) ("companionably as they lay"). Such companionship provides not only sexual pleasure but also reciprocated affection and the sharing of confidences. The lover anticipates in his beloved the gratification of a sympathetic listener. The lady of "S'anc fui belha" mentions specifically that her lover is one to whom she can freely confide:

e murria
S'ieu fin amic non avia
Cuy disses mo marrimen... (5-7)

And I would die
If I did not have a noble lover
To whom I could tell my sorrows.

The lover of "Friuntlîchen lac" asks for his lady's confidences: "nû rede in kurzen zîten allez daz dû wil" (19) ("Now tell me briefly all that you wish"). Equality and mutuality define their interactions. And as the narrator informs us, both lovers are most fulfillingly requited:

doch galt er mit triuwen
dazs ime vil nâhe lac. (52)

He repaid her with loyalty
that she had lain so near.

In "Ez ist nu tac," Wolfram depicts the lovers' embrace twice. First, it is initiated by the lady:

Daz quote wîp ir friundes lîp
vast umbevie (14)

The good woman her friend's body
fast embraced.

The next time, the lover initiates the embrace:

an sîne brüste druhte er sie (18)

He pressed her to his breast.

The male lover of "Ab la gensor," an alba which he narrates exclusively until the final strophe, speaks longingly of the idyllic tryst he had with his lady:

M'entre qu'ieu mi jazia
En sobinas dormia,
Un dous bais mi tendia
Tan plazenmen,
Qu'enquer lo'm sen
E farai a ma via. (7-12)

While I lay
On my back, sleeping,
A sweet kiss she tendered me
So pleasingly
That I feel it still
And shall do so all my life.

Remembering his passive receptivity and the lady's actions, he reminisces as longingly as any alba lady would. Indeed, his recollection does not differ drastically from the reminiscence of the lady of "Entre moi et mon amin" about the tryst she and her lover shared:

Entre moi et mon amin
En un boix k'est leis Betune,
Alainmes juwant mairdi
Toute lai nuit a la lune,
Tant k'il ajornait.... (1-5)

My love and I
In a wood near Betune,
Together playing Tuesday
All night there by the moon
Til it dawned....

The knight of "Us cavaliers" tells his beloved of
his great desire and love for her:

Doussa res, s'ieu no'us vezia,
Breumens crezatz que morria,
Que'l grans dezirs m'aucira
Per qu'ieu tost retornarai
Que ses vos vida non ai. (40-44)

Gentle one, if I could not see you,
soon, believe me, I should die,
For my great desire would kill me
Wherefore I shall return quickly
For without you I have no life.

Here the male, like the lady of many an alba, speaks
of the emptiness of life without the beloved. Yet,
Fries finds:

The woman speaker is absorbed in the
experience of the beloved's presence in or
absence from her arms, a passive experience
as opposed to that world of male activity
which occupies most of his life....she may
be rhetorically dominant but is actually
powerless in her attempts to confine her
man within the bounds of her feminine
world, as most dramatically illustrated in
the alba. 27

However, if we consider the extant texts, we find
that either lover can be passive or aggressive, that
both are powerless--but equally desirous--to change
their situation. Furthermore, it is not the lady
only who experiences the anguish of parting. Men,

when they speak in the alba, express not only desires similar to those of their ladies, but also similar sorrows.

The lover of "Us cavaliers," besides expressing his great desire, also tells his lady of the pain he feels upon parting:

Doussa res, que qu'om vos dia,
No cre que tals dolars sia
Cum qui part amic d'amia
Qu'ieu per me mezeys o sai. (20-24)

Gentle one, whatever they tell you,
Do not believe that there is any such grief
Like that which parts lover from lover,
For I myself have proved it.

And the lover of "Gaita be" suffers grief, as well:

mays enics sui de l'alba
e'l destrics que'l jorn nos fai
mi desplai
plus que l'alba. l'alba, oc l'alba! (10-14)

but grievous to me is the thought of dawn
and the sorrow that daytime brings
displeases me still more
than the dawn, the dawn, yes the dawn!

In "Von der zinnen," the narrator relates:

Er muos eht dannen,
der si klagen ungerne hôte.
dô sprach sîn munt:
`allen mannen
trûren nie sô gar zerstôrte
ir vröiden vunt.' (29-32)

Indeed, he had to go thence,
who heard her complaint unwillingly.
His mouth spoke:
`Sadness never so completely
destroyed the fund of happiness
of any man.'

The lady's lament disturbs and distresses the lover unwilling to hear her complaint presumably because it pains him to do so. Yet he, too, complains about the pain he feels.

The lover as well as the lady reacts, and, at times, aggressively. The lover joins in, sometimes dominating, the lady's cursing. Occasionally, he responds violently, verbally threatening those who obstruct his desires or disturb his joy. And like his lady, he too, shows a wide range of emotional response. In the first two strophes of "Ab la gensor," the lover is tender, evoking in a gentle, playful voice the solace and pleasure he has been experiencing with his lady. In strophe three, however, we suddenly hear his angry, aggressive side:

Gaita, s'ieu ti tenia,
De mas mas t'auciria,
Ja res pro no't tenria,
 Aur ni argen
 Ni hom viven
Ni res que e'l mon sia. (13-18)

Watchman, if I were holding you,
In my hands I would kill you,
Nothing could ever help you enough,
 Neither gold nor silver
 Nor living man
Nor anything in the world.

The contrast between his loving, affectionate

response to his lady and his angry and martial, if childish and unrealistic, response to the watchman, reveals his complexity and emotional range. Not only does he threaten the watchman, but calls down curses on him: "Gaita, dieus ti maldia"(19). However, he also fears the watchman:

Quar tant cochas lo dia
Gran paor ai
E gran esmai
Que no'i perdes m'amia. (21-24)

For you so much hasten the day
That I have great fear
And great dread
Lest I lose my love.

The lover cannot be denounced as effeminate and passive because of his gentleness and playfulness with his lady, when he also demonstrates his aggressiveness in self-defense: he speaks of killing the hated watchman with his bare hands and curses him. He is a man who behaves with discrimination: he is gentle and loving toward the creature that he feels deserves it, but not to all others. He adjusts his emotions according to their objects, demonstrating rage as well as love, and the capacity for making distinctions within a wide range of possible responses. Contrary to Saville's claim, he resists reality as much as would any alba lady.

Even in the tageliet, men are portrayed with a range of emotions which have gone unacknowledged by the critics. In Wolfram's "Ez ist nu tac," the lady speaks of the mutuality of sentiment she shares with her lover. This mutuality is so apparent that she has no doubt about it. Lamenting her sorrow, she adds: "Ich weiz vil wol, daz ist ouch ime"(7) ("I know full well that it is the same with him"). She trusts him implicitly, knowing that his feelings match the depth of her own. Like many an alba lady, the lover himself laments: "jô erkande ich nie/kein trûric scheiden alsô snel"(19-20) ("I never knew such a sad and sudden parting"). And the narrator of this same tageliet tells of the sharing of pleasures between the lovers: "Si beide luste daz er kuste si genouc" (27) ("that he kissed her enough they both liked it well"). He also relates both lovers' agony when he tells us: "Ir ougen naz dô wurden baz, och twanc in klage"(40) ("Her wet eyes then grew wetter, sorrow also oppressed him"), binding together their sorrows in the same line. Both lovers' pleasures and sorrows are mutual and equally shared between them.

Fries claims that the alba "underlines the

otherness of women in medieval lyric by positing her ultimate desertion by her lover as well as her exclusion from the male community of action."²⁸ But if the lover feels similar desires and sorrow, he also shares the lady's fears of being forgotten and abandoned. The lady of the aube "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" asks her lover to remember her:

Biaus dous amis, vos en ireis,
A Deu soit vos cors comandeis.
Por Deu vos pri, ne m'obleis.
Je n'ain nulle rien tant com vos. (19-22)

Fair, gentle friend, you will go,
To God may your body be commended.
In God's name I beg you, do not forget me.
I do not love anything as much as you.

But in "Us cavaliers," it is the male partner who begs to be remembered:

Per Dieu, no m'oblidetz mia
Que'l cor del cors reman sai
Ni de vos mais no'm partria. (33-35)

In God's name, don't forget me one bit
For the heart of my body remains here
Nor from you will I ever part.

This lover even uses similar vocabulary, invoking the Deity when asking for the beloved's remembrance, and speaking of his "cors" in a way similar to that in which the lady of "Cant voi l'aube" spoke of her lover's. Whereas the lady of "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" commends her lover's body into God's keeping because, since he is leaving her, she will

no longer have his body in sight, the lover of "Us cavaliers" actually leaves his heart itself behind in the keeping of his mistress. Both lovers--male and female--pledge themselves to their beloveds.

Furthermore, it is not only the male who does the abandoning, as these critics would lead us to believe. Indeed, if we consider the most famous of all alba scenarios, and indeed, the only example we have in which the entire affair is worked out, we find that the desertion, when actually carried out, is perpetrated by the lady--Criseyde--not by the faithful Troilus. This does not, however, merely lead to the conclusion proposed by Kaske and accepted by Fries²⁹ that a "sex-role" reversal has therefore taken place between Troilus and Criseyde, one that can be traced, according to Kaske, through their aubades. In his article, "The Aube in Chaucer's Troilus," Kaske attempts to demonstrate that Chaucer is intentionally presenting Criseyde, through her aubade, in the role typically assigned to the alba male. Troilus, he posits, takes on the typical female role. He points to Troilus' "hesitant request for assurance (III, 1485-91) and Criseyde's long answering promise of faithfulness

(III,1492-1518)," contrasting these with the "prevailing pattern" of the medieval alba:

Though there are strong exceptions, its prevailing pattern seems to be that in which the lady introduces the question of faithfulness, and the lover replies with an elaborate pledge in what might be described as the superlative mood. 30

Yet, from the citations above, we can already see that the interchange between lady and lover may take many forms, that both speak of their faithfulness and both make pledges. Indeed, the poets ("Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" is attributed to Gace Brulé; "Us cavaliers" to either Gaulcelm Faidit or Bertran d'Alamanon) may even have known each other's pieces and may have been reversing one another's motifs long before Chaucer would have been able to discern "prevailing patterns." But since Kaske does not cite the "strong exceptions" he found to this pattern, it is impossible to know which poems he was thinking of.

Kaske further observes of the alba generally that it is the male who is "more nearly resigned to the necessity of parting, while the lady emotionally opposes or laments his departure and begs for his quick return."³¹ Let us note, however, that no "prevailing pattern" jumps out at the reader of the

extant corpus of albas, although examples of the type Kaske refers to certainly exist. But there also exist examples of albas in which the lover promises a quick return without being bid to do so by the lady, and there are also albas in which the lover is more resistant to parting than his lady.³² Kaske does mention "strong exceptions" and "a few notable exceptions" to his case, but fails to footnote most of them (he does cite the exception of "Us cavaliers" to most of his readings), acknowledging the inconclusiveness of his evidence:

Let me emphasize, therefore, that for none of these individual motifs is the evidence of the medieval aube quite so conclusive as one would wish. In every instance there are exceptions to the patterns I have been invoking as 'conventional'; and in a few instances the number of examples available is suspiciously slight. 33

Because Kaske's article was originally presented as a paper, he notes the lack of scholarly documentation:

A paper of this kind takes manifest advantage of its audience, inflicting on them a body of documentation continually alluded to but seldom produced. 34

And indeed, his evidence does suffer thereby.

We wonder why the number of examples is "suspiciously slight"? And, if there are exceptions to "every instance" of the "patterns," should not that tell us that these "patterns" need to be reconstrued? Unfortunately, many who have read this article, have relied upon it as a closed case, although Kaske himself was the first to note how inconclusive his proof was. Indeed, in reading the entire corpus of extant medieval dawn-songs, one does not come away with a sense of a rigidly defined sex-role for lady and lover, especially in the Old Provençal alba, but in the others as well. I would submit that it is the very opposite which is the case.

What my conclusions suggest is not that Chaucer was intentionally planting the sex-role reversal between Troilus and Criseyde, but rather that the medieval poets we read had a much less rigid conception of sex-roles than our modern critics. There is no sex-role reversal from the early alba to Chaucer's aubade in Troilus and Criseyde because sex-roles are not assigned in the alba in the first place. I do not mean, however, to ignore the very real differences between the personae of Troilus and

Criseyde and which become manifest in their aubades (to be addressed in the final chapter), but to suggest that these differences are not products of an intentional sex-role reversal on Chaucer's part.

The gender similarities in Heinrich von Morungen's lyrical "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê" are quite striking. Goldin notes that Heinrich's songs "adopt the metrical techniques and courtly themes that originated with the troubadours and came to German-speaking areas both directly from the troubadours and through the courtly poets of northern France, the trouvères."³⁵ Hatto, too, observes that Heinrich von Morungen (c. 1160-1222) was "the first great poet to write in the new style" influenced by Provençal and Northern French poetry.³⁶

Although Heinrich's lyric shows these influences, it also bravely manifests his own originality. His striking and evocative imagery is unique to the genre and does not stem from the influence of Provençal or French dawn poetry (at least as far as the extant corpus indicates), and adds a touch of sublimity and humble majesty to the genre. Heinrich's tageliet has been considered by many to be the greatest in the genre: Dronke calls

"Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê" "the summit of the genre."³⁷ Although there is no watchman (who is a sign, according to some scholars, of Romance influence), the lyric does have a refrain reminiscent of the Provençal models. Hatto comments:

Despite its alba-like refrain, no direct foreign model has ever been found for [this tageliet]. 38

And Dronke observes:

Heinrich's alba is, like Wolfram's, astonishing in its range of human insight; in its conception it is very different. 39

Heinrich's tageliet, as mentioned above, is unique because it is written in the form of a wecshel--the lovers speak alternating stanzas not addressed to one another; their speeches are, rather, interlaced monologues. Independently, each reminisces, as if to himself, about their shared evening. The similarity of their responses--their enjoyment, their sorrow--is more noticeable and significant than any gender difference between them. Indeed, the lady's first words echo those of her lover, even though, presumably, she hasn't heard them. Both commence their speeches with questions. He begins: "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê"(1) ("Alas, shall never more for me"). She opens her first stanza: "Owê,

sol aber er iemer mê"(9) ("Alas, shall he never more"). If the lady's kisses were "âne zal" (17) ("without number"), her lover's gaze was tireless: "ez was ein wunder grôz/daz in des nie verdrôz"(30-31) ("it was a great wonder/that in this he never tired"). The final line of their speeches are the identical, refrain-like echoings: "dô taget ez" ("then it dawned").

Indeed, it is the similarity between these lovers that unites them although they are now apart. Both lament that their moments of bliss have passed, both express doubt that they will ever again attain such rapture, and both look back upon events they hold to be wonderful and sacred. Although each of the lovers concentrates on his own experience, they are nonetheless united because of the mutuality and similarity of their responses.

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, the concern with sex-roles and the inaccuracy in scholarly research on them is not confined solely to research in medieval literature. The authors of the recently published Female Strategies (1985)--Evelyn Shaw, a former curator of the American Museum of Natural History and a professor of biological sciences, and Joan Darling, a biologist--have written about the

past omissions and errors of biological researchers, so blinded, they say, by their preconceptions about animal sexual behavior that they failed to observe it accurately. In their book, the authors argue:

The feminine stereotype is so tightly etched in scientific thought that a female [animal] who is brightly colored, promiscuous and a gadabout is described as showing 'sex role reversal'--in other words, taking the expected masculine role....Many scientists are reluctant to relinquish their cherished image of the male's monopoly on courtship behavior and sexual drive. 40

Similarly, male animals showing nurturing behavior are seen by scientists as acting "maternally," when, in fact, Shaw and Darling contend, they are simply showing a parenting impulse not alien to either gender.

Especially when the alba genre is examined in its extent entirety, one discovers that the alba speaker of whatever sex shows similar concerns with pleasure, love, loyalty and trouthe as well as a similar preoccupation with pain and anger.

As evinced in albas, both lady and lover are capable of aggression and action or of resignation and passivity. But Saville claims:

while the knight is usually the first to give in and accept reality the lady usually accepts it only grudgingly, if at all, and only when the man is already taking his leave. In

a few albas the lady is much concerned with the knight's safety, and seconds the watchman's urgings that he leave. But this is so unusual a state of affairs that we are probably justified in considering it a conscious reversal (on the part of the poet) of the norm. 41

Although Saville and others have sought to discern the "norms" as well as the significant differences between the behavior of male and female in the alba, they have overlooked the much more pervasive and obvious similarities between the genders.

Furthermore, it is a fairly conventional, though perhaps inaccurate, notion that "the male community of action" mentioned by Fries⁴² is the most desirable or important sphere of action, or one into which the lady desires inclusion. Saville's view of the alba lady is particularly limited:

She lives only for love. She is the chief upholder of the erotic values of the inner world, having no existence anywhere else. The knight at least has a social function in the outer world although not much is said about it. The knight leaves the love-chamber. The lady does not. She remains in the inner world, her only world, and since that inner world has meaning only when it is the scene of love-making, the lady must go into a kind of inanimate suspension during the daylight, when her lover is away. 43

This view of the lady is riddled with preconceptions and inaccuracies. If we are considering aspects of life which extend beyond the purview of the alba

itself, then the lady, like the knight, does have a social function. Even if we are willing to grant that the knight's social function is important to the alba, regardless of whether it is spoken about in the poems themselves, the statement is still problematic, for does not the lady, as well as the knight, exist in a fictive social realm and context? And isn't it because she does exist in this realm and context that he must depart at dawn in the first place? In fact, isn't her social context even more vital to the meaning of albas than the knight's, since it is her realm which he enters and violates? The alba lady is, presumably, a wife, or a lady with an important position within her community; she is jealously guarded by husband, friends and family. As such, her position within the castle complex is a primary factor of her life as well as of her community. Her existence does not become any more meaningless when her knight has ridden off, than does his. It may be convenient to believe that the lady "must go into a kind of inanimate suspension during the daylight, when her lover is away," but it is not the contention of the poets of Old Provençal albas or Old French aubes that this is so, and not one such lyric approaches the subject from this

viewpoint. I would grant, however, that this may be the case in certain tageliet where the sense of abandonment and desertion is marked and emphasized by the poet.

In actuality, however, the alba rarely shows the knight outside the love-chamber, unless it is to show the lovers in an out-door setting. Although the couple continually refers to the lover's having to leave, the poem generally concludes before he has actually done so. Only rarely in albas narrated by a third party is any glimpse of the knight after he has left the lady's chamber given. Thus, to claim that "not much is said about" the knight's social function in the alba and aube is an overstatement. I would contend that nothing at all is said about the knight's social function in most of these poems, including the fact that sometimes the lover is not even referred to as cavaliers at all but as "amic," a social role the lady can and usually does explicitly match in the lyric. In the tageliet, the lover is more frequently referred to as ritter, and in Middle High German his social function does become more of a factor; however, Saville is not referring in this statement to the

tageliet specifically, but to the genre in its entirety. He drastically overstates his case.

But if we consider only the context of the poem and do not opt to construe what may happen to the lovers outside its boundaries, then we must admit that the knight, as well as the lady, lapses into "inanimate suspension" when they are no longer together, for their being together is the very nucleus of the song, and the song concentrates almost exclusively on them together, assiduously avoiding the question of what will occur thereafter (as it has avoided the question of what occurred previously).

The alba lady, remaining behind "in anguish and longing" as Saville puts it,⁴⁴ has, at least, a familiar, permanent residence (even if she dislikes it) in which to await her lover's return. The lady's admittance of the lover into her room is a perilous action. She does not even have to leave her bed-chamber in order to experience excitement and action, for she creates these for herself in her very own sphere. The lover, on the other hand, encounters life-threatening perils in the "male community of action," beyond the lady's domain, perils which may make his return less than certain,

as the lovers acknowledge in their laments. When the lover departs, he reenters a life probably more akin to exile than enjoyment. Leaving his beloved without knowing when or how he will see her again, and with the possibility that he may never again return to her safe harbor may not necessarily be the preferable option or role. In fact, the lady's chamber is the realm of true excitement and action and everything that occurs outside of that chamber holds much less interest for the lovers.

Fries sees the alba as a dramatic enactment of the conventional sex-linked roles of lady and lover:

The necessary absence of the male is epitomized in the alba, in which the Watchman and/or the omnipresent dawn of the masculine Day (as opposed to the feminine Night) interrupt the joyous lovemaking of Lady and Knight and cause them to enact dramatically their sex-linked roles: the Knight goes off to his world of male affairs, for him the important one, while the Lady remains behind.... 45

But aside from the fact that circumstance dictates that it is the male who must leave the chamber, there is little gender differentiation in the alba. Indeed, one of the most distinctive characteristics of the lady's relationship with the lover as opposed to her relationship with the gilos is the very lack

of sex-role differentiation that the lady has with her lover. With him, she is on equal footing; with her husband, the lady is a subordinate, undervalued.

The sex-linked roles of lady and lover may be enacted once the lovers have parted from each other. But this extension into the future is rarely glimpsed in the alba. In fact, this differentiation is enforced by the very social conventions the lovers desire to escape. The alba depicts lover and lady while they are together, and at this time they are portrayed most emphatically, as I have demonstrated, as equals, as friends. It is their equality rather than their separate, distinct roles, their parity rather than their differences or differentiation, that the alba strives to portray.

For alba lovers, whatever pleases is desirable, beautiful and good. Worth is assessed by the appearance, attractiveness and manners of the desired object. The very source of the lovers' appeal to one another is their capacity to provide the other with pleasure. The capacity to present oneself as "pleasing" demonstrates a sensitivity to social reflex and to the desires of others. In "Us cavaliers," the narrator speaks of "Fis amicx ab so

que'l plai" (10) ("A true lover with the one who pleases him"). In "Ab la gensor," the lady kisses her friend "tan plazenmen" ("so pleasingly") that he will remember it "all my life"(10). And in "Dieus, aydatz," "plazen bais"(30) ("pleasing kisses") are also referred to.⁷⁷ The lady of "Den morgenblic" speaks of the pleasure her beloved provides:

der grôzen liebe bin ich gar verheret.
wan sô du kumest und ich zuo dir. (21-22)

Of great love I am completely despoiled,
save when you come in this way and I to you.

Her lover alone can fulfill her yearnings. In "Von der zinnen," pleasure ultimately obviates all the lovers' cares. Wolfram's narrator tells us:

der unverzagete
an ir bejagete
daz sorge in flôch (34-36)

The undaunted man
won from her
such that sorrow fled from him.

"En un vergier," also displays a great concern with pleasure and style. The poem is one of the only two albas which in Jeanroy's estimation merit attention.⁴⁶ Certainly, most scholars and critics, whatever the differences in their evaluation of the genre as a whole, agree that "En un vergier" is an exceptionally lyrical and beautiful poem. For Jeanroy, who praised its naive and passionate

expression, its freshness and originality, it was one of the pearls of Old Provençal literature.

Preserved in only one manuscript which dates from the fourteenth century, this anonymous lyric is thought to have been composed in the twelfth or early thirteenth century. Because of its simple form which is unusual for troubadour poems in general,⁴⁷ and also because the lovers meet out-of-doors, this poem is considered to be quite early, and some have suggested that it may be the earliest extant alba. Its rhyme scheme is coblas singulares, each strophe consisting of three ten-syllable lines rhyming together, followed by a ten-syllable refrain.

As do many albas, "En un vergier" presents a lady's response to her love affair. Although her speech itself is uninterrupted by authorial mediation or intervention, it is framed by an opening strophe which sets the scene, and a concluding one which omnisciently describes her. A particularly winsome excursion into the realm of love's pleasures, it is one of the very few albas set out-of-doors. In fact albas generally lack any depiction of location at all; but when a setting is

presented, it is always given, as it is here, in sketchy outline:

En un vergier sutz fuella d'albespi
tenc la dompna son amic costa si,
tro la gayta crida que l'alba vi.
Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve! (1-4)

In a park under the leaf of the hawthorne
a lady held her lover at her side,
until the watchman cried that he saw the dawn.
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it comes!

The scene is set in a park and beneath a hawthorne tree in leaf. The meadows and garden which are mentioned in later strophes of the poem are also unique in the genre. Maureen Fries has noted "the staples symbols of garden and wind" in this poem;⁴⁸ but, ironically, "En un vergier," in comparison with other albas, is one of the most pastoral and descriptive. At least we are given a general idea of the scene of action and its environs.

The setting is conventional and simple. A park, a hawthorne tree, birds, meadows, garden and breeze are all aspects of nature mentioned in the poem, but these seem to exist merely to be named, because they are not really described. Not centrally implicated in the plot of the poem, they seem more like props--ornamental, associative, stylized.

The poem's particularity of detail is also characteristic of the genre. The scene becomes

increasingly focused as we zoom in not only on a particular hawthorne, but on one of its leaves, and not on that leaf specifically, but on what is positioned beneath it. Admittedly, the wording "sotz fuella d'albespi" is an alternative way of describing a "leafy hawthorne" yet it is important to note that the author is using a form of synechdoche--one leaf representing the general idea of leafiness. In singling out these particulars, our poet may have been suggesting their singularity and uniqueness, and by association that of the lovers who are positioned within it. The lovers are singled out by the poet from the rest of society, just as the one tree has been singled out by the lovers from the whole park.

The lovers, removed from society at large, are ensconced within a natural, but unpeopled milieu. Like the one tree in the grove, they appear to be like all the others, but in actuality, they are not of the crowd: they stand out, apart. Indeed, in pursuing an illicit relationship (we know this because of the later reference to the gilos), the lovers have demonstrated their difference from others and their willingness, even desire, to set

themselves apart from the rest of society. They belong to the park with its wild hawthornes rather than to the social community--to the world of nature rather than to that of the court.

The action, although it occurs outside, is, however, recessed within a series of enclosures: it takes place in a park, within the bower provided by the tree, beneath the shelter of its leaves. The second line of the poem, "tenc la dompna son amic costa si," extends the idea of enclosure as well as continuing the poem's concern with spatial relationships. It depicts, though, again, it does not describe, the central figures of the poem: a lady and her lover. The words on the line are placed in the same relation to each other as the figures being described: lady and lover are placed literally side by side ("la dompna son amic") and they are enclosed by the "tenc" ("held") on the one side of the line, and "costa si" ("at her side") on the other. The line itself recapitulates or imitates the lady's action, embracing the lovers, as the lady does her man. The narrator, too, participates, on a larger scale, in an analogous relation to the lady, for he encloses her speech between the two strophes of his.

The position of the lovers to one another, as well as in relation to the setting of the poem, is an important factor in this alba as it is in most of them. The lady of "En un vergier" holds her lover "at her side." The first and etymological meaning of costa is "rib," a word which indicates even more clearly the close physical "attachment" between the lovers. This expression may be describing their embrace or it may be a metaphor or euphemism for sexual activity, but it is rendered in terms which stress the physical closeness between the lovers--their intertwining and inseparability.

Not only does the first line of "En un vergier," opening as it does in a greenworld, subtly evoke the Garden of Eden, but the reference to "side" or "rib" in this context is suggestive as well. The poet here depicts a woman's attempt to hold her lover so tightly to her that she might almost be trying to subsume him into herself. In Genesis, God created Eve from Adam's rib. In "En un vergier," woman tries to reunite with man--to absorb him into her rib.

The opening scene of "En un vergier" is still--a static tableau set in the past. The situation is

fixed, the couple unmoving, their rendez-vous seemingly timeless. The first line of the poem carefully sets the place of action; the second line relates the human drama; the third line of the poem (the last of the strophe before the refrain) portrays the boundaries within which that drama occurs. The three lines constitute a one sentence unit, but each line has its own meaning. These three lines present the entire premise and action of the poem: where it occurs, what occurs, and when. But the rendering of the drama in three separate and distinct syntactical units again makes the strophe seem particularly static. Until the watchman's cry pierces the scene, all is serene, idyllic. But the tableau is finally broken by the cry of advancing day which sets the refrain into motion.

Consequence and contingency are expressed by the word "tro" ("until") in line three, and reiterated in the third line of strophe four. The lovers have orchestrated their affair in such a way that the watchman's signal--his cry or shawm-playing--becomes the auditory boundary beyond which they cannot extend their "play." In addition, the "tan tost" ("how quickly" or "too soon") expresses the transience of the relationship and its predication

on only a brief span of time. We do not know whether the refrain is uttered by the omniscient narrator, by the lady herself, or by the watchman, or even whether it is sung by the same character throughout the poem.

The watchman's cries set not only the refrain, but also the lady's speech, into motion. However, there is no real motion in the poem itself. Roused into an awareness of time's passage, the lady acknowledges that her love affair is really impermanent. The lady, confronting this, turns her attention to a being whose power extends far beyond her own and who alone is capable of causing the miracle which could alter reality. Her prayer to God consists of three wishes:

Plagues a Dieu ja la nueitz non falhis,
ni'l mieus amicx lonc de mi no's partis,
ni la gayta jorn ni alba no vis!
Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve! (5-8)

May it please God that the night not fail,
and that my lover never part far from me,
and that the watchman see neither day nor dawn!
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it comes!

The first wish has several possible meanings. The lady can simply mean that she wishes the night to endure--that is, not to "fail" by not ending, not fading into day. Night, for all alba lovers, is

love's refuge, hiding them and bestowing upon their illicit activities the veil of anonymity and secrecy.

Another possible meaning of the lady's wish is that she hopes that night does not fail to hide her and her lover, a meaning related to the first, since, if night retains its hegemony, its darkness will dramatically diminish the lovers' chances of exposure. "Falhir" also means "to trick," and the lady may be requesting that night not trick or betray them into discovery. The idea of betrayal, although it is probably secondary here, is nonetheless important, for it subtly and indirectly initiates the theme of loyalty which is explicitly addressed at the poem's conclusion. Here, a putative allegiance on the part of night to the lovers is implied by the lady's prayer that night not "fail" her in its function. A final possible interpretation of this first wish is that the lady means that she hopes that night will not fail to return to her once again next evening.

The lady's second wish is significant because it announces her opposition to her lover's inevitable departure. The lady uses the possessive adjective "mieus" ("my") when she speaks about her lover

parting. The thought of parting having become conscious, the idea of possession, which was unnecessary before, begins to take on importance. The lady's second wish acknowledges the inevitability of her lover's departure even as she wishes for him to remain with her.

The separation of day and dawn in the lady's third wish, that the "watchman see neither day nor dawn," suggests the idea of sequence and consequence. She wishes that the watchman see neither day nor dawn because, in deference to her desire, God will alter the customary route of these cosmic forces and prolong night. She now asks God to alter natural law through the agency of the watchman. She equates the gaita's vision of day with the day's actual advent, in a sense, attributing to him the control which she lacks over the approaching dawn. All the lady's wishes are in the form of negations. They reveal her desire to deny what she knows must be.

The lady turns her attention, in the next strophe, from the Almighty and her own fantasies, to her "bel dous amicx" whom she addresses identically at the beginning of strophes three and four. These

two central strophes--the core of the poem--
basically recapitulate each other:

Bels dous amicx, baizem nos yeu e vos
aval els pratz, on chanto'ls auzellos;
tot o fassam en despieg del gilos.
Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve!

Bels dous amicx, fassam un joc novel
yns el jardi, on chanton li auzel,
tro la gaita toque son caramel.
Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve! (9-16)

Fair gentle friend, let us kiss you and I
down in the meadows, where the little
birds sing,
let's do it all in spite of the gilos.
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it
comes!

Fair gentle friend, let us play a new game
In the garden, where the birds sing,
til the watchman plays his shawm.
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it
comes!

The strophes are similar in structure, syntax and
lexis. In the second half of each of these two
first lines, the lady presents invitations to her
lover. The structural and syntactical repetitions
make her invitations appear ritualistic, formulaic,
formal. Furthermore, the lady not only does the
embracing, as we saw at the beginning of the poem,
but she also initiates more active intimacy,
inviting her lover to "kiss" and in the parallel
position of the next strophe, to "play a new game."

The directness with which the lady addresses

these invitations to her lover adds to the sense of freedom in the poem. Dronke comments: "I know of no other alba in which the lady seduces in this way."⁴⁹ Yet her forthright manner and obvious interest are balanced by her formal and polite mode of invitation. Although the relationship may be passionate, adulterous and secret, it is nonetheless conducted with discipline and decorum. When the lady invites her lover, she addresses him politely, as "vos." Each is free to participate if she or he so chooses.

Refinement is an attribute not only of each of the lovers, but also of the love relationship itself, which is purposefully and decorously conducted. Part of the artifice of the love affair lies in its game-like quality. The courtship is conducted in an orderly fashion: the lady initiates several invitations to her lover, first beckoning him to kiss, and later to play or make ("fassam") "un joc novel." The game-like aspect of love-making has several effects. The lovers engage in a "novel" activity: they are innovators, creators. In an alternate reading of the line, they are repeating a game or joy that they shared previously. The joy is "novel" in that it is new or in that it is being

renewed by the lovers. The game-like aspect of love-making serves to make it more of an end in itself--to prolong and extenuate its play and pleasure, and this aspect is noticeable in several other albas. In "Gaita be," the lover complains that the dawn wrests from him the "joc novel"(9) which so delights him.

Only the third lines of strophes three and four differ significantly. In strophe three, the lady suggests that they "do it all inspite of the gilos." Although her husband is a powerful and potentially dangerous man to defy, the lady nonetheless pursues her pleasures heedless of the consequences of this recklessness. The third line of strophe four presents another obstacle, related to the first: the watchman's "song" which warns the lovers of day's advent, serves as a signal for the lovers to part. In strophe one, it was the watchman's cries--a different sort of "song"--which disrupted the serenity of the scene. Here, his shawm-playing is a discordant reminder, contrasting with the harmonic bird-song which fills the garden--that the love affair is not the idyllic and perfect fulfillment the lovers wish it could be.

Although elements of artifice and ritual structure the love affair, the lady associates the affair with nature and bird-song. The watchman's voiceless song is conveyed by a man-made musical instrument. The rhyming of "caramel," with "auzel" emphatically contrasts the man-made with the natural song.

Birds, in "En un vergier," are mentioned in parallel places in strophes three and four. "Little birds" ("auzellos") befriend the lovers in the meadows; birds are part of the garden scene, too. In the dawn-song in general, birds, especially the lark and rooster, sometimes function as waking birds, but in "En un vergier," they have another purpose: to sing not as reminders of time's passage or as annunciators of joy's demise, but as harmonic accompaniment to the activities of love. Birds' song infuses the meadows and garden. It is carried on the breeze. The lady's invitation to her lover, like the songs of the birds, is a natural and freely uttered expression; and like a bird's song, the lady's invitations are also carried on the breeze.

The park and garden, themselves examples of the cultivation of nature, symbolize the intertwined elements of nature and artifice which are inherent

in the lovers' relationship. Natural but not wanton, fertile but not wild, these loci exemplify the interrelationship between nature and art which is in the poem and which may be important to the genre in general. These loci are examples of the imposition of human will, knowledge and artifice on the wildness, lust and irrationality of nature. The conjoining of the luxuriance and randomness of nature to human control and purpose engenders fruitfulness.

Strikingly, the emphasis upon control, artifice and refinement in "En un vergier" is matched by an equal emphasis on the natural. The hawthorne, a "spring flowering shrub of the apple family"⁵⁰ which can grow wild, and the "pratz," a meadow or field (as opposed to the more regulated park and garden), evoke the more uncontrolled aspects of the natural world. Although an "anti-love" or "anti-sexual" tradition emanated from the Church and from many important medieval thinkers, another influential philosophical tradition strove to place human sexuality within the divine scheme. According to this view (exemplified in works like Alain de Lille's De Planctu Naturae) natural or biological

love is a vital and divinely ordained phenomenon whose end, which was seen as just and good, was nothing less than the active propagation of the human species. The setting of "En un vergier" in what seems to be a natural paradise is consonant with the freedom, spaciousness, ease and fulfillment which the actions of love provide. Correlated to this sense of freedom is the fact that it is the lady, not the man, who speaks and who explicitly expresses sexual desire as well as love for him. Like the bride of the Song of Songs (to which this lyric is sometimes compared), she expresses an unconstrained, unselfconscious spontaneity of feeling and an unabashed enjoyment of sexuality. Indeed, Dronke claims that the lady echoes the following passage (his translation of the Latin Vulgate) from the Song of Songs:

Come, my lover, let us go into the field...
at dawn let us wake near the vines...
There I will give you my breasts.
Within my gates lies every fruit--
new and old I have kept for you, my love. 51

But the larger world outside the boundaries of the park, appearing in its most vile in the form of the gilos, is not cultivatable; it is restrictive, indecorous and mean-spirited. As in Eden, evil impinges on the periphery of an idyllic garden

scene. Lover and lady play within delimited enclosures, but the gilos, poised on the outskirts of the scene, is primed to disrupt the union. Evil lurks beyond, yet invariably manages to infiltrate the garden recesses. In fact, although he is mentioned only once in the poem, and although he is not part of the actual scene, nevertheless, the lady's awareness of the gilos is evident. He is mentioned in one of the two central strophes (strophe three) of the six strophe poem, and in the last rhyming word of that strophe. He is referred to in the strongest, most aggressive language in the poem, one which contrasts markedly with the language the lady uses to address her lover.

Woledge, in printing his text of "En un vergier" in Eos, makes a break between the first four strophes and the following two. He explains in his notes that "although there is nothing in the manuscript to separate the lines 17-25 from the rest, it seems necessary to assume a pause or break; this helps to give the dramatic quality which is characteristic of the genre."⁵² However, it is uncharacteristic of the genre for a poem to shift in mid-course from presenting the lovers together, to

presenting a reminiscence by one of them about their tryst.

Nevertheless, it seems clear that a startling transition has taken place in strophe five because the lady no longer speaks, as she has in the previous two strophes, to her lover, but now speaks of him. Even though we have received no description of their parting, and although no movement has taken place within the poem, the lover is now "de lay" ("over there"); how far away he is we have no way of gauging. Dronke notes: "suddenly we realise that the lady is alone."⁵³ The lady has once again shifted focus. Her opening speech was a prayer to God, the next two strophes were addressed to her lover--but all three previous strophes were her requests to another party--in the present tense and subjunctive mood. In strophe five, however, the lady has shifted tense and mood. She has moved from making requests in the present subjunctive to reminiscing in the perfect indicative. The lover is removed, it is clear, in place and time, from the lady. He has receded into real time and history.

In this strophe, the lady rhapsodizes about having imbibed a draught of her lover's breath, rendering metaphorically the sexual consummation of

the love affair, and elevating it to a mystical and spiritual union:

Per la doss'aura q'es venguda de lay,
del mieu amic belh e cortes e gay,
del sieu alen ai begut un dous ray.
Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve!
(17-20)

Through the sweet breeze that has come from over
there,
from my lover, handsome and courtly and gay,
from his breath I have drunk a sweet draught.
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it comes!

That the sweet breeze is equated with the lover's breath demonstrates the perfect harmony between the couple, as well as between them and their natural surroundings. The scene, the very breeze, nature herself, is infused with the lover's sweet sensuality. Like the earlier birds' song, the lover's breath is now carried on the breeze. As Dronke reminds us, again the Song of Songs is brought the mind:

The image of the wind as messenger of the beloved, which occurs elsewhere in troubadour poetry, derives not, as has recently been argued, from Arabic poets (though indeed they also use it), but once more from the Song of Songs:

Awake, north wind, and come, south wind,
breathe upon my garden...
let my lover descend into his garden,
and let him devour the flesh of its fruits.

It is from the Biblical love-song above all that this poet has learnt to pass imper-

ceptibly from the meeting of the lovers to the memories and longings of the woman alone, from event to daydream, outer to inner world. 54

The word "ray" is often used, as in English, to refer to a sunbeam, but here the lady refers to her lover's very breath with that word, associating him not only with nature, but also with light.

In view of the lack of adjectives in the poem (there are only nine different adjectives used), the fact that the breeze is "dous" becomes significant. The word, which the lady has used twice previously to address her lover, immediately associates him with the breeze. In fact, "dous" is the most frequently used adjective in the poem, being repeated four times, which makes it also the fourth most frequently used word ("Dieus," "alba" and "amic" are the most frequently used words, being repeated thirteen, seven and five times respectively). There is an interchange of meaning which allows us to perceive the lover's sweetness as being transferred to the very atmosphere he has left. And the lover himself is so much a part of nature that he is infused with nature's sweetness. The relationship between the material and the immaterial, presence and absence becomes here a

thematic element. The sexual consummation of the affair is rendered in spiritual terms: the separated lovers are brought together in a spiritual reunion through the sweetness conveyed by the breeze. The relationship may be consummated even when the lovers are apart, for they are one in spirit. Their relationship may be extended in time on a nonphysical plane. Yet the lover's "presence" is so strong it becomes tangible: the lady can "drink" in his breath. The breeze also represents freedom, for if the only element which connects the lovers is the air itself, then their bond is not only spiritual but mutual as well; their love cannot be tied down to earthly matters, such as law or obligation. The breeze facilitates memory as well because it carries reminders of the lover.

Besides his sweetness, the lover, as perceived by his lady, has three other attributes--and these present him as a courtly man par excellence: he is "belh e cortes e gay." Previously, the lady had twice addressed him as "bels" and "dous"--the first two adjectives used in the poem, and the only two until the "novel" of strophe four.

Now that they are apart, the lady reconstructs him through her words. Her description does not

stress his individual, unique or spontaneous qualities, but rather ones that are conventional and stereotypical. Possessive adjectives are used: the lover is "mieu" ("mine"); the breath "sieu" ("his"). Possession, although it has actually become less real at this stage in the "drama," now almost takes on a fictional life. And indeed, in incorporating him into her memory--and her song--she does, in a sense possess him and keep him more permanently with her. The lady's idealization of her lover demonstrates the distance which has passed between them, for when he was with her, there was no need even for any kind of description. His presence sufficed. When he has gone, the void of his absence is filled by the most conventional and courtly images--images which serve to represent him. The lady requires representation of her lover now because he is no longer visible to her eye. As the lover recedes farther from the scene, the lady needs to paint him in this manner. He has become more image than presence. Once he has left the lady, she becomes more conventionally descriptive. In strophe five, there are five adjectives, more than in the entire poem up to this point. His earlier physical

presence eliminated the need for the descriptive details which the lady now requires.

In the final strophe, characterized as enigmatic or anticlimactic,⁵⁵ the poet takes us one step away from direct contact with the lady, as she has been taken away from her lover. The lady describes her lover once he vanishes; the narrator describes the lady as though she, too, is now off in the distance. How we view her, until this strophe, is based primarily on our response to her words. It is not until this strophe that the poet moves us a step back. But his description, like the lady's of her lover, is conventional and nonspecific. She is the very image of the typical courtly lady: beautiful, gracious and pleasing:

La dompna es agradans e plazens,
per sa beutat la gardon mantas gens,
et a son cor en amar leyalmens.
Oy Dieus, oy dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve!
(21-24)

The lady is pleasant and pleasing,
because of her beauty many admire her,
and she holds her heart loyally on loving.
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it comes!

Both lovers have similar features: they are beautiful and "courtly;" thus, they are appropriately matched. This conventional portrait serves to establish each lover's worth. The poet

ensures that his characters will be perceived as courtly and respectable. Again, this strophe differs from the preceeding ones. Presumably, the speaker of strophe one is the speaker of this final strophe as well. The verbs, as in strophe one, are strong, indicative verbs. This time, however, they are in the present tense: the lady "es" ("is"), she "a" ("has"). In addition, for the first time in the poem, predicate adjectives are used: the lady "es agradans e plazens." Another of her outstanding qualities is not rendered adjectively, however, but as a noun: she is noted for her "beutat."

The lady has now reentered the social realm. Although she is apart from her lover, she is now part of the larger community. And we are given our narrator's appraisal of her along with that of others. He tells us that because of her beauty many regard her highly. That others also value her is significant. The lover is not alone in finding this lady a worthy object of affection. Many others also see her as such. Perhaps there is even an indication in the word "regardons" that because of her beauty, she is watched, even guarded. Not only among the trees in the park, but even among the women of her community or court, this lady's beauty sets her

apart.

The lady receives one final characteristic: "she has fixed her heart on loving loyally." Although many regard her, she has fixed her regard only on her lover. No matter how they look at her, these others cannot see what is in her heart; her heart has its own yearnings, which no one can decipher from her external appearance, lovely as that may be. She may betray her marriage vow, but for our narrator, that does not constitute disloyalty. The lady is loyal according to a different set of criteria. The word "leyalmens" stands out for several reasons: it is a rhyming word, a rare three-syllable word (there are only about four in the poem), a rare adverb (there are about five); and, except for the repetitive refrain, it is the final word of the poem. Thus, the lady's loyalty is an essential attribute and one which is beyond question. The poet may even be punning on the fact that the etymological root for both legal and loyal is the same. Her principle allegiance is emphatically not to law (while the poet suggests the link between legality and loyalty), or to society, but to authenticity of emotion. Indeed, she is

loyal to herself by following her heart's promptings. Even though she may have transgressed certain moral and legal injunctions (these are never referred to in the poem, except for the mention of the gilos), when judged by a set of criteria which values beauty, manners and this kind of loyalty, the lady of the poem is exemplary, as is the lover she has selected. Our poet gives no indication that he is presenting values which may be controversial.

Strikingly, the lady of "En un vergier" is not described until the final strophe of the poem. Although the poem opens with a description of the scene, it merely states in the most generalized terms that a lady and lover are embracing--without describing either of them. It is not until the final strophe that the narrator describes the lady whose voice we have heard until then. But we may wonder why the poet bothers to give us this description because, after all, it is one of the most conventional and nonspecific kind. Dronke comments that the poet has

presented a woman glowing with life and passionate, but very different from the accepted 'portrait of a lady' in his society. That is why he ends by deliberately insisting on her courtly qualities, affirming that she is all that a domna should be. He is, one might say, forestalling

objections: she is not impious in invoking God, not unrefined in spiting her husband, not unbecomingly lascivious in luring her lover; she is perfect, even by courtly standards. It is the achievement of this alba to have invaded the narrower world of courtoisie with the sensual and dreamlike qualities of the Song of Songs. 56

The poet renders her as the image of the typical "courtly" lady. This is, however, the very point. The poet wants to make certain that his lady is viewed as both "courtly" and respectable.

The lady who sings the first five strophes of "En un vergier" has achieved the nobility and respect desired by all alba ladies. The last strophe of "En un vergier" informs us that: "per sa beutat la gardon mantas gens" ("because of her beauty many people regard her"). And in the community that understands and sympathizes with alba lovers, she is admirable, a model worthy of emulation and high regard.

The alba lady is often spoken of in the superlative: she is "plus...bon e bel," and "e so qu'eu plus voilh ai" ("Gaita be," 2, 9); she is "la re que plus volia" ("Us cavaliers," 2). She is beautiful, is, in fact, "de biauté la monjoie" ("Gaite de la tor," 74) ("the very sum of beauty"). She is "la gensor...la mielhs aibia" ("Ab

la gensor," 1, 2)--the fairest and noblest of all creatures. She is the most courtly of ladies. In addition, she has virtues. In "En un vergier," the lady is also loyal. The lady's virtue, as is her lover's, is further stressed in the tageliet: in "Ez ist nu tac," the lover asks his beloved to use her "womanly virtue" as a protective shield for him:

dîn wîplich güete neme mîn war,
und sî mîn schilt hiute hin und her
und zallen zîten. 37-39

She is a "guote wîp"("Ez ist nu tac," 14) and a "sueze wîp,"("Sîne klâwen," 18) and in "Friuntlîchen lac," she is "die schoenen frowen guot"(51).

The beloved has particularity and singularity, standing out in sharp relief against all other creatures. Everything about her becomes distinctive. This is true even when the lover describes his beloved in the most conventional or stylized terms. Although the lover may never mention his lady's name, or describe her features specifically (thereby protecting her under the cloak of anonymity), it is clear from his evocations of her that she has qualities which distinguish her--to him--from all other ladies. What is poetic convention to us serves as meaningful indicators of the beloved's status in the heart of her admirer,

and conveys his conviction that she is the epitome of worth.

The alba lady, then, does not descend by reciprocating her suitor's ardor. Her elevated stature is further underscored by the words used to describe her, even after consummation of the love. In other albas, the lover, often after the consummation of the union, still addresses his beloved in terms of respect and endearment: she is his "true love," "sweetheart," "dear mistress," "dear friend," "lady," and "dear love."⁵⁷

Perhaps the attitude and feelings of the lady's husband and his entourage of loyal retainers, who would view her by a vastly different set of criteria, would be colored, if not by the lady's amorality, certainly by her adulterous (and therefore apparently treacherous) nocturnal activities. But these divergent opinions, we are made to understand, are necessarily to be rejected by sympathizers of the "courtly" ethic--those who aspire or ascribe to the same ethic as does the lady. And we must assume that this sympathetic audience is the one which the erotic alba poet primarily--although not exclusively--addresses.

Whatever contributes to the maintenance and perpetuation of the desire, pleasure, gratification and fulfillment of love takes precedence. Even duty and obligation toward the beloved take on an aspect of pleasure and outweigh other responsibilities.

The playful and innocent aspect of love as presented in the alba makes the genre most appealing. Within their enclosed, protective bower, the lovers cavort freely. Sporting, playing and laughing are often specifically mentioned activities the lovers engage in. Play, as Huizinga observes, requires the kind of delimited and bounded field of action that the alba presents. Play needs to be set apart so that it can distinguished from the real, non-fantasy world.⁵⁸ In "En un vergier," when the lady invites her lover to "fassam un joc novel," she also suggests a locale in which to do so: "yns el jardi." She refers to love-making as a game. Games have rules and are usually goal-oriented: they are things at which one can "win." Often the lover's game is played against the gilos--its object, to trick him.

The numerous references to play, sport, and laughter in the alba point to a less regulated activity. In "Entre moi et mon amin," the narrator

recalls a previous tryst where she and her lover were "Alainmes juwant"(3). Alone together, secluded "en un boix"(2), they were "playing." Similarly, the lover of "Ab la gensor" speaks of his rendez-vous with a lady in which they were "jogan rizen"(5) ("playing, laughing"). The lady who narrates the third and final strophe of "Dieus, aydatz" says that she will not leave off the games or joys she has been experiencing with her lover:

non crezatz
 per armatz
 que jogars
 de mon amic lays
 qu'e mon bratz
 jauzen jatz.... (49-54)

do not believe
 that because of the armed ones
 I shall leave off the joys
 with my friend
 who, in my arms,
 happy lies....

The happiness shared by lady and lover is a paramount value. The watchman of "S'anc fui belha" also speaks of the "fins drutz" who "pren jauzimen/de domna valen"(34-35) ("takes joy from his worthy lady"). The joy and amusement of the lovers is also evoked in the "joc novel"(5) spoken of by the lover of "Gaita be." And in "Gaite de la tor," the speaker refers to "dame et seignor" who "sont a

sejor"(5, 4). He also tells the lovers that they can "make joy" until day: "poëz demener joie"(49). These references all connote the freedom and joy the lovers experience from expressing themselves and exploring both their own passion and that of their beloved. In all dawn-songs, play is pleasure for its own sake.

The references to play and laughter as well as the depiction of impotent rage and disappointment may seem, on the one hand, to imply that the lovers are regressing to a state of childishness and immaturity. The emphasis on pleasure and play may be seen, in a sense, as infantile: the lovers have temporarily given up any other responsibilities and business in order to immerse themselves in pleasure. The lover of "Slâfest du" addresses his lady as "kint"(6). In "Friuntlîchen lac," she is "friundinne"(9, 35). Certainly, there is also something childish about the lovers' blaming and threatening of the watchman and even dawn itself in response to their feelings of impotence or frustration at having to part against their wills. In castigating the watchman or dawn itself for dawn's imminence, the lovers reveal a childlike fantasy or hope that a human (either they or the

watchman) can control the cosmos. Although they wish that they could change the course of nature, they often accept their own lack of such omnipotence. That they displace their desire to alter the order of things onto the watchman and credit him with such ability reveals that they believe him to be a powerful figure.

Saville notes: "[The alba lovers'] love is as radically against limitations as it is radically anti-social."⁵⁹ There are no binding restrictions on their play within the sanctum of love, no authoritarian overseer to prevent them from expressing their emotions as fully as they desire. The state of carefree romping, even if childish or immature allows the lovers a freedom from inhibition and stricture which may not otherwise be available to them. In the childlike state which such romantic illicit attachment seems to create, the lovers also regain a long lost freedom; safe with each other, they reexperience the joy of uninhibited, relaxed laughter and play, unafraid of expressing themselves. That love allows them to explore and express points to its individualizing aspect for they feel free to be and explore themselves. This

desire for self-expression may be one which the alba poet shares and may be why the genre appealed to poets. Robert Hanning writes about the courtly poet in general:

The courtly poet, writing for a self-consciously elite society, participated in this climate of innovation by redefining the poetic act as the fresh application of intelligence and sensitivity--of ingenium, or engin--to use twelfth century terms--to large preoccupations of the movement, under the guise of tales of adventure. 60

The alba poet, so sympathetic in most cases to the illicit lovers in his poem, must himself have craved the same expressive freedom, the liberty to vent his impulses in verse, as he allows to his lovers. It is the desire for self-expression and explorative creativity on the poet's part which may have provided the impetus of his attraction to this theme in the alba.

The tageliet retains this theme, but varies its implications slightly because it seems more pointedly sexual. In the Middle High German poems, "sporting" seems solely a euphemism for sexual activity because the context in which words for games or joy appear, usually includes a description of sexual activity. For instance, in Wolfram's "Ez ist nu tac" the idea of game or enjoyment is described

in this way:

urlop er nam, daz dâ wol zam; nu
merket wie:
dâ ergie ein schimpf bî klage.
si hâten beide sich bewegen,
ez enwart sô nâhe nie gelegen,
des noch diu minne hât den prîs (29-33)

He took his leave so that it was fitting;
now mark how:
A game went along with the lament.
They had both agreed so between them
that there was never such a close lying
together,
of which now yet Love has the renown.

While in the Old Provençal and Old French the idea of sexual activity is also implied, there are references to joys, laughter and play which seem to go along with the activity of sex but do not necessarily represent that activity. The tageliet seems to focus more specifically on the sexuality of parting. Rather than stressing joy, laughter or happiness, these tageliet concern themselves primarily with sexual pleasure and the deeply felt sorrow of the deprivation of such pleasure.

Our alba poets imply that outlets for play, exploration and creativity are not integrated within the social structure of their community. But the activities the lovers engage in during their tryst are time-bound. Freedom is attained, but only temporarily, as the lovers attempt to suspend their

awareness of responsibilities and obligations. Ironically, when the lady is with her spouse, she has all the time in the world--and probably as much space; but when with him, she is deprived of the emotional, psychological and sexual freedom which would make that time and space valuable.

The description of the lady in "En un vergier" as "agradans e plazens" (21) points to the poet's concern with what is "pleasing." He assures the audience that she is a lady to whom pleasure is important. The lady of "S'anc fui belha" refers to her "guaita plazen" immediately implying by this description that he is a man sympathetic to her love and who shares her ethic, as he himself will emphatically assert in the next strophe the poem. The faithful watchman/companion of "Reis glorios" fears that neither his song nor his friendship--and they are inextricable--is pleasing to the lover, and his final words lament: "aras no'us platz mos chans ni ma paria"(29) ("now neither my song nor my friendship pleases you"). And without such pleasure, the watchman fears that his friend will not budge from his preferred location.

The lady who narrates the Old French aube, "Entre moi et mon amin," the poem which most closely

resembles "En un vergier," presents her response to her lover in a very artful and coy manner:

Adont ce trait pres de mi,
Et je ne fu pas anfruine;
Bien trois fois me baixait il,
Ainsi fix je lui plus d'une,
K'ainz ne m'anoiait. (13-17)

Then he drew himself close to me,
And I was not reluctant;
Three times at least he kissed me,
Then I returned to him more than one,
But that did not bore me.

She playfully and gracefully expresses her great attraction to her lover. Presenting it so coyly and artfully, she undercuts the blatantly sexual aspect of what she depicts. Rather than affirming her eagerness, she uses litotes, negating the affirmation of her lack of desire; she says "I was not reluctant," or "that did not bore me." Her lack of definiteness with regard to numbers--"three times at least he kissed me and I returned to him more than one"--undercuts the intensity of her pleasure, while simultaneously calling attention to its dizzying and dazzling effects. The preponderance of understatement calls attention to the disproportion between the elegance of the statements and the intensity of her emotion. The repetition of understatement emphasizes the insufficiency of

words to express her feelings. The discrepancy between the understatements and the emotion becomes noticeable through their preponderance, so that we become conscious that she is understating. Indeed, one could say there is an excess of understatement which calls attention to the discrepancy between it and the intensity it belies.

For the lovers in the alba, pleasure is not necessarily the spontaneous expression of impulse (although their "play" may be); they may derive pleasure from the refining of their behavior, from etiquette, as well as from grooming and disciplining their passion.

One social manifestation of the capacity to please is fine manners. Manners demonstrate the extent of one's desire to provide pleasure and also subtly indicate one's ability to do so. Not only do lovers please each other by possessing, displaying and employing refined manners. The lover also often defers to his beloved, making her his "mistress" not only as a term of endearment, but also as a form of trust and respect. He allows her mastery and lets her guide and command him. In "Us cavaliers," the knight asks his lady what to do: "Doussa res, ieu que farai?"(4) deferring to her command. In

"Slâfest du," he says: "swaz du gebuittest, daz leiste ich, friundin mîn"(8) ("whatever you bid, so I shall do, my mistress"). In both cases, he is willing to be guided by his lady's command, her "pleasure". He allows her the mastery to make the decision.

The husband, on the other hand, is overbearing and possessive. The lady of "S'anc fui belha" speaks indirectly of cortezia in her reference to "desconoissens vilania"(42). Ignorance and vulgarity are traits antithetical to all she considers worthy. The gilos' vulgarity is manifest by his bluster ("guap") and his threatening ("menassa") (37). She conceives of him as a bully and a coward--a man whose words are overblown--larger than his actions--and whose language (and hence, behavior--since his relationship to language is representative of his relationship to others) is ignoble. But the lady herself is unmoved by these self-inflating verbal acts. She would be as vulgar as she believes her husband to be if she responded to his threats. And she would commit an ignorant act, and would therefore be just like her husband, were she to "part ignobly" from her lover, a man who presumably deplores such behavior as much as she does. She

must part "well" rather than in deference to base fear or threats. In "Ab la gensor," the lady also mentions the "vilania" of the gilos, but in this alba it does indeed frighten her.⁶¹

Cadenet's lady presents her lover as the embodiment of refinement and courtesy, as opposed to her spouse whom she portrays as vulgar. We might be surprised at such a designation for the lord of a castle. Yet in our albas, the husband, although perhaps rich and powerful, is not refined or "courtly." He is a "vilan" because, like a rustic, he is unaware of or uninformed about how to behave decorously. But like a lord, however, he can afford to be unconcerned with such matters. Although he lacks subtlety, refinement, even amicability (all traits of the "courtly" man), he is such a powerful master that he need not consider these traits necessary or desirable. He is a man who does not cultivate manners or concern himself with providing pleasure for others--those are concerns, rather, of the people who serve him. But he is consequently perceived by his wife as possessing unattractive, displeasing manners. Furthermore, it is he who really becomes the outcast, the social misfit,

vilified and excoriated amongst courtly lovers. Cadenet's lady, while not even the financial equal of her lord (since she was "given away" to him because of his wealth), nonetheless despises him for lacking refinement. In "Gaita be," the lover tells the watchman that the gilos is

... vostre malvays seynor
enujos plus que l'alba (16-17)

... your malevolent lord
more hateful than the dawn

In the aube "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir," the lady speaks of "des mavais maris jalous" (28). Whatever displeases is characterized as ugly and evil.

Hatto observes that although the knight of the tageliet is a minor character, he possesses certain indispensable traits; he is "patient, generously understanding of a woman's passion, obedient, daring and calm, a perfect lover."⁶² In "Ez ist nu tac," the lady characterizes her lover as a wooer whose soft words and sweet kisses "tutored by rare excellence" (as Hatto translates it)⁶³ have won her respect as well as her heart:

dînen munt, der manigen gruo
mir bôt und ouch dîn kus,
alse in dîn ûzerwelte gûete lârte,
und diu geselle dîn, diu triuwe. (45-48)

your mouth, which many a greeting
bade me and also your sweet kiss,
as your excellent goodness taught it,
and that companion of yours, loyalty.

To the alba lady, this is the sort of man who has
real "class."

The lady has deliberately and freely chosen an
outsider and a man beneath her husband's and her own
social position. The cortoisie referred to in the
alba, like the gentillesse the Wife of Bath later
praises in Chaucer's tale of that name, is not based
on the accident of birth, on social status. For
alba lovers and their sympathizers, courtliness has
much less to do with wealth and social position than
with refinement of behavior, etiquette, decorum and
fine speech. When the lover of Raimbaut de
Vaqueiras' "Gaita be" says: "qu'eu sui ricx e so
qu'eu plus voilh ai"(9) ("for I am rich and I
have what I most desire"), he does not mean that
he possesses calculable wealth, but that he feels
fulfilled by the presence and love of his lady.
There is a cause and effect relationship between his
feeling of wealth and his emotional fulfillment.
Having his beloved beside him makes him "feel" rich
despite any real lack of funds and property. His
feeling of being rich may, indeed, contradict

reality, or conversely, the use of the word "rich" has undergone alteration and no longer merely refers to finances. Raimbaut de Vaqueiras' narrator in another of his lyrics (not an alba) expresses a similar notion:

Doncs, qe'm val conquistz ni ricors?
qu'eu ja'm tenia per plus rics
qand er'amatz e fis amics (37-39)

And so, what's all this wealth and conquest
worth to me?
I thought I was far wealthier
when I was loved and a faithful lover 64

It is emotional fulfillment which is "enriching" to these lovers. John Donne picks up this theme in his masterful inversion of the alba, "The Sunne Rising", when his lover/narrator observes, "All honor's mimique; All wealth alchimie."⁶⁵

Speech, between the alba lovers, as between most courtly lovers, takes on erotic overtones. The lover of "Gaita be" contrasts the mundane activities the rest of the world engages in with the activities of love: "que za jos parlam d'amor"(18) ("down here we speak of love"). In "Entre moi et mon amin," the lady describes her lover speaking to her "doucelement"(8). And in the aube "Est il jors?" the lady exclaims: "Deus! keil parleir d'amors fait ores!"(9)⁶⁶ ("God! how it feels now to talk of

love!"). In "Sîne klâwen," the lady speaks of her lover's mouth from which come both his sweet greetings and kisses.

"S'anc fui belha" is far from the only alba which demonstrates a concern with the lover's manner of parting, a concern which is part of the alba's larger emphasis with decorum and style. In "Gaita be," the lover says: "Mal grat meu me'n coven ad anar"(23) ("In spite of myself it is fitting for me to go"). Here, what is "fitting" is allowed to take precedence. Although the lover does not desire to go, he chooses to do what is appropriate. He denies his desire to remain with his lady and obeys his more prudent reason.

Even in the tageliet, which is generally less concerned with the courtly, the lovers value "propriety." In "Ez ist nu tac," Wolfram von Eschenbach describes the actions of the lover as he prepares to depart: "urlop er nam, daz dô wol zam"(29) ("he took his leave so that it was fitting"). The knight's actions "suited" the event. As in "S'anc fui belha," parting well is a subject for commentary. The lover's behavior is notable because of its appropriateness to the situation: in this case, suitable action is a renewal of intimacy

between the lovers. The narrator seems to approve, appreciate, admire and even enjoy how "well" this lover "parts" from his lady.

Strophe four of "S'anc fui belha," as we have seen, demonstrates the lady's deep concern with her behavior and with how she appears: that she values nobility of carriage and appearance, despising anything that is unrefined and coarse. The central strophes of the lyric, as they are given in Appel's text, are narrated by a watchman who proclaims his identity as a "corteza guaita" ("courtly watchman") with his first words:

Eu sui tan corteza guaita
que no vuelh sia desfaita
leials amors a dreit feita,
per que'm don guarda del dia,
 si venria (10-14)

I am such a courtly watchman
that I do not wish the undoing
of loyal love rightly made,
wherefore I give myself to the watching
 of the day
 if it should come

The watchman partakes in an ethic of worthiness based on fidelity to certain rules and responses. Not only is he loyal to loyal lovers, but he discerns the criteria by which love is "a dreit feita". The watchman also recognizes, however, that not all relationships are of this caliber:

S'ieu e nulh castelh guaitava
 ni fals'amors y renhava,
 fals si'ieu, si no celava
 lo jorn aitan quan poiria;
 car volria
 partir falsa drudaria (19-24)

If I were watching in any castle
 where false love was reigning,
 false I'd be, if I did not hide
 the day for as long as I could;
 for I would wish
 to part false lovers

Indeed, the watchman makes a discrimination between loyal and false lovers. He wishes to part false lovers--those who give a bad name to the whole endeavor by masquerading behind a mask of courtesy while intent on ulterior motives. As Goldin notes: "In Huizinga's terms, these are the cheats who play with nothing real at stake."⁶⁷ The watchman, in order to remain loyal to love, must be false to those who are disloyal to love. But for loyal lovers, the watchman declares, "guait ieu leialmen" (26) ("I watch loyally"). The watchman's sense of the differences among types of lovers establishes the lovers of this poem as of the sort who are true and right, declaring therefore their worthiness and value. Loyalty to true love is the guiding value of the watchman. Words for false and true are among the most repeated words in the poem (words for false

occur three times; words for loyal occur three times). The concern with loyalty displayed here also pervades the entire genre as a whole. The watchman is not as interested in the particular couple he is guarding as in performing his function well because these lovers fulfill the necessary requirements for being recognized as fins drutz. His role is to be a loyal watchman to all such lovers.

The lady of "En un vergier" "a son cor en amar leyalmens" ("has her heart on loving loyally"). The lover's loyalty is an essential aspect of his allegiance to the code. He demonstrates the strength and depth of his adherence to the code by his loyalty to his love object and vice versa. Loyalty is especially required of alba lovers; the capacity to remain discreet is at least partial insurance against the inadvertent discovery of the union. Two of Wolfram's tageliet stress this factor. In "Ez ist nu tac," the lady describes her lover's "triuwe" as his companion: "und diu geselle dîn, diu triuwe"(48)--enumerating it as one of the qualities which most attracted her to him. And in "Den morgenblic," too, the lady speaks of loyalty: "gar ungescheiden unser triwe/mit einander vert"(19-

20) ("wholly inseparable our troth with each other will be").

The lovers desire reality to be constituted of their desires, but in fact, jarring reality intrudes unsought. In "Gaita be," the lover is displeased because dawn comes uncalled for: "E'l jornz ve e non l'apel" (4) ("And day comes and I do not call it"). Interestingly, the lover here, as in several other albas, confesses his lack of omnipotence and autonomy. The world is not controlled by the lovers' wishes. Unlike the heroic lover of many a popular romance,⁶⁸ he is not capable of vanquishing all the obstacles which come between him and the object of his affection. This more realistic figure recognizes the fact that there are surrounding circumstances beyond his control. The lover's autonomy extends only so far as his own actions; it is bounded by the existence of community. Cosmic and natural forces pursue their own course, but the lover attributes to these forces the intention of also pursuing him.

The concern with displeasure also manifests the lovers' preoccupation with their desires. The lover of "Gaita be" reiterates the displeasure and

distress day occasions, saying: "el jorn nos fai/mi
desplai"(11-12) ("the distress day brings
us/displeases me"). The tornadas of "S'anc fui
belha" also speak of the lovers' displeasure at
dawn:

Anc no vi jauzen
drut que'l plagues l'alba.

Per so no m'es gen
ni'm plai quan vei l'alba. (46-49)

Never have I seen rejoicing
a lover such that the dawn pleases him.

Wherefore it is not noble to me
or pleasing, when I see the dawn.

And in "Sîne klâwen," the watchman is addressed by
his courtly mistress thus:

maer du bringest, der mich leider niht gezimt,
immer morgens gegen dem tage. (11-12)

Tidings you bring me which unhappily do not
suit me
ever of a morning towards day-break.

Here, as in his "Ez ist nu tac," Wolfram refers to
the suitable. The idea of what suits the lover has
a double meaning: it "suits" in the sense that it is
fitting and apt; but it also "suits" in the sense
that it pleases. Thus, our English word "suits"
conflates for us two meanings of the word,
demonstrating an inherent association between
decorum and pleasure, combining in the word one of

the alba's primary themes. Similarly, the speaker of the aube, "L'abe c'apiert au jor," says:

Ne puet estre ke partir
Vos coviene, amins, de moi. (10-11)

It cannot be that to part,
my friend, from me, suits you.

The world of love shared by the lovers is self-created, emerging from the imaginations, fantasies, desires and personalities of the lovers themselves. Though the lovers feel a tremendous need for one another, the fulfillment they experience together is so great that they have, at least temporarily, no need for the rest of the world. As Donne's "The Sunne Rising" would later explicitly demonstrate (but to quite different purpose), the lovers feel their world contracted into a universe of two:

She'is all States, and all Princes, I
Nothing else is,
Princes doe but play us; compar'd to this,
All honor's mimique; All wealth alchimie.
Thou sunne art halfe as happy'as wee,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age askes ease, and since thy duties
bee
To warme the world, that's done in warming
us.
Shine here to us, and thou art every where;
This bed thy center is, these walls, thy
spheare. 69

In fact, in many albas, the poet places an emphasis on how alone together the lovers are, secluded and isolated from the rest of the world. In "Ab la

gensor" and "Entre moi et mon amin," the lovers sport together "tan solamen"(4) and "alainmes"(3). They stand apart physically from society, thriving away from the public sphere either in a peaceful pastoral greenworld ("en un vergier," "en un boix," "jos la flor") or in a recessed and remote inner chamber ("en chambre coie," ["Gaite de la tor," 46]). In either setting, they strive for an autonomy through which they can render the rest of the world insignificant and thereby magnify the experience of love.

The newly forged bond of love derives its being from the relationship. All being is as absorbed in the beloved, as the lovers themselves are absorbed in the union. Often the lovers express the sentiment that their very existence depends upon the seeing of or being with the other. The beloved's presence has become essential to the lover's own well-being. This interdependence and symbiosis expresses a significant aspect of love--the lover feels less than whole without the partner, needing the other to feel complete. In "Us cavaliers," the lover says:

doussa res, s'ieu no'us vezia,
breumens crezatz que morria

que'l grans dezirs m'auciria,
per qu'ieu tost retornarai,
que ses vos vida non ai. (40-45)

Gentle one, if I did not see you,
soon believe that I would die.
for my great desire would kill me,
wherefore I will soon return,
for without you I have no life.

In "Friuntlîchen lac," the lover avers:

Das muoz alsô geschehen
daz ich es niene mac,
sol ich dich, frowe, mîden eines
tages lanc (25-27)

That must thus happen
that only if I cannot help it,
would I remain away from you, my lady,
for an entire day.

The lover feels the great need for connection with his beloved, and the separation, even if only for a day,--the span of time which must necessarily sunder them--is a forced and excruciatingly painful one.

Although we are given few details about the lovers and their surroundings, alba poets continually refer to the physical closeness between the lovers. This is especially striking in view of the fact that albas are generally so nondescriptive. and their atmosphere so generalized. The focus on the lovers' physical proximity is so prominent in the genre that practically every poem specifically mentions it. In some lyrics, the lovers' closeness is suggested in a simple phrase such as "a" or "ab

son amic" or "pres de mi," indicating the lovers' side by side position. In "Entre moi et mon amin" the lady speaks of her lover "pres de mi"(13). The watchman of "S'anc fui belha" tells of "drutz que jai ab s'amia"(15); the lady of the same song speaks of not budging from the side of her lover: "qu'ieu non jassa/ab mon amic tro al dia"(39-40). In "Us cavaliers," the knight is depicted "jazia/ab la re que plus volia"(1-2). There is such close physical "attachment" between the lovers of one alba that its opening line mentions it: "En un vergier tenc la dompna son amic costa si." And in "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" the lady tells us she misses the presence of her lover's body "encoste mi"(14). In these two lyrics, the word "costa," which etymologically means "rib," is used.

In the Middle High German, the lovers' side by side position is depicted with the phrase "bi mir" or "bi mir lac." In "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê," for instance, the lady reminisces about the last time her lover "bî mir lac"(15) and similarly in "Den morgenblic," the lady laments that "nu enmac niht langer hie bî mir bestên" ("now he may stay no longer here by me") (10). The "breast to breast"

embrace is also referred to by the tageliet poet. In "Ez ist nu tac," the lover "an sîne brüste druhte er sie"(18) ("to his breast pressed her"). Conversely in "Sîne klâwen," "ir brüstelîn an Brust si dwanc"(36) ("she pressed her little breast against his breast").

In these citations, note too, the references to the reclining position the lovers take. The lover of "Ab la gensor" opens the poem speaking of his tryst with an unidentified but superlative lady:

Ab la gensor que sia
et ab la mielhs aibia
mi colgei l'autre dia (1-3)

By the noblest who might be
and by the best endowed
I lay me down the other day

Although we are not told where the action occurs, we do know who it occurs with: the lover reclines next to his prized beloved. At the beginning of the second strophe, the knight again speaks of his position:

Mentre qu'ieu mi jazia
e'n sobinas dormia (7-8)

While I was lying
and supine, asleep

Although the poem is vague about the mundane details of place, it carefully specifies--twice--the lover's reclining posture. Twice in "Gaite de la tor," too,

the lovers' lying position is referred to, first by the watchman ("cortois ameor,/qui a sejour/gisez on chambre coie" [44-46]) and later by the lover himself ("Pou ai geü/En la chambre de joie" [62-63]). The knight of "Friuntlîchen lac," is also described as reclining in the opening lines:

Friuntlîchen lac
ein rîter vil gemeit
an einer frowen arme. (1-3)

Lover-like lay
a splendid knight
in the arms of a lady.

Later in the poem the lady asks her lover to lie there longer: "nû lige eht eine wîle: sô getaet dû nie sô wol"(40) ("now just lie awhile: you could never do so well"). The lover's supine posture, in many of these examples, is mentioned at the very opening of the poem, as though it, in itself, gives a sense of place to the poems. In "Dieus, aydatz," the lover's posture is mentioned not at the opening of the poem, but in the lady's only strophe which concludes the three-strophe poem. She speaks of her lover "qu'e mon bratz/jauzen jatz"(53-54) ("who in my arms/happy lies"). In "Us cavaliers," the narrator speaks of an actual "place":

....grans merces seria,
al meyns al luec on estai

fis amicx ab so que'l plai.
(17-19)

....a great blessing it would be,
at least to the place where would be
a true lover with she who pleases him.

The lover's posture, in these poems, is obviously suggestive of the sexual activities that, in a sense, are the poem's raison d'être.

The supine posture the lover adopts may have other implications as well. Because vulnerability increases when one reclines, one does not assume such a posture unless one feels comfortable, safe and secure. Vulnerability is produced by a dropping of defenses, a certain passivity, a relaxation of one's vigilance and a diminution of one's awareness of one's surroundings. The serene mood induced by this relaxation invites play, a deliberate suspension of business, a temporary absence from responsibility, a freedom. A sense of luxuriance accompanies this abandonment of oneself to leisure because it is generally only an aristocratic or privileged member of society who can afford the repose into which neither toil, social restrictions, or sleep intrude. The very atmosphere generated by this kind of love is creative. In "En un vergier," the lover's sweet breath infuses the very air:

Per la doss'aura qu'es venguda de lay,
del mieu amic belh e cortes e gay,
del sieu alen ai begut un dous ray.
Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve!
(17-20)

Through the sweet breeze which has come
from there,
from my lover beautiful, courtly and gay,
from his breath I have drunk a sweet draught.
Oh God, oh God, the dawn! How quickly it
comes!

As God breathed the breath of life into Adam, so the lady's lover breathes the breath of life into her. The sexual act, rendered in terms of the lover's breath being imbibed by the lady, becomes not only an act of "creation" in the usual sense, but also one by which the lady is sustained, nourished and animated.

In the second stanza of "Ez ist nu tac," Wolfram tells us about the intense intimacy of his lovers at dawn in the second stanza: "Daz guote wîp ir friundes lîp vaste umbevie"(14) ("The good woman her friend's body fast embraced") and four lines later: "an sîne brüste druhte er sie"(18) ("he pressed her to his breast"). But Wolfram also uses the theme, in the third stanza of the poem, for a virtuoso display of his own prodigious poetic gifts:

si hâten beide sich bewegen,
ez enwart so nâhe nie gelegen,

des noch diu minne hât den prîs:
ob der sunnen drî mit blicke waeren,
sine möhten zwischen si geliuhten. (31-35)

they had both so agreed between them,
there was never such a close lying together
wherefore now yet Love has the renown:
If there were three suns shining,
they could not have shone between them.

Wolfram's goes to the lengths of metaphorical, even hyperbolic, comparison in order to demonstrate the closeness and inseparability of the lovers. Not even the magnified light of three brilliant suns could discover or penetrate any space between the lovers. Certainly, then, in a world with only one sun, they must appear as one, almost physically attached. The lovers have become so inextricably connected, so tightly fused together, that neither space nor light can penetrate between them. The silhouette of neither lover can be distinguished as the lovers appear, to all views and even in the most brilliant of lights, inextricable, one.

Yet Wolfram is also offering a contrasting depiction of the actual situation: the sun's light will actually cause their separation as well as demonstrate it. Wolfram's image, which speaks of three suns not being able to discover any space between the lovers, is an ironic allusion to the effect that the real (rather than poetically

created) sun will have on the lover's union.

In "Den morgenblic," Wolfram again sharply focuses on the lovers' intimacy: "diu friundîn den vriunt vast an sich dwanc"(15) ("the lady pressed her lover fast to herself"). Her tears moistened the cheeks of both of them ("ir ougen diu beguzzen/ir beider wangel," [16-17]) because they were lying so closely together. And she declares: "zwei herze und einen lîp hân wir" (18) ("two hearts and one life have we"). Yet even beyond these depictions, the narrator actually renders the intimacy himself, in the final stanza, adding his own comments:

Der trûric man nam urloup balde alsus:
ir liechten vel diu slehten
kômen nâher, sus der tac erschein:
weindiu ougen, sûezer frouwen kus;
sus kunden si dô vlehten
ir munde, ir brüste, ir arm, ir blankiu
 bein:
swelh schiltaer entwurfe daz
geselleclîche als si lâgen,
des waere ouch dem genuoc.
ir beider liebe doch vil sorgen truoc.
si phlâgen minne ân allen haz. (23-33)

The sad man swiftly took his leave thus:
their smooth bright skins
came nearer, thus the day shone:
eyes crying, the kiss of a sweet woman;
thus they could then intertwine
their mouths, their breasts, their arms,
 their white legs.
whichever painter were to depict that
companionably as they lay,

that would also have been enough.
their pleasure indeed bore many sorrows.
They cultivated love without any hate.

This graphic and lively depiction of sexual activity, as well as others in Wolfram's tageliet, demonstrates his interest in portraying these very specific aspects of human love. The portrait is at once vivid and full of motion; parts of bodies merge. Wolfram is able to convey the frantic intensity, the restless tumult, the profusion and interpenetration of parts, the complex and swift intertwinings, while yet retaining a sense of decorum--an esthetic perception of the scene. The idea of satisfaction which is alluded to in the word "genuoc" ("enough") is not experienced directly by the lovers but by an outsider. In this last stanza, Wolfram moves us back from the closer perspective we were given earlier by the lovers in their own speeches. We turn to a more objective point of view, an esthetic one, as Wolfram prepares us for the most graphic scene in the poem. The closer the lovers get, the further the point of view recedes from them; their intimacy is such, he implies, that it can never be imitated or reenacted in verse.

The allusion to the "schiltaer", literally a "shield painter" indicates that the lovers are

providing good subject material for art. Line ten of the stanza is difficult to interpret, and has several meanings. Hatto, making it a comment on the lovers' movements, translates it: "he would have enough to do!"⁷⁰ In other words, the complexity and confusion of the scene would be a challenge for an artist to capture in visual image. The lovers are moving so quickly, their parts seem disembodied; yet the intertwinings are so complex, they appear as one being. In order to capture such a scene, the artist would have to freeze motion itself. Sayce centers, in her translation, on the idea of artistry, rendering the line: "Lit. `that would satisfy even him', i.e. could he paint them as they really were: `he would indeed be equal to his task'."⁷¹ In other words, all an artist would have to do in order to paint a masterpiece would be to imitate the scene. No artistic treatment or embellishment would be necessary because as the scene appears, it is itself almost a work of art. Richie's verse translation has a slightly different tinge:

If a shield-painter could have limned
 them there,
Where they lay clasped, no other picture
 could have been as fair. 72

Her reading also stresses the beauty of the scene as

it is, not in order to indicate the difficulty an artist would have in capturing it, but to suggest the consummate glory of the scene, the unsurpassable delicacy and refinement of the lovers' actions.

Both Hatto's and Sayce's interpretations, unlike Richie's, focus on the traditional topos that the scene defies representation. How can a painter depict such tumultuous and swift motion, such complex intertwinings, such profusions of parts? Wolfram also provides an answer: just any artist could not--a great artist does not represent, he creates. And only an artist of the greatest magnitude could do justice to such a scene--only an artist such as Wolfram himself can create and animate this scene and he has just proven his case by limning the action in words. The idea that such a scene would be appropriate subject matter for a medieval shield painter--or a painter in any other medium--or a poet--is almost shocking. Yet Wolfram has done so, applying a very traditional topos to very unconventional subject matter. He has made his representation of human sexuality acceptable as esthetic endeavor, depicting the scene in all its splendor. This poem disproves Forster's theory that

the alba depicts sexuality in only subtle, understated ways,⁷³ for there is nothing obscure, understated or euphemistic in Wolfram's portrayal.

The depiction, powerful and explicit as it is, is not coarse or animalistic. There is feeling and admiration expressed for the lovers: their skins are "lichten" ("white," "bright" or "shining"), the lady is "süezer" ("sweet"), their legs are "blankiu" ("white," "shining," Hatto translates this nicely as "gleaming").⁷⁴ And the very fact that Wolfram evokes the painter gives the scene decorum, as though we can step out of the lovers' emotional world, and view the lovers as beautiful objects. Sympathy is expressed for them when the narrator tells us of the many sorrows they bore. Nonetheless, for all their sadness, they were able to "cultivate" their love. The concluding words: "ân allen haz" ("without any hate") is the kind of understatement which brings back a sense of proportion to the scene while yet conveying the intense love they have for one another.

The transition the lovers will be forced to undergo will sever this close attachment. One motif predominant in the tageliet is that of the necessity of parting engendering a renewal of sexual activity

and we have just seen an example of this in "Den morgenblic," where the description of the lovers' intimacy is preceded by the narrator informing us that the lover took his leave swiftly. This motif is related to the effect the thought of parting has on intimacy. In "Ez ist nu tac," for instance:

urlop er nam, daz dâ wol zam; nu merket wie:
dâ ergie ein schimpf bî klage. (29-30)

He took his leave so that it was fitting; now
mark how:
A game went along with the lament.

And in "Sîne klâwen" too, the lovers' embrace concludes the lyric:

ir brüstelîn an brust si dwanc.
der riter ellens niht vergaz
(des wolde in wenden wahters dôn):
urloup nâh und naêr baz
mit kusse und anders gab in minne lôn. (36-40)

Her little breast against his breast she pressed.
The knight did not forget prowess,
(though the watchman wanted to prevent him):
leave-taking near and even nearer
with kiss and other things gave them love's reward.

The thought of parting becomes the impetus for further intimacy once more in "Von der zinnen," also serving as the concluding scene:

unvrömedez rucken,
gar heinlîch smucken
ir brüstel drucken
und mê dannoch
urloup gap, des prîs was hôch. (37-41)

undistant embracing,

intimate pressing close
the stroking of her little breasts
and even more besides
gave farewell, the worth of which was high.

The use of the litotes is again in evidence in the phrase "unvörmedez rucken" ("undistant embracing") as well as in the indefinite statement "und mê dannoch" ("and more besides").

As we have seen, all of Wolfram's poems take up the theme of parting causing the renewal of sexual activity. His poems, unlike most albas, are not static: there is much movement and action in them. However, although the poems focus on parting, they also portray, more explicitly than any other albas, sexual intimacy. Richie observes that in Wolfram's tageliet:

stress is laid on the knight's valour as shown by his fearless prolongation of love's farewell while the danger quickens....Not since Kürenberg's lover called for his horse and armour, had the martial note in the Minnesang been thus decisively sounded Here knightly valour and knightly honour are objective realities; and this secret nocturnal love is an adventure of the chivalrous life involving both. 75

Although they show action, the poems do not take us beyond these intimate acts to portray the actual leave-taking. The movement of the poems is, paradoxically, toward increased closeness and intimacy between the characters even though the

subject of the poem is separation. Or we could say that there is a bidirectional movement in the poems: verbally, the lovers move toward parting, physically, they draw closer together.

The erotic aspect of the temporality of love is most explicit in Wolfram's tageliet, but he is not the only alba poet interested in this theme. Many imply that the very short span of time the lovers are granted makes their time together all the more valuable. The awareness of the transitoriness of love produces an attitude that promotes the desire for hedonistic pleasure. Since the future is unknowable, and since their next meeting may be far off in time, if it occurs at all, the lovers make the best of their meager allotment of time. Thus, not only Wolfram's lovers, but many alba couples are determined to enjoy the experience until the last possible moment. The lady of "En un vergier" addresses a series of invitations of her lover, one after the other, in order of escalating intimacy. The carpe diem theme established, the lady beckons her lover to sexual play "despite"(11) her husband and "tro la gaita toque son caramel"(15) ("until the watchman plays his shawm"). The spare rationing of time, as Ovid made explicit in the letter from

Leander to Hero in the Heroides, makes it extremely valuable:

quo brevius spatium nobis ad furta dabatur,
hoc magis est cautum, ne foret illud iners.
(109-110)

the briefer the space given to us for secret
love
the greater is our care lest that space
be idle

The temporality of love, then, adds a further spark to the lovers' ardor and the spare rationing of time, while a cause of great grief to the pair, nonetheless also inspires and makes more keen their pleasures.

Unification overcomes time's threat. In "En un vergier," the opening Edenic tableau presents a woman and man conjoined at their sides: "tenc la dompna son amic costa si"(2). Similarly, in "Ez ist nu tac," the lady would "encastle" her lover within her eyes:

...ich in minen ougen gerne burge,
möht ich in alsô behalten. (8-9)

...I in my eyes would gladly encastle him
if I could keep him so

She would wholly absorb him into herself in order to protect as well as possess him. Motifs of protection and possession are present in several other poems. "Friuntlîchen lac," as we have just

seen, opens with one such image:

Friuntlîchen lac
ein rîter vil gemeit
an einer frowen arme (1-3)

Lover-like lay
a splendid knight
in a lady's arm.

And even the very idea of embrace implies not only intimacy, but encircling, engulfing possession as well:

Daz guote wîp ir friundes lîp vast umbevie:
der was entslâfen dô.
("Ez ist nu tac," 14-15)

The good woman, her friend's body fast embraced:
who was sleeping there.

When he espies dawn, on his awakening, he likewise clasps her ("an sîne brüste druhte er sie"(18) ["he clasped her to his breast"]). The lover Heinrich's tageliet tells us that his beloved embraced him, too: "und mich al umbevie"(24) ("and she embraced me all around").

Alba poets situate their lovers in a world which either transcends time and mortality or attempts to replace it with something completely unlike it, something unnatural. The lovers of many an alba, while they may see their love affair as a natural expression and while they may sometimes align themselves with birds or with a natural milieu,

nonetheless generally seek escape from nature, wishing to transcend both it and time. They wish, in effect, to escape flux, decay--mortality. The lovers want to create their own anti-natural world, one immune to time. Thus, in their aspiration to transcend the natural through art and artifice, they continually implore God to abrogate the cosmic cycle. Ovid does this explicitly in referring to Jove's prolongation of night for his own pleasure in Amores 1.13; alba lovers express similar wishes without alluding to such mythological or poetic antecedents.

Night, as repository of the occult and realm of the unseen, veils the illicit lovers, encircling a time of individual fulfillment and private pleasure. The remote, mysterious realm of erotic dalliance, night nourishes and sustains passionate love, providing a sanctum within its shadowed expanse. It is a dynasty unto itself, where Eros reigns. The watchman of "S'anc fui belha" speaks of his preference for the longest and darkest nights, even though during them he himself suffers most:

Be'm plai lingua nueg escura
el temps d'ivern, on plus dura,
e no'm lais ges per freidura
qu'ieu leials guaita no sia

tota via,.... (28-32)

I am well pleased by the long dark night
of wintertime, when it lasts longest
and I shall not fail, even for the cold,
to be a loyal watchman
always....

During such long, dark winter nights, the lover's
tryst can be most fully extended in time.

The loyal, protective companion/narrator of
"Reis glorios" however, does not so completely trust
in the night's shadowy domain. As an outsider, he
expresses forboding about the lover's safety within
the mysterious, unseen realm. The narrator voices
his misgivings for the lover's safety since the
lover vanished from view: "eu no lo vi pos la nochs
fo venguda"(4) ("I have not seen him since the night
has come"). Night has spread its tenebrous veil
between the two companions. The watchman's
apprehension about his friend's safety pervades the
song, inspiring a similar forboding in the
audience--a fear that the lover is immersed in an
unknown or unknowable--possibly dangerous, even
treacherous--realm, and that he is beyond the reach
of a mere compagno. The lover, therefore, seems
inaccessible, hidden away in another dimension
altogether.

Light is awaited with a combination of fear and

longing by the watchman of "Reis glorios" in contrast to the bird he describes who searches the wood seeking day. Ironically, he looks toward dawn's advent as the time of reunion with his bel companho, but that very time spells disunion for the lover and his beloved.

Ensconced in their "society of two," however, the lovers pay no heed to the activities taking place in the surrounding environment. In a sense, that is why no external activities or environment is presented in most albas. Reversing the routine of the larger society in which they reside by being active when most of the populace sleeps, they flourish in the nocturnal realm. In "Entre moi et mon amin," the lady speaks of the joyful rendez-vous she took part in "mairdi/Toute lai nuit a la lune"(3-4). The moon and its light are important in Heinrich's tageliet as well. In other albas a star is occasionally referred to.⁷⁶ Generally, however, even these external signs and images of night are excluded from the alba.

In "Ab la gensor," the lover recalls his tryst with his lady "l'autre dia"(3). Yet as the poem proceeds, we learn that the lovers had to disperse

at dawn, and that their tryst was therefore more accurately l'autre nuit. Although the speaker probably means the span of twenty-four hours which constitutes the entirety of one full day rather than solely the hours of sunlight usually meant in alba lovers' references to day, he might also be implying that his day--that part of time which is most valuable to him--has occurred at night. Although it had not yet dawned, the lover refers to the activities of love as having taken place during the day. He transforms night into day because it is the portion of time that he spends with his beloved which is most important. Thus, night seemed like day to him in his recollection. And his sense of time is revealed to be reversed.

One of night's effects upon lovers, then, is to abrogate their sense of time. As the watchman of "S'anc fui belha" implies, night's darkness obscures the perception of time's passage. The lovers can successfully seek temporary obliviousness to its passing. The activities of love provide an additional obfuscation of the lovers' sense of time, as indeed, the fulfillment and pleasure of the experience may actually, in an emotional sense, transcend time.

Gazing at his beloved, the lover of Heinrich von Morungen's beautiful "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê," is so enchanted, that, rapt in his almost hallucinatory vision, he loses all sense of time:

Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê
geliuhten dur die naht
noch wîzer danne ein snê
ir lîp vil wol geslaht?
der trouc diu ougen mîn:
ich wânde, ez solde sîn
des liechten mânen schîn,
dô taget ez. (1-8)

Alas, shall never more for me
shine through the night
whiter even than the snow,
her body so beautiful?
It tricked these eyes of mine:
I thought it must have been
the light of the bright moon.
Then it dawned.

Dronke notes that this light-filled stanza "plays on the theme of reality and illusion in the three kinds of light--moonlight, daylight, and the radiance of the beloved's body."⁷⁷ The beloved's body shines so luminously--whiter than snow, as bright as the moon's light--that his eyes were fooled ("trouc") into believing that night was still ascendent. He thought her body was reflecting the moonlight; in fact, her body was aglow in a radiance of its own. The lover, in comparing his lady to the elements, demonstrates how she surpasses them.

Her body's glow surpasses the sparkling purity of snow and the moonlight's radiant lustre. Her almost supernatural gleam gives her an ascendancy over nature, an iridescence which provides a kind of short-lived immortality. In associating his beloved with the moon, he evokes Diana, also a sacred enchantress. Strikingly, both snow and moon are affected negatively by the sun: snow melts in its heat; the moon pales, diminishes, and eventually vanishes once the sun ascends in all its splendor. Yet at night, the moon is stunningly bright, its pure white light keenly contrasting with the black night sky. We know, from the lady's final stanza, that the lover lost himself in contemplating her, for she reminisces:

Owê, daz er sô dicke sich
bî mir ersehen hât!
als er endahte mich,
sô wolte er sunder wât
mîn arme schouwen blôz.
ez was ein wunder grôz
daz in des nie verdrôz.
dô taget ez. (25-32)

Alas, that he has been so often
lost in contemplation on me!
When he uncovered me
he so wanted without clothing
my arms to see.
It was a wonder great
that it never wearied him in this.
Then it dawned.

Scholars have disagreed over the acceptability of

Kraus' emendation of the "mîn arme" ("my arms") to mich armen ("poor me"), but in either reading the sense of the lady's modesty comes across. Two views of the lady coexist: her lover's perception of her radiant beauty; her sense of her humble humanity. In finding his lady's glow more brilliant than moonlight, the lover instills the scene with a sense of wonder, a wonder matched in the final stanza by the lady's marvel at her lover's tireless gazing at her; both wonders are jarringly shattered and voided by day.

Day arrives unexpectedly. When day breaks for the lover of Heinrich's poem, it does so startlingly because it was somehow unexpected. Time, when perceived in the abstract, may be infinite, but it is the nature of the lovers' relationship that imposes finite restrictions on time. The more conscious one is of such restricted time, the more quickly it is perceived to be passing. Despite the lovers' attempts to escape time, they are, like all forms of life, completely subject to it. It is the necessity of definite departures and the secret nature of their relationship that renders the lovers all the more mastered by time.

It is only when the light of day is sufficiently advanced--that is, at dawn--that visual reminders reimpose an awareness of temporal flux. The lovers, having ignored the passage of time, are startled into an awareness of day's imminence. Hence, the alba is replete with exclamations and shouts of dismay. The refrain of "En un vergier" continually reiterates this sense of the unmeasured and unaccustomed speed with which dawn ascends: "Oy Dieus, oy dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve!" The friend of "Reis glorios" repeatedly warns the lover of the ever-nearing threat in his refrain: "e ades sera l'alba." The urge to action conveyed in the refrain of "Us cavaliers" resembles that of many dawn-songs:

Ai!
qu'ieu aug que li guaita cria:
Via
sus! qu'ieu vey lo jorn venir
apres l'alba.

Ah!
for I hear that the watchman cries:
Away
up! for I see the day come
after the dawn.

It is through such repetitions that the actual structure of the poem conveys not only the rapid passage of time, but also the gathering momentum of time as it hurls forward. As a consequence, the

audience is left feeling the inevitable rush, the fleet movement of time. But even outside the refrain, dawn's suddenness is often cause for comment and complaint. The speaker of the aube "Est il jors?" exclaims:

Bien m'avroit navreit a mort
Ke si tost l'amoinroit ores. (2-3)

It would well wound me to death
If anyone has brought the time so soon.

The lady of "Ez ist nu tac" expresses the dread such recognition of dawn's sudden imminence instills:

sol er von mir scheiden nuo
mîn friunt, diu sorge ist mir ze vruo (5-6)

Should he separate from me now
my lover, this sorrow is mine too early

In the next stanza, her lover expresses similar sentiments:

kein trûric scheiden alsô snel.
uns is diu naht von hinnen alze balde:
wer hât si sô kurz gemezzen? (20-23)

I never yet knew such a sad separation
so sudden.
Night is from us all too soon--
who measured it so short?

Chaucer incorporates this motif into Criseyde's aubade:

Thow doost, allas to shortly thyn offyce,
Thou rakle nyght. (III, 1436-1437)

Dawn is not seen by the lovers in its cosmic and cyclic role, but neither is it viewed naturalistically. No longer an objective, external phenomenon, dawn begins to manifest "human" as opposed to natural features; to it the lovers ascribe human actions and motivations. Dawn is personified as thief, accused of stealing the beloved or trying to cheat the lovers of precious time. In the first strophe of "Gaita be" the lover exclaims that dawn steals his new joy:

joc novel
mi tol l'alba,
l'alba, oi l'alba! (5-7)

And in the final strophe of that poem, he claims that dawn wishes to deceive them:

engandar
nos vol l'alba
l'alba, oi l'alba! (26-28)

In "Gaite de la tor," the lover, who sees dawn as the enemy, says:

Trop m'a neü
L'aube qui me guerroye. (65-66)

Too much it has harmed me
The dawn which combats me.

In "Von der zinnen" the blast of dawn "breaks" or "presses" through the clouds:

durh wolken dringet
ein tagender glast. (24-25)

In the tageliet, dawn begins to assume the symbolic characteristics of a gilos--the character, incidently, whose absence in the tageliet is striking. Perhaps in his absence, the dawn itself comes to represent or symbolize the lovers' fear of retribution. The lady of "Den morgenblic," for example, complains that the dawn's splendor "chases" her lover from her: "den jaget von mir dîn schîn"(11).

Sometimes dawn is perceived by the lovers as spying enviously, peeping and peering in voyeuristically at them, miming the role of the jealous husband in the eyes of the guilty couple. Thus dawn in "Sîne klâwen" makes "glances...through the glass" "blinken...tet durh diu glas" (33).

In a very celebrated image from Wolfram's masterpiece, "Sîne klâwen," dawn is seen not only as "natural" but as animalistic, even predatory. Likened to the talons of a mighty eagle in the act of clawing through and piercing the "clouds" or veil of night, dawn swiftly and spectacularly ascends:

Sîne klâwen durh die wolken sint
 geslagen,
er stîget ûf mit grôzer kraft,
ich sihe in grâwen tâgelîch als er
 wil tagen,
den tac,... (1-4)

His claws through the clouds have struck,
he rose aloft with great power,
I see him grayling, daylike, as if he will
dawn,
the day,...

Richie views these lines as imaging not an animalistic, but a superhuman, creature. The two interpretations are ultimately reconcilable:

...over and beyond [the human side of the story] we can sense the lordly, untarrying, relentless advance of Day. 78

In this powerful incipit, the dawn most appears in its guise as the vengeful husband. It has the characteristics of a dangerous weapon: sharp, cutting, penetrative, violative. Richie alludes to this in her observation that

in this brief, concentrated drama there are, we may say, four actors. For, in addition to the three human figures, the watchman with his wise fidelity and the reckless lovers, there is also Day itself, so powerfully conceived that we feel its superhuman presence, irresistible and fateful, forerunner and champion of the hostile human forces which are not named. 79

In *Sîne klâwen*, dawn is retribution "personified."

That temporal flux violates love is graphically evinced in Wolfram's tageliet where dawn rises aloft "mit grozer kraft" ("*Sîne klâwen*," 2) ("with great power"), its sharp talons and darting glances capable of sundering the lovers' union. In "Den

morgenblic," dawn is also portrayed as a powerful force:

Der tac mit kraft al durch diu venster
dranc.
vil slôze si besluzzen:
daz half niht, des wart in sorge kunt. (12-14)

The day with power all through the window
pressed.
Many locks they locked:
That helped not: because of which they
sorrowed.

The nightingales of "Quan lo rossinhols escria," are gentler aviary reminders of dawn. While unaware of the significance of the message their song bears, they instinctively keep time, crying out "la nuev e'l dia"(2). For the lovers who hear them, these cries are a continual reminder of the perpetual flow of time. Their love, unlike that of the birds in the song, is doomed to imminent disruption by dawn--and again, unlike the birds in the song, the lovers are aware of the fragility, preciousness and precariousness of their time together.

Dawn's first light signals the lovers that they are in a world which opposes their desires. Day introduces the time of social responsibility which opposes the claims of love. If night's mysterious darkness grants to the lovers an illusion of timelessness, the glaring light of day reveals to

them the obdurate reality of mortal, finite time. They begin to recognize this as the dawn brightens. Indeed, the light of day initiates visibility, even color. But to the lovers, the world has, in a sense, gone "gray," as it does literally in the tageliet; it has lost its color, its vibrance. Unlike the classical antecedents to the alba which associate color with Eos and Aurora, albas rarely mention color. And when the lover of Walther's "Friuntlîchen lac" mentions "bluomen rôet"(33) ("red flowers") it is only to dismiss them as meaningless and worthless.

The external world affects the lovers' otherwise Edenic realm, intruding into it unwanted and with unwonted speed. Outer reality penetrates their enclosed enclave; in the clear light of day they can perceive that their affair is now untenable. They can no longer evade the fact that the outer world can affect them and interfere with their love.

Advancing daylight rouses the lovers from a nocturnal realm of timeless fulfillment to a diurnal domain of mortal time. And mortal time is, by its very definition, finite. It can be counted, measured and consumed--but it cannot be stilled or stopped. The limitations placed on their allotted

time is a dominant cause of complaint in the alba and is conveyed by the frequent use of words of contingency.

Prepositions and adverbs, words of time and position, are also very common. The word "until," for example, is frequently used in relation to the pleasures the lovers can experience before dawn puts an end to them. In "En un vergier" the word "tro" is used twice: once with reference to the watchman's cries, once with reference to his shawm-playing. The speaker of "Quan lo rossinhols escria," tells us that he is "ab ma bell'amia/...tro la gaita de la tor/escria"(3-6). In "Reis glorios" the watchman says that he watched "tota noch tro al dia"(28). The lady of "S'anc fui belha," exclaims: "no mudarai qu'ieu non jassa/ab mon amic tro al dia"(39-40) ("I could do nothing else but lie/by my lover til day"). In "Gaita be," again the tryst lasts "trosqu'a l'alba"(3) as it does in "Gaite de la tor" where the lover is told not to be afraid: "Que tresq'a jor/poëz demener joie"(49-50) ("For until day/you can remain joyful"). The lover of "Ab la gensor" recalls how he "m'adormi tro al dia"(6).

Frequently the alba begins with a preposition or

adverb: "En un vergier sotz fuella d'albespi," "S'anc fui belha," "Ab la gensor," "Quan lo rossinhols escria," "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir," "Ez ist nu tac," "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê," "Von der zinnen," "Entre moi et mon amin," "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir." In some cases, this kind of opening gives the lyric a sense of interrupted action: the poems seem to begin in mediis rebus. In others, we feel that whenever certain conditions are present, it is inevitable that the particular event depicted will occur--as if on cue.

Dawn initiates the onset of the lovers' awareness of temporality and sets the poem, and the world, into motion. In "Reis glorios," day, in the mind of the speaker, spurs not only bird but also the gilos into action(12-14), threatening the lovers' security and making them vulnerable.

The frequency of the time-related words "soon," and "early" and "quickly" is also significant, as the lovers attempt to extend and stabilize their threatened union. The refrain of "En un vergier" continually reiterates the urgent imminence of dawn: "Oy Dieus, oy Dieus, de l'alba! Tan tost ve!" ("Oh God, oh God, the dawn! how quickly it comes!"). Similarly the refrain of "Reis glorios": "e ades

sera l'alba" ("and soon it will be dawn") repeats this motif. The sentiment is also expressed in "Est il jors" when the speaker cries out how wounded she would be: "Ke si tost l'amoinroit ores"(4) ("if anyone brought the hour so soon"). In "Dieus, aydatz" there is an anticipation of the day "soon" to be born and a request that it be peaceful and bright:

E vulhatz
Que ab patz
Lo jorns clars
El bels c'ades nais (5-8)

On occasion, as in the following citations, the idea of celerity is expressed even more forcefully with verbs for hastening. In strophe four of "Ab la gensor," for example, the sentiment is picked up in the lover's accusation to the watchman that "cochas lo dia"(21) ("you hasten the day"). In "Est il jors?" the lover exclaims: "Vos lou hasteis trop"(2) ("you hasten it too much").

The words for "soon" and "quickly" also come up in "Us cavaliers" where the lover declares:

Doussa res, s'ieu no'us vezia,
breumens crezatz que morria,
que'l grans dezirs m'auciria;
per qu'ieu tost retornarai (41-44)

Noble one, if I could not see you,
soon believe I would die,

for great desire would kill me;
wherefore I will soon return.

The placement of the word "breumens" makes it serve a double function: it expresses the idea of that the lover's longing for his lady is so intense that he must see her again, "soon," while it also expresses how quickly he would expire if he did not see her. Two lines further, he swears to return quickly ("tost").

In "Von der zinnen," the narrator tells us: "swie bald ez tagete"(33) ("soon it dawned"). A variation of that sentiment is present in the refrain of Heinrich's tageliet, which announces: "dô taget ez" ("then it dawned"). In "Slâfest du" a charming one stanza lyric attributed to Dietmar von Eist, the lady laments: "man wecket uns leider schiere"(2) ("one awakens us, alas, soon"). The watchman of "Sîne klâwen" advises: "Er muoz et hinnen balde und âne sûmen sich"(17) ("he must hence soon, without delaying himself at all"). In "Ez ist nu tac," we are also told that day comes "too soon": "uns ist diu naht von hinnen alze balde"(21) ("the night is from us hence all too soon") and in that poem, sorrow, too, comes "too early": "diu sorge ist mir ze vruo"(6).

The lady of "Friuntlîchen lac," uses an interestingly different context for the word "soon," asking her lover: "war gâhest alsô balde?"(16) ("whither do you go so soon?"). Here the lady's use of the word "soon" takes on the implication that she thinks that not only dawn, the watchman and other external forces conspire to sunder the union, but that the lover, too, is anxious to leave.

Similarly the words "ever" and "never" are frequent. The lover of "Us cavaliers" promises his lady that he will never part from her: "ni de vos mais no'm partrai"(35). He repeats the word in the second strophe when he wishes:

...s'esser podia
que ja mais alba ni dia
no fos, grans merces seria (11-13)

...if only it could be
that never dawn nor day
were, a great kindness it would be.

In "Entre moi et mon amin," the lady wishes that her situation could be forever altered and that she would never more need to hear her lover say that he must go: "Mais ke plus n'alest dixant"(20) ("never more a need to say"). The first tornada of "S'anc fui belha" repeats the word "anc" which also opens the poem: "Anc no vi jauzen/drut que'l plagues

l'alba"(46-47) ("Never have I seen rejoicing/a lover whom the dawn pleases"). Both the lady and lover of Heinrich's beautiful tageliet begin their speeches using the word "ever". The lover, who speaks first, says: "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê"(1) ("Alas, shall never again for me") and the lady, at the commencement of her following speech, says: "Owê, sol aber er iemer mê"(9) ("Alas, shall he never more"). In "Ez ist nu tac," the lover comments: "jô erkande ich nie/kein trûric scheiden alsô snel"(19-20) ("I never knew so sudden nor sad a parting"). Later he asks her to be his shield forever: "hiute hin und her/und zallen zîten"(38) ("everywhere, today and always"). In "Von der zinnen," the lover complains:

allen mannen
trûren nie sô gar zerstôrte
ir vröiden funt. (31-32)

Sadness never so completely
destroyed the fund of happiness
of any man.

These time-related words and words of contingency reveal an obsession with time in the alba. They also situate the alba in a spatio-temporal framework. Even if time and place are indefinite, they are nonetheless carefully placed within a

limiting frame.

Dawn's light, in revealing temporal movement, spurs the consciousness of social and practical realities in the lovers' minds. Dawn puts the nocturnal activities of love in actual flight in "Den morgenblic." The lady who sings the first stanza accuses dawn of chasing her lover away:

owê tac,

nu enmâc niht langer hie bî mir bestên
mîn vriunt: den jaget von mir dîn schîn.
(6, 10-11)

Ah me, Dawn,

He may no longer stay here by me,
my friend: your shine chases him from me

The necessity of departure gradually "dawns" on the lovers, making itself increasingly insistent and urgent with each passing moment. The lady of "Ez ist nu tac" prepares to depart with the lament: "urlop ich nime ze den froiden mîn"(42) ("I say farewell to all my joy"). The lover of "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê" reminisces about the night he spent with his beloved. The lady's magnificent luminescence, although stronger, brighter and more powerful than either of the two natural phenomena--the snow and the moon--to which it is compared, cannot compete with the sun's brilliance and becomes

ephemeral, receding once day ascends. She is not only supernatural, but she is also eerily dream-like, even ghostly. In "Den morgenblic," day actually illuminates the scene:

.... sus der tac erschein
weindiu ougen, süezer frouwen kus (25-26)

.... thus the day shone down
on weeping eyes, the kiss of a sweet woman

Day destroys the refuge the lovers had established whereby the lady "dâ si tougen/an ir werden friundes arme lac"(2-3) ("lay in secret/in the arms of her worthy lover") or where he lay contentedly in hers:

Friuntlîchen lac
ein riter vil gemeit
an einer frowen arme. (1-3)

Lover-like lay
a splendid knight
in the arms of a lady.

Rather than heralding the promise of a new and better day, as it does for most Christians, dawn initiates, for the lovers in the alba, the dissolution of all promise and hope.

The intermingling of desire for the lover, with trepidation about the future, gives rise to the lady's strenuous craving for stasis. The lovers desire time to cease its movement so that their present may exist in perpetuity, and they plead for immunity to the changes time metes out, wishing that

night could last forever. Dreading a future of undesired change, they cling to their fleeting moment, their now of happiness and fulfillment. The watchman of "Reis glorios" worries that his friend, who is within the lady's chamber is no longer interested in his own welfare. He warns the lover: "si non o faitz, vostres n'er lo damnatge"(19) ("if you do not do this, yours will be the harm") and finally he concludes: "aras no'us platz mos chans ni ma paria"(29) ("now neither my song nor my friendship pleases you").

In the first strophe of "Gaite de la tor," the activity of lover and lady is described by a third party who tells us:

c'or sont a sejour
Dame et seignor (4-5)

for now are reposing
Lady and lord

The word "now" frequently occurs in the genre, as it does in these two poems, as the present moment becomes all important. The lover who is, presumably, the narrator of the sixth strophe of "Gaite de la tor" speaks of his own activities:

a cestui tor
ai ceu que plus amoie (60-61)

at this moment

I have what I most love

The word "nu" is repeated three times in the first five lines of "Ez ist nu tac". The phrase, "ez ist nu tac," which begins the poem, reappears in "Sîne klâwen" when the watchman reminds the lady: "ez ist nu tac"(23). The similar phrase, "owê, nu ist ez tac"(13) comes up in Heinrich's tageliet as well. In "Slâfest du," the word "nu" is also used: "nu rüefestu kint Wâfen"(6) ("now, dear, you give the alarm"). The speaker of "Gaite de la tor," in contrast, commands "Or soit teü"(29) ("Now be silent"). In "Ich sich den morgensterne brehen" the lover is advised: "nu, helt, la dich niht gerne sehen"(2)⁸⁰ ("now, knight, do not willingly let yourself be seen"). And in the refrain of "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir," the lady repeats the sentiment: "or ne hais rien tant com le jour"(5) ("now I hate nothing as much as day"). In contrast to all these sorrowful recognitions of the end which is come to love is the speaker's concluding exclamation in "Est il jors?": "Deus! keil parleir d'amours fait ores!"(9) ("God! how it feels to speak of love now!") which Woledge translates as "Oh God! how sweet it is now to talk of love!"⁸¹

Albas often have refrains, but other devices of

repetition also appear. Devices of repetition and repetition with variation contribute a formulaic as well as formal stiffness to the poem. But they also reinforce the sense of a kind of movement which only returns to the same starting point. In "En un vergier," as we have noted, the lady begins the two central strophes by addressing her lover in an identical fashion: "Bels dous amicx"(9, 13) Similarly, the watchman's address to his friend in "Reis glorios" is no less conventionalized. He begins strophes two through six "Bel companho." Besides refrains and conventionalized addresses, repetitions of phrases within albas indicate repeated actions. "En un vergier" has two central strophes which basically recapitulate each other. The watchman of "Reis glorios" twice warns his friends, "Non dormatz plus"(7, 12) ("Sleep no longer").

Although some albas include strophes in which the speakers alternate--first lady, then lover; first lady, then watchman; or any other combination--these alternations do not necessarily signify dialogue or true exchange of responses meant to communicate between the voices in the poems.

Heinrich von Morungen writes a retrospective alba which is also a wechsel--the lovers are no longer together but reminisce about their nocturnal tryst which was curtailed and disrupted by dawn. The wechsel, is indicative of the lack of communication or response there may be between the speakers of a lyric. Each person speaks in isolation, expressing his own feelings. He does not speak in response to the words of the previous speaker. In most albas, the speakers turn toward their audience rather than each other, expecting no response from their partners.

The kind of narrative technique used by Heinrich lends a static as well as stylized feeling to the speeches by the lovers. Other narrative techniques employed by alba poets also have that effect. "Sanc fui belha," for example, is not a sequential narrative. There are two voices: that of the lady and of the watchman. But these characters do not address one another and each is involved with defining or declaring his own identity and value. The fact that albas are often difficult for modern editors to order, or when they survive in more than one manuscript often have different strophic orders, is telling. There is such lack of narrative

progression or movement within the poems that strophes can be moved around with little marked difference to the meaning of individual strophes or of the poem as a whole.

This staticness also gives the poems the feel of frozen action. They may not be framed by sequential narrative movement, or by events which move in a logical sequence, but they are "framed" nonetheless, by their unmoving and permanent stasis. It does not matter which strophes come first, or which last--all action is preserved and past; all action is memorialized.

Man's resistance to temporality sets him apart from all other natural creatures. Wolfram's lady demonstrates her alienation from the rest of the natural world in "Den morgenblich" on the basis of her divergent response to temporal change, lamenting:

. . . . owê tac,
wilde und zam daz frewet sich dîn
und siht dich gerne, wan ich eine. (7-9)

. . . . Alas, Dawn,
the wild and tame rejoice in you
and see you gladly, but for me alone.

Similarly the courtly lover of "Friuntlîchen lac" exclaims:

Waz helfent bluomen rôtt,
sît ich nû hinnen sol?
vil liebiu friundinne, die sint unmaere mir,
reht als den vogellînen die winterkalten
tage. (33-38)

What help are red flowers
since I now must hence.
Very dear love, they are of no account to me
Just as the winter-cold days to the
little birds.

Again, nature, with all its beauty, has either no meaning or a negative one. The birds of "Quan lo rossinhols escria," unlike the lovers who hear their song, accept whatever impositions nature puts upon their mating, for they are so much a part of her that they could not question their future destiny. In "Sîne klâwen," the day itself takes on a predatory guise.

The lack of specificity of location in the alba adds to the uncontextualized atmosphere of the love affair. When a setting is presented at all, which happens rarely, it is given in very sketchy outline. The lovers are placed "En un vergier sôtz fuella d'albespi"(1) ("In a park under a hawthorne in leaf") or "yns el jardi"(14) or "awal els pratz"(10) ("in a garden;" "down in a meadow"--these are all from "En un vergier"); they are "En un boix k'est leis Betune,..mairdi/Toute lai nuit a la lune"(2-3) ("in a wood beside Bethune,..Tuesday/all night by

moonlight" ["Entre moi et mon amin"); they are "jos la flor"(4) ("under the flower" ["Quan lo rossinhols escria"]) or "za jos"(18) ("down here" ["Gaita be"])¹²⁴ or the lovers may even be, as they are in "Gaite de la tor," "gisez en chambre coie"(46) ("lying in the quiet chamber"). The watchman is "foras als peiros"(26) ("out there on the steps" ["Reis glorios"]) or "de la tor"(1, ["Gaite de la tor"]; 15 ["Gaita be"]; 5 ["Quan lo rossinghols escria"])), ("in the tower").

Trees, which often provide some sort of arbor for alba lovers, are mentioned sometimes by species (hawthorne, hazel, linden) but never further described. Often, too, they will be more generalized: "un vergier," "playssaditz" ("hedges"), "un boix," "boscatge" or "la flor." The natural backdrop to the lover's drama seems to exist merely to be named and accounted for rather than described. These details are not central to the action or theme. And although birds are mentioned either in a generalized way or occasionally by species (the lark, the nightingale) they, too, are actually described only once.⁸²

Although very little of nature is acknowledged

in albas, birds appear frequently. Sometimes they function as a contrast to human love, sometimes their presentation ignores the birds' own animality. Sometimes, however -- in "En un vergier," "Dieus, aydatz," "Slâfest du" and "Quan lo rossinhols escria"-- there is true "harmony" between the birds in the poem and the lovers who hear their song. In Dietmar's "Slâfest du," a little bird, instead of a watchman, rouses the lady who exclaims, opening the poem:

Slâfest du, friedel ziere?
 man wecket uns leider schiere:
 Ein vogellîn sô wol getân
 daz ist der linden an daz zwî gegân. (1-4)

Are you asleep, beloved dear?
 One awakens us, alas, soon.
 A little bird so beautiful
 Is on the linden going on that twig.

The single image of the small bird on a particular bough isolates it. The bird appears as the natural, external signal of love's disruption. The stanza is very tender and delicate and its charm, according to Richie, resides in its "primal freshness":

more than any other song of this genre
 (so far as I know) it creates an elemental sense of the still hour of dawn. The effect is delicately heightened by the vowel-melody of the first strophe with its preponderance of the high front vowel i: friedel ziere . . . schiere . .

. vogellîn . . . linden . . . zwî,
giving an impression of the faint light
rustle of the bird among the leaves. In
contrast with this, the long broad a of
the initial word slâfest and of the
second pair of rhymes getân: gegân
strikes a profounder note of grave
pathos which is continued in the second
strophe 83

The lady who speaks, rather than being angry at the bird for the message it unwittingly bears, admires it, appreciating its beauty and delicacy. She calls it "ein vogellîn", using the diminutive, yet she also calls it "sô wol getân," literally "so well made"--a beautiful artifact of God's handiwork in miniature. She is viewing the bird from an aesthetic viewpoint. Perhaps the bird represents to her the beauty and delicacy of love--its fragility and transience, the fleetingness of its precious life. Although the bird is the bearer of sad tidings, the lady's response to it is one of identification rather than resentment. Like the bird, she too, serves as the messenger of ill tidings, for it is she who apprizes the lover of the imminent need for parting. Moreover, she recognizes that the bird is not the ultimate cause of love's disruption, but simply an agent that registers the fact of dawn's imminence. The lady's description of the bird evinces, not only her mature appreciation

of beauty and delicacy, but also her mature response to a sorrowful situation. "Slâfest du" is ascribed to Dietmar von Eist by the compilers of the Heidelberg Manuscript, and, according to Hatto, the poem

shows no specific trace of Romanic influence except perhaps the gallant phrase 'Whatever you command I'll do, sweet mistress.' The watchman is not specified. There is the bird, and the not positively identifiable man (Ms. wan) wecket. 84

Composed about 1160, the lyric would be placed with the older minnesang, says Richie, "were it not for the finished form of the simple but pure technique,"⁸⁵ and is unique among tageliet in its brevity and concision (it is comprised of only three stanzas of four lines each--twelve lines in all). The motif of the intermingling of joy and sorrow is present in "Slâfest du," as well as in several other tageliet. mentioned above. The poem also contains the gnomic or proverbial statement: "liep an leit mac niht sîn"(7) ("joy without sorrow there cannot be"). Yet similar kinds of sententia are also found in Wolfram's tageliet.

In "Friuntlîchen lac," the lover also identifies with birds, analogizing his feelings about the "red flowers" to the response birds have to cold, wintery

days. The narrator of "Dieus, aydatz," speaks fondly about "small birds", evoking the sweet warblings that he hears from the hedges as they anticipate the dawn:

car solatz
e chantars
e voutas e lays
ay auzitz
d'auzels petitz
pels playssaditz. (10-15)

for conversation
and song
and warbling and lays
I have heard
from the small birds
through the hedges.

In many of these examples, birds are referred to in the diminutive. In the first of the two references the lady of "En un vergier" makes to birds she calls them "los auzellos"(10); in strophe four they are "li auzel"(14). Here, in "Dieus, aydatz," they are "d'auzels petitz" and in "Slâfest du," the bird is "ein vogellîn." The references to birds in the diminutive seem more affectionate, as does the lover's address to his friendly "gaiteta"(1, 15) in "Gaita be." These little birds are objects of love and beauty. The birds in these examples symbolize, generally, the exalted value and preciousness of love. Birds are not earth-bound and so are symbols

of the spirit and soul--they can soar. Being natural, they respond intuitively to their natural surroundings--as in the tageliets "Friuntlîchen lac" and "Slâfest du." But they are, as in Walther's poem, also fearful (of the cold), mortal, vulnerable, fragile. In the Old Provençal citations, however, (from "En un vergier," "Quan lo rossinhols escria," and "Dieus, aydatz" as well as from "Reis glorios" and "Entre moi et mon amin"), it is the birds' song which is explicitly referred to whereas in the tageliet, it is not specifically the song of the bird which is called to our attention.

Birds, the aspect of nature that more than any other infiltrates the alba, do not always represent the lover's feelings, nor do they always serve as pleasant harmonizers with illicit, secret love. For example, "Quan lo rossinhols escria," a beautiful lyric and "the simplest of all surviving Provençal albas"⁸⁶ presents in its one seven-line strophe (which some believe to be a fragment of a longer poem) a splendidly organized series of symmetries in which the birds serve as contrasts to the lovers:

Quan lo rossinhols escria
 Ab sa par la nueg e'l dia,
 Yeu suy ab ma bell'amia

Jos la flor.
Tro la gaita de la tor
Escria: "drutz, al levar!
Qu'ieu vey l'alba e'l jorn clar." (1-7)

When the nightingale cries out
By his mate the night and day,
I am by my fair mistress
 'Neath the bloom.
'Til the watchman of the tower
Cries out: "true lover, rise up!
For I see dawn and the bright day.

I quote also Pound's beautiful translation:

When the nightingale to his mate
Sings day-long and night late
My love and I keep state
 In bower
 In flower
Till the watchman on the tower
Cry:
 "Up! Thou rascal, Rise,
 and see the white
 Light
 And the night
 Flies."

This alba, contrasts the overt and purely natural mating of the birds with the covert and complex relationship of the human lovers. A popular erotic symbol, the nightingale, according to Hatto, sings both during the day and at night "in the season of its passion".⁸⁷ The unassuming, modest exterior of the nightingale conceals its magnificent gift of song. The nightingale, "ab sa par" is portrayed in close proximity to his mate. The birds are "peers" in nature's realm where no social hierarchy hinders equality, mating, or the duration of their stay

together. The very use of the word "par," however, evokes the idea of the human social hierarchy. The physical placement of the speaker of the poem and his beloved parallels that of the nightingale pair: he, too, is "ab ma bell'amia." The lovers are also "peers," since their relationship is one of friendship. Yet for the human couple, such intimate placement--that is, the fact that he is "ab ma bell'amia"--has a definite temporal boundary beyond which the pair cannot prolong their stay. He is only "with his beloved for a limited time, "Tro la gaita.../escria...." The factors which necessitate the human lovers' parting do not affect the birds.

The human lovers are situated "jos la flor" while the nightingales (whose position is not described) are presumably above rather than beneath the blossoms on their tree. Thus the speaker and his lady are in the lower position. The lovers may also require the protective covering of the bough or blossom to shield them from public view. In contrast, the birds are unashamedly public and even call attention to themselves with their cries. As in "En un vergier," the birds in the poem thrive in a natural, idyllic milieu--the domain of freedom and

concord--in which exists an harmonic correspondence between nature and its winged denizens. The human rendez-vous is conducted beyond the boundaries of the community, outside the court; it is infused with the freshness, openness and freedom of the natural realm.

The birds also serve to contrast with a second human presence in the poems: the watchman who here represents the human as opposed to the natural world. The human world is one of men and society--civilization. Birds, perched atop the boughs of blossoming trees, flourish out of doors, beyond the realm of man's dominion and legislation.

The watchman, here as in several other albas, is "de la tor." Both the nightingales and watchman are physically elevated, but the watchman in his tower, is protected from the elements (of which the birds are, in essence, a part), ensconced in his powerful fortification. The tower is also an image of constriction. Built by men, it not only provides protection from nature, but also from fellow humans. It signifies the boundaries of civilized community, beyond which lie mysterious, unexplored regions. Within castle fortifications the lovers most likely spend most of their days. Unlike the birds who may

fly above the walls, entering and leaving at will, at least one of the lovers must reenter these enclosures--walls which prevent a non-confining, atemporal love affair. The walls symbolize the rigid restrictions which civilization imposes and which prohibit their love. The lovers therefore choose a setting for their tryst "jos la flor" which represents the natural love they seek. The contrast between the natural and human realm is made more acute by the rhyming of "flor" with "tor" and the fact that both the "flor" and the "tor" are elevated. The lovers are "supervised" by both the birds on the bough above them and the watchman in his high tower.

The birds, although elevated, cannot foresee consequences and consider the future, unlike humans. They lack consciousness as well as conscience. For them, every day repeats the same basic unchanging, cyclic pattern. Their love, unlike the human love depicted in the alba, is undisrupted by temporality--the nightingales sing out during both the night and the day; the watchman here cries out only when it is day. From the lovers' point of view, the nightingales' situation seems ideal.

In the lovely aube "Entre moi et mon amin," the only aube in which nature plays any significant role, another particular species of bird is mentioned. In this lyric, the lady recalls an idyllic trust "en un boix." Saville comments:

Along with the walls, the castle, and the watchman, society as a force in the poem has virtually disappeared. 88

Yet, as we shall see, certain aspects of society and human nature have not vanished from the poem. The lark, as does the cock in Troilus and Criseyde, serves as the watchman, rather than in contrast to him. In Northern France, the lark, was and still is "among wild birds the typical waker at dawn" and is, purportedly, "the most ethereal bird of all dawn birds in poetry."⁸⁹ The lady of "Entre moi et mon amin" hears the lark singing to her in human words:

E ke l'alowe chantait
Ke dit: "`amins, alons an.'" (6-7)

And then the lark was singing
Who says: "`friends, lets go.'"

The lady and lark are so "in tune" with each other that either she is capable of interpreting (or imposing an interpretation onto) the lark's song, or the lark has assumed the remarkable and distinctively human trait of speaking human language. Either she has become more natural,

clearly cognizant of the lark's language so that she can understand and translate it, or the lark has become more human, fully understanding the lovers' plight and warning them that their time has elapsed. The voice of the lark, to the lady, is equivalent to the advent of dawn--when she hears his singing, she knows dawn is near and perhaps can translate his song into a message for human ears. The boundary between the human and natural, though not eradicated, has become less distinct.

Not only does the lark speak human language, but another specifically human trait is also attributed to it by the lover who tells his lady:

Il n'est mié jours.
Saverouze au cors gent,
Si m'aït amors,
L'alowette nos mant. (9-12)

It is not nearly day.
Sweet, noble one,
So help me love,
The lark lies to us.

He accuses the lark of interrupting his paradisiacal bliss through intentional mendacity, through deception. One cannot read these lines without immediately recalling the celebrated lines from Romeo and Juliet (for which this poem has been suggested as a source), in which Juliet gently

plaint that: "day of us moot make disseveraunce!"
(III, 1424).

The lying lark in "Entre moi et mon amin" completes its substitution for the watchman with the attribution of the ability to lie, because occasionally in the alba the watchman is accused of lying to the lovers in order to steal time--and thus the beloved--away. In fact, the watchman refers directly to this in "Eras ço que'us dey dir," when he says:

...sitot gayta s'es reptats
que ço que dits no es vertats (23-24)⁹⁰

...even though a watchman is accused
that that which he says is not true

Some critics have suggested that dawn-songs with bird-wakers form a distinct--and probably more ancient--tradition from dawn-songs with watchmen. Saville notes:

the albas in which the lovers are awakened by birds seem to constitute a separate tradition going back at least as far as the tradition of albas with watchmen. 91

Earlier scholars such as Jeanroy and Paris claimed that the albas with bird wakers were earlier, the watchman being a later addition.⁹² But such theories were criticized as early as Baskerville's article in 1921⁹³ and no conclusive evidence has

been adduced. Saville categorizes albas into two extremes--"the alba in a castle with a watchman, and the alba in a wood with birds"⁹⁴--without attempting to order them chronologically. He notes that there are albas which combine the motifs but does not discuss how these extremes or these categories are significant.

Sometimes birds in the alba, rather than paralleling or contrasting with the lovers or the watchman, play a more active, even aggressive role. In "Reis glorios," for instance, the watchman warns:

Non dormatz plus, qu'eu aug chantar l'auzel
que vai queren lo jorn per lo boscatge,
et ai paor que'l gilos vos assatge
e ades sera l'alba. (12-15)

Sleep no longer, for I hear the bird singing
who goes seeking the day through the woods,
and I fear the jealous one will assault you
and soon it will be dawn.

The bird's chirping reminds the watchman of its natural, instinctual action and he, in his song, reminds the lover of it as well. Giraut de Bornelh renders this most beautifully, metaphorizing the bird's behavior as a search for day--as though the bird had conscious intention and as though day could be discovered hidden in the brush of the wood. Just as the bird's search for day will not hasten day's

advent, so the lover's avoidance of day will not delay it. Human or natural feeling--no matter how strong or intense--does not control the cosmos. The bird's eager and joyful anticipation of day keenly contrasts with the presumed distress the lovers feel at their anticipation of day. The analogy drawn between the gilos's actions and the bird's song seems to suggest that his human behavior is as instinctual to the gilos as the bird's singing is to it: just as the bird searches through the wood for day, the gilos would search out all possible haunts for the adulterous lovers.

Yet, like all things living, love has a glorious peak moment. In "Quan lo rossinhols escria," the lovers are situated "jos la flor"(4), beneath the blossom. Like the "flor" love, too, has a time of perfect ripeness, a culminating moment from which only decline can ensue. "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê" powerfully but delicately renders a culmination between the lovers that seems to them so perfect it can never again be experienced--which is part of the meaning of the first lines of both their speeches. It can only be recaptured and enshrined through memory (and song) and so we are presented with a retrospective tageliet. The perfecting of love,

therefore, like that of the ripe blossom, presages its decay and ultimately, its death. For humans, "perfection" is inextricably bound to decline, fulfillment to loss--hence, there can be no true "perfection," for such "perfection" would have to be stasis.

The intermingling of joy and sorrow so prevalent in the alba recapitulates this very human dilemma. Although the theme pervades the entire alba genre, in the tageliet it receives its most explicit depiction and exploration. In "Friuntlîchen lac," the lady says, "daz si dâ heizent minne, deis niewan senede leit"(8) ("that which they call love, it is nothing except the pain of longing").

Wolfram von Eschenbach takes this theme a step further. For the lover of "Der helden minne ir klage," love and its aftermath is "daz sûre nâch dem süezen"(3) ("the bitter after the sweet"), a gnomic statement. In "Von der zinnen," the lover laments: "allen mannen/trûren nie sô gar zerstôrte ir vröiden funt"(31-32) ("sadness never so completely destroyed any man's fund of happiness"). But further, in Wolfram's tageliet, joy and sorrow are so utterly intermingled that the one physically merges into the other. In "Ez ist nu tac," "dâ ergie ein schimpf bî

klage"(30) ("enjoyment went along with their lament"). And we have also already seen this motif in "Den morgenblic":

Der trûric man nam urloup balde alsus:
ir liechten vel diu slechten
kômen naher . . . :
sus kunden si dô vlechten
ir munde, ir brüste, ir arme, ir blankiu
bein. (23-25, 27-28)

The sad man took his leave soon thus:
their smooth bare skins
came closer . . . :
thus then they were able to intertwine
their mouths, their breasts, their arms, their
white legs

Again, in "Sîne klâwen" and in "Von der zinnen" Wolfram ends his tageliet with a renewal of sexual intimacy, the thought of departure stimulating a new burst of energy. Saville comments:

The love making [at the end of "Sîne klâwen"] is inspired by the separation It is the very fact of being embedded in reality, time and danger that makes the pleasure so poignant and so intense. 95

And Dronke, too, notes that the lady's terror "suddenly turns into reawakened desire, which overwhelms both lovers--a sensuality born out of the danger itself."⁹⁶ Wolfram is, at one and the same time, the most sexually explicit alba poet while also being the most realistic.

The act of separation in the alba is an act as

painful and heart-wrenching as the act of birth itself. Disunion, in the alba, as in Genesis when Eve is formed from the body of Adam, is also an act of individuation. Alba lovers express this painful wrenching apart most poignantly and explicitly. The separation is not only emotionally agonizing, but it is rendered as physically so as well. Images of disembodiment and dismemberment accompany the lovers' lament. In "Fruintlîchen lac," the lover is physically agonized: "dô sente sich sîn lîp"(50) ("his body was filled with longing"). He pledges: "sô enkumt mîn herze doch niemer von dir"(28) ("thus my heart comes away from you never"). His heart, sundered from the rest of his body, remains perpetually behind with his lady perpetually. The knight of "Us cavaliers" speaks of the separate journey he must take, also making a gift of his heart to his beloved:

Doussa res, ieu tenc ma via,
 vostres suy, on que ieu sia.
 Per Dieu, no m'oblidetz mia,
 que'l cor del cors reman sai,
 ni de vos mais no'm partrai. (31-34)

Sweet one, I take my leave,
 I am yours, wherever I may be.
 For God's sake, do not forget me at all,
 for the heart of my body remains here,
 and from you I will never part.

The lovers must now take each their separate "via."

Similarly, the lady of "Den morgenblic" addresses the following to her lover:

zwei herze und einen lîp han wir:
gar ungescheiden unser triuwe
mit einander vert. (18-20)

two hearts and one body have we:
completely inseparable our trouthe
with one another will be.

Thus the lover endeavors to retain some link, some vestige of attachment, even while he prepares to sunder the physical bond between himself and lady. Similar but more subtle, is the comment the lady of "Sîne klâwen" makes to the watchman:

du hâst in dicke mir benomen
von blanken arme, unde ûz herzen nieht. (31-32)

you have taken him from me often
from my white arms, and not out of my heart.

Saville discusses Wolfram's utilization of the zeugma:

In its use here, it yokes together, as complements of the same verb, ("hâst benomen"), two expressions, one of which ("von blanken armen") goes with the verb literally, while the other ("ûz herzen nieht") goes with it figuratively. There is the world of nature and outer reality in which watchmen do take lovers from the white arms of their ladies. But there is also a world of interior feeling, a world of the heart, from which the lover cannot be taken away. The world of nature is subject to time, but the world of feeling is not. Although physical union cannot last, their feelings for each other are eternal.

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The lady of "Slâfest du" speaks of her joy departing along with the body of her beloved: "Owê, du fûerest mîne frôide sant dir" (12) ("Alas, you take my joy together with you"). The lady of "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" commands her lover's body to God, since she cannot retain it: "A Deu soit vos cors comandeis"(20). In "Ez ist nu tac," too, the lover acknowledges his inability to keep his lady, and therefore asks, as a token, that her womanly virtue be borne as a protective shield, invoking a martial image:

dîn wîplich gûete neme mîn war,
und sî mîn schilt hiute hin und her
und zallen zîten. (37-39)

let your womanly goodness have me in its view
and be my shield everywhere
and always.

The use of the reflexive in the lovers' exclamations about parting again emphasizes how close they are--as though they were attached. In "En un vergier," the lady implores "ni'l mieus amicx lonc de mi no's partis"(6) ("nor my lover never part [himself] far from me"). In "S'anc fui belha," the lady's roundabout expression also serves this purpose:

quar seria
desconoissens vilania
qui partia malamen

son amic valen
de si, tro en l'alba. (41-45)

for it would be
ignorant vilany
whoever should part ignobly
her worthy lover
from herself, before dawn.

In "Friuntlîchen lac," the lover speaks of wanting to part: "ich wil mich von dir scheiden: daz ist uns beiden guot"(11) ("I want to part [myself] from you: that is good for us both").

Now, having to part from each other, they must also yield up their newly assumed identities as lovers and as a unit. They have become divided beings. In fact, they are almost forced into assuming two identities: one as lovers at night; the other as members of the community during the day.

The focus on memory in the alba is related to the brevity of time the lovers actually have together. Through memory, one can retain the happy past--extending and prolonging it and bringing it into the present, if not the future. Memory highlights those aspects of the relationship which desire extension. The lover of "Ab la gensor" plants the seeds of a life-long love when he relates:

un dous bais mi tendia
tan plazenmen

qu'enquer lo'm sen
e farai a ma via. (9-12)

a sweet kiss she tendered me
so pleasingly
that I feel it still
and will all my life.

The limits of love are here explicit. They endure the length of "ma via". The emotions are admittedly secular; they do not extend, as they do in Dante, beyond mortal life. The lovers' actual tryst is so brief that memory becomes an essential aspect of it. The relationship, conducted predominantly by conjunctions of opportunity and accessibility--factors of chance--may not be able to perpetuate itself except in the lovers' memories. Heinrich's tageliet is retrospective, as is "Entre moi et mon amin" (these are the only dawn-songs in which the tryst is entirely recreated in the lovers' memories rather than dramatized directly). Saville observes:

The alba of Heinrich von Morungen presents a love union which has receded entirely into the past tense and thus has ceased to exist except in the memory....What, in the usual alba is present experience...has here become a fixed, unchangeable event of the past. We do not see the lovers being separated; we see them as already separated, each of them alone with his memories. Time has done its destructive work; the love union that was once real, in the present tense, has changed to the nonbeing of the past tense, where the state of being separated is the only

reality. 98

Even in albas other than "Entre moi et mon amin" and "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê," it is the memory of the relationship which the lovers can possess and carry with them wherever they travel. Dronke comments: "It is a memory of that orchard which has stirred the lady [of "En un vergier"] with such physical force that it seemed she was drinking in her lover's presence with the wind."⁹⁹

Pledges of troth, verbal contracts, promises and oaths are likewise a prominent feature of the genre and serve much the same function. The exchange of vows prepares the lovers for separation, bestowing a promise of permanency--a word--which substitutes for presence, and hence, bears a great burden of meaning. The verbal pledge between the lovers becomes increasingly meaningful as means of retaining some "hold" on one another and the relationship. Because all other bonds are conventional, they have become meaningless to the lovers. But the verbal exchange of troth, although potentially ephemeral, is the only meaningful bond the lovers can exchange; like the kind of love they have chosen, it is volitional and emotionally expressive. Their fidelity to the pledge they give,

like their fidelity to love itself, is a basis of honor. Therefore, the oaths they make are not lightly given, nor are they apt to be lightly broken.

Giving one's word, pledging to remain faithful or to remember one's beloved, is an almost tangible and physical token of oneself. Promises of loyalty sustain the love bond across time. After asking for his lady's pledge, the lover of "Us cavaliers" himself swears:

vostres suy, on que ieu sia.
Per Dieu, no m'oblidetz mia,
que'l cor del cors reman sai,
ni de vos mais no'm partrai. (32-35)

I am yours, wherever I may be.
By God, do not forget me,
for the heart of my body remains here,
and from you I will never part.

Note, too, the use of the reflexive in line 35 which literally reads: "nor from you will I ever part [myself]." And in his sixth and final strophe, he pledges: "per qu'ieu tost retornarai"(44) ("wherefore I shall soon return"). The lady of "Ab la gensor," promises in the final strophe (the only strophe in which she speaks): "Qu'ieu remanh vostr'amia"(26) ("For I remain your lover"). The lady of "Den morgenblic" speaks for both her lover

and herself when she says:

zwei herze und einen lîp hân wir:
gar ungescheiden unser triuwe
mit einander vert. (18-20)

two hearts and one life have we
all unbroken is the troth
each keeps with the other.

The litotes characteristic of Wolfram is notable in his use of "gar ungescheiden" ("completely unbroken") which serves to stress the strength and durability of the bond. The pledge connects the lovers when physically apart, extending and anchoring the relationship. The lover of "Friuntlîchen lac," surpassing the lover of "Ab la gensor" whose memory of his lady shall last as long as his own life, swears: "sô enkumt mîn herze doch niemer von dir"(28) ("my heart will never separate from you"). In both "Us cavaliers" and "Friuntlîchen lac" the bond is not merely one of memory and not mortal as in "Ab la gensor"; rather, it is physical and permanent. Yet the pledge of the lover of "Ab la gensor" is more realistic: it can be taken literally and is fulfillable; the others are metaphorical, hyperbolic and utterly impossible in reality.

That the lovers are beginning to face reality is demonstrated in their expression of a sense of

consequence. Although the lovers would like to still time's procession, their eventual recognition of it reveals the maturing process they undergo with the passage of time. Indeed, time is actually producing the elements necessary for natural maturation. The lady of "Ez ist nu tac," demonstrates this awareness, saying:

diu vinster naht hât uns nu brâht ze leide mir
den morgenlîchen schîn. (3-4)

the dark night has now brought us to my sorrow
the morninglike shine.

or when she cries "mîn kumber wil sich breiten"(10) ("my grief will broaden itself"--that is, will "multiply").

The sense of consequence and accrual is depicted in some albas in the separation the singer makes between day and dawn, portraying them as two separate and sequential phenomena. In "En un vergier" the lady makes a distinction between dawn and day when she asks, in her third prayer that the watchman see neither: "ni la gayta jorn ni alba no vis!"(7) The watchman of "Reis glorios" speaks of "lo jorn"(9) in strophe two, but refers only to "l'alba" in his refrain. The lover of "Us cavaliers," quotes the watchman, in the refrain, as

distinguishing day and dawn: "Sus! qu'ieu vey lo jorn venir/Apres l'alba" ("Up! for I see the day come/After the dawn"). In "Quan lo rossinhols escria" the lover also hears the watchman's similar cry "drutz al levar!/Qu'ieu vey l'alba e'l jorn clar"(6-7) ("lovers arise!/For I see the dawn and the clear day").

The first strophe of "Gaita be" makes a similar distinction. The lover first speaks of the pleasure he can experience "trosqu'a l'alba"(3) but goes on to complain not that dawn but that day comes: "e'l jornz ve"(4). He always returns to "l'alba," however, in his refrain. The watchman who sings "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir" also makes the same distinction between day and dawn in this passage describing the lover as:

a celh qui'm fe mon Dieu plavir
 la nuyt preyan dins mon hostaus
 qu'ieu ans xantes
 qu'eperagues
 l'alb'e'l jorn clar (5-9)

that one, who made me swear to my God
 at night begging inside my dwelling
 that I would sing
 when dawn and bright day
 should appear.

The singular verb "eperagues" closely links the two subjects "l'alb'e'l jorn." In "Dieus, aydatz" the refrain, too, separates dawn and day, and again they

are linked closely together by the use of the singular verbs "ven" and "par":

L'alb' e'l jorns
Clars et adorns
Ven, Dieus aydatz!
L'alba par
E'l jorn vei clar
De lonc la mar
E l'alb' e'l jorns par.

Dawn and day
Bright and fair
Come, God help us!
Dawn appears
And I see bright day
Along the sea
And dawn and day appear.

The binding together of the dawn and day with a singular noun serves a purpose. It makes a distinction between dawn and day while demonstrating that one is part of the other and that they are both part of an even more comprehensive whole. Once set in motion, dawn inevitably brings day along with it. In two aubes, the distinction between day and dawn is announced in the opening lines: "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" and "L'abe c'apiert au jor." In these two references dawn is explicitly part of the larger force of day.

In the tageliet, the distinction between day and dawn is more subtle. The word tac means "day," and morgen "morning." There is no separate word for

dawn itself. Tac or morgen with a descriptive or adjectival suffix attached often signifies dawn. In "Ez ist nu tac," dawn is referred to as "den morgenlîchen schîn" (4) (literally, "morninglike gleam"). In the same poem, dawn is evoked with the words "den grâwen tac"(16), conveying the sense of movement and growth--its ever nearing imminence. But we are already prepared, from the very title of the poem, to hear a dawn song. Similarly, the title of "Ich sich den morgensterne brehen!" ("I see the morning star breaking!") informs us that we will be hearing a dawn song. The title of "Den morgenblic" ("The dawn-splendor") is equally "enlightening." In "Von der zinnen," the dawn is referred to as "ein tagender glast"(25) ("a dawning-radiance"). Dawn is announced in "Sîne klâwen" in the following way: "ich sih in grâwen tãgelîch als er wil taget"(3) ("I see it graying daylike as if about to day"). The "graying" of night signifies dawn's advent. In the tageliet, dawn is often grâwen, more obviously imaged as the blending of night and day in this realistic chromatic rendering. In the tageliet, black and white are inextricably interwoven as gray. Hatto comments:

The Romance and Slavonic traditions make

their lovers rise to 'white' dawn; but in German tageliet of the best period they rose to a "grey" dawn....Adjectives like grâ and brûn were adjectives not of pure colour but of light-effect. Grâ and its Old English cognates were applied to the gleam of steal, of frost and hoar-frost and the hoary heads of the aged....Thus the 'grey' light of dawn originally referred to the morning gleam. 100

We also see the word tac used not only with an adjectival suffix ("tägeliċh") but in a verbal form, as it is in Heinrich's refrain "dô taget ez." In no alba and only one aube can we find something similar. The lady of "Entre moi et mon amin" recalls that she met with her lover "Tant k'il ajornait"(5) ("Until it dawned").

The lovers in the tageliet show even greater awareness of the sequential and consequential, the logical procession of events. Many tageliet are more narrative than Old Provençal and Old French dawn poems. In the only two Old Provençal albas which are framed by an omniscient voice (no Old French aubes are)--the narrative voice serves, as in "Us cavaliers," only to set the scene and vanish, or, as in "En un vergier," to frame the scene and return later to complete the frame. The tageliet narrator has a larger role. He not only describes the lovers' behavior and actions but he molds the action for us rather than merely setting it, and he

conveys information to us about the lovers' feelings and actions.

Wolfram is especially interested in describing what the lovers do and how they feel. Indeed, all of his tageliet, unlike the dawn-poems of Heinrich and Dietmar, are narrated by a third party who sets the scene and describes some of the events to us, before, during and after the direct speeches between the lovers. The voice tells us, for example, that the lady began to cry, or that her tears fell on both the lovers' cheeks, that the lover requited the lady's affection or that he had to leave, much as he was reluctant to do so.¹⁰¹ This intrusion into the lovers' world, and between the audience and the lovers is absent from Old Provençal and French albas, and, among other functions, it serves to shape the events into a sequential and more narrative pattern.

Although the lady of "S'anc fui belha" tells us about her past life and her present existence, she gives the broad spectrum of her life (the before and after of her marriage), not the specific details of a night of love. But the rendering of the before and after in "Den morgenblic," for instance, is

quite different as it displays, from a distance, various movements which are taking place in the lady and her environment:

Den morgenblic bî wahters sange erkôs
ein frouwe, dâ si tougen
an ir werden friundes arme lac;
dâ von si . . . fröiden wil verlôs.
des muosen liehtiu ougen
aver nazzen. (1-6)

The dawn-splendor a woman perceived
where she in secret lay, as the watchman sang,
in her worthy lover's arms;
wherefore she lost much joy,
so that bright eyes must
grow moist again.

The lady's perception of dawn's light provides the moment of inception of the song. The framing narrative piles up information: it tells us that the lady sees dawn, that she reposes in the arms of a lover who is worthy, that she meets this lover furtively, that the watchman announces dawn and that she hears him. All these details are not significantly atypical of the genre but provide an account which, while succinct, is fuller than usual. The fourth line, however, informs us about an alteration in the lady's emotional state: she suddenly loses her joy and begins to weep. This report is quite unusual, for the narrator has taken it upon himself to set not only the scene, but also the lady's mood. Dronke comments on a similar

effect in "Sîne klâwen":

The image 'dawns' only gradually: at first, for two lines, it is nothing but a cruel, monstrous animal of menacing strength--only in the third line does it grow 'day-like'; only in the fourth does it explicitly become day itself. Thus Wolfram evokes the moments from numb apprehension to conscious fear in the lady's thoughts. 102

Consequence and contingency are also expressed in the alba in the lovers' desire for possession. In "Gaita be," possession is contingent on time:

Gaita be, gaiteta del chastel,
quan la re que plus m'es bon e bel
ai a me trosqu'a l'alba.
E'l jornz ve e non l'apel;
joc novel
mi tol l'alba,
l'alba, oi l'alba! (1-7)

Watch well, little watchman of the castle,
when the creature who is best and most fair
to me
I have by me until the dawn.
Day comes but I do not call it;
a new joy
the dawn steals from me,
the dawn, yes the dawn!

The lover "has" ("ai") his lady at his side, but only for a while. The temporary nature of his possession of the beloved is stressed in the very opening words of this poem, where the lover implores the friendly "gaiteta" to "guard well," implying that their meeting is something precious which needs to be protected from others. Furthermore, the lover

attributes to dawn the intent of robbery. In the second strophe, when the lover declares "qu'eu sui ricx"(9) ("for I am rich"), again the theme of possession is invoked.

Motifs which emphasize possession and fear of loss pervade other albas as well. The aube, "Gaite de la tor," mentions "larron vont en proie"(6) ("thieves who go in prey") and "li robeör"(35) ("robbers") lurking in the dark shadows of the landscape. In "Ez ist nu tac," the lady expresses an intense desire to possess, secure and even absorb her lover:

ich weiz vil wol, daz ist ouch ime,
den ich in mînen ougen gerne burge,
möht ich in alsô behalten. (7-9)

I know full well, that it is the same to him,
whom I in my eyes would gladly encastle,
If I could hold him in this way.

The association of sight, concealment and possession in these lines is striking. The lady would at one and the same time, shelter and protect her lover, have him as a constant object in her view, while preventing him from being seen by others, and she would "hold" him so. Her holding of him is simultaneously an act of embrace and of possession. The lady would like, literally, to "encastle" ("burge") her lover in her eyes, metaphorically situating him,

perhaps, in the same kind of relation to herself that her own lord has with her.

Physical possession, no matter how strongly it is desired, must be relinquished at dawn. Ironically, the gilos legally retains physical possession--ownership--of his wife (and her body), even though he no longer possesses her heart, for that part of herself has been given to the man she truly loves. He is the gilos because he cares so much for physical possession that he guards his wife's physical body even when she feels no emotional attachment and does not reciprocate any feelings he may have for her. He lacks the subtlety of sensibility which distinguishes between the physical possession of an object and any other possible relation to it.

Another related, common thread which runs through albas is the theme of the impossibility of permanence in a love relationship. The lady of "Sîne klâwen," a tageliet which consists primarily of her dialogue (which turns to harangue) with the watchman, desires to retain her lover as long as possible. The more prudent watchman, however, continually urges her to wake her lover and send him

safely on his way before it is too late. She complains:

du hast in dicke mir benomen
von blanken armen, und ûz herzen nieht. (31-32)

You have taken him from me often
out of my white arms, but not out of my heart.

Physical possession (the motif of theft is again suggested in the "hâst benomen") is impermanent--the lover's body can be taken away by the watchman, but his heart (as in lines 18-20 cited earlier from "Den morgenblic"), may keep the lover, even when the lady's arms can no longer clasp him. The dissociation of emotional and physical possession sows the seeds of a spiritualized love. Similarly in the penultimate strophe of "En un vergier," the lady renders the intimacy between herself and her lover as the passage of a sweet breeze from his location to her own:

Per la doss'aura q'es venguda de lay
del mieu amic belh e cortes e gay,
del sieu alen ai begut un dous ray (17-19)

Through the sweet breeze which has come from there
from my lover beautiful, courtly and gay,
from his breath I have drunk I sweet draught.

The lovers, because they are one in spirit, can consummate their relationship even when apart.

The emotional transition the lovers undergo is depicted more specifically in the larger movements

which occur in individual lyrics. "Ab la gensor," provides an illustration. The poem has five strophes. Each strophe consists of six lines with three isometric rhyming lines of six syllables followed by two lines of four syllables using a different rhyme, followed by a final line of six syllables rhyming with the first three and thus unifying the strophe: AAA BB A. Rhyme A runs throughout the poem, but rhyme B is used only in the first three strophes, and in the two final strophes a different rhyme is substituted. The poem has no refrain, and one scholar has rejected its inclusion in the alba genre altogether.¹⁰³ Yet it does have many of the elements of the alba plot, including the gaita and the gilos. Poe, among others, claims it belongs in the corpus, citing the opening two words "Ab la" (as well as the repetition of the phrase in line two) as the poet's intentional reversal of the word "alba," in order to indicate the genre in which he was placing the poem.¹⁰⁴ However, in order to prove this, Poe would have to make a thorough search of courtly poems in order to confirm that the phrase "ab la" is never used in the incipits of other types of poems. Poe fails to provide this

evidence. The phrase "ab la" is certainly frequent in albas and, I believe, significant as well, but I have not researched whether it is equally frequent in other genres. Leaving aside this matter, we can still examine "Ab la gensor" without classifying it definitively.

Like "En un vergier," "Ab la gensor" opens with a peaceful scene of love and solace but here we are given no real setting. The lover opens the poem and narrates the first five strophe:

Ab la gensor que sia
et ab la mielhs aibia
mi colgei l'autre dia
tan solamen
jogan rizen
m'adormi tro al dia.

Mentre qu'ieu mi jazia
e'n sobinas dormia
un dous bais mi tendia
tan plazenmen
qu'enquer lo'm sen
e farai a ma via. (1-12)

With the noblest lady who could be
and with the best endowed
I lay me down the other day
so alone
playing, laughing
I fell asleep til day.

While I was lying
on my back, asleep
a sweet kiss she tendered me
so pleasingly
that I feel it still
and will all my life.

The lover recalls a relaxing rendez-vous where he

eventually fell contentedly asleep with his lady. The scene--serene, joyful--is rendered in the past tense. The lover's speech is courtly as he recalls the tryst with the most noble ("gensor") lady. This being is not only superior to all other ladies who exist, but she also surpasses all those who could ever be conjured in the imagination. Indeed, the lover never even uses the word "lady" to describe his beloved, but allows her gender to emerge through his use of the feminine article. The internal rhymes of lines four and five are not repeated in later strophes, but they work effectively in strophe one, their metrical dissimilarity nicely contrasting with the parallelism of the rhymes. The repetition of the rhyme "dia" (lines 3 and 6) is unusual, bringing to our attention the repeated use of the reflexive verbs which both indicate the lovers "actions." Both actions, however, are really passive. The lover reclined; he slept.

Isolated somewhere together, the couple laugh and play until the lover falls asleep. Even during sleep, the lady tends and caresses her lover, her kisses leaving an imprint on his memory for life. Again, passive "activity" is depicted, this time

primarily in the imperfect tense. The lover goes into even greater detail about lying with his lady. He is the passive recipient of the lady's more active affection, and his final actions in the strophe are of feeling and of memory--and both are basically removed in time from the kiss itself. The fourth line is identical in rhyme and metrical structure to the fourth line of the first strophe, repeating the word "tan."

As the poem progresses, however, the lover becomes angry. His gentle tone and playfulness turn aggressive and violent as he transfers his attention from his beloved to the interfering watchman. The mood now changes to subjunctive. The poem culminates in an evocation of negativity as the lover expresses his anger at the thought of the watchman's invasion of this idyllic scene:

Gaita s'ieu ti tenia
de mas mas t'auciria
ja res pro no't tenria
aur ni argen
ni hom viven
ni res que e'l mon sia.

Gaita, Dieus ti maldia
lo filhs Sancta Maria
quar tant cochas lo dia
gran paor ai
e gran esmai
que no'i perdes m'amia. (13-24)

Watchman, if I were holding you

in my hands I'd kill you
never could anything avail you
gold nor silver
nor living man
nor anything that is in the world.

Watchman, God curse you
the son of Holy Mary
for you so hasten the day
great fear have I
and great dismay
that I will lose my love.

The direct aggression of these lines is unusual for an alba and is in marked contrast to the opening two strophes where the lover was so passive. Although the alba lady may threaten the watchman, or speak angrily, the lover himself never does so in such an overt manner. The lady's angry response serves to express the depth of her emotion and her desperation because she clearly would not be able to carry out her threats. But even she never threatens to actually kill the watchman. The lover's anger in "Ab la gensor" is different. It seems to be a reflection of the knight's manliness--his desire to display his martial prowess. Although he is gentle and courtly with his lady, he can be quite menacing to others and seems greatly, almost eagerly involved in these displays, for he is not content to threaten to kill the watchman with his bare hands, but continues, listing those things the watchman would

not be able to rely on to escape from the lover's power: neither gold, silver, living man, nor anything of this world. In fact, nothing short of divine intervention would keep the watchman alive. The lover is yet not content with one entire strophe which is devoted to threatening the watchman with worldly harms: he pursues this train of thought in the fourth strophe as well, attempting now to enlist divine forces in his attack on the watchman.

It is the lady's intervention in the final strophe of the poem which resolves the situation:

Amicx N Esteves via
qu'ieu remanh vostr'amia
que si'l gilos venia
gran paor ai
e gran esmai
que'ns fezes vilania. (25-30)

My love, Lord Steven, go
for I will remain your friend
because if the jealous one were coming
great fear have I
and great dismay
that he will do us vilany.

These lines, too, are unusual for the genre. The lady speaks only in this last strophe and her speech is rather undistinguished. She gives us two elements nowhere else found in albas: the name and rank of her lover. The lady repeats two lines of her lover's speech, diverging from him only in the object of her fear. If he fears the gaita, the lady

fears the gilos.

In "Sîne klâwen," the lady childishly vents her anger at the watchman, who functions only as an instrument of warning and counsel, rather than as the real enemy. But it is clear from the watchman's response to her anger that he does not fear for his life; rather he understands her frustration and anger. He knows that her anger at him is really only a deflection of her anger at the situation itself, and in the last stanza, she finally ceases denying the reality the watchman has been urging her to confront. Her anger towards him leaves off, as she finally directs her attention to her anger's underlying cause--the imminent separation from her lover--and she begins to apprehend her own feeling of dread.

Along with their aroused sense of consequence, the lovers' sharpened awareness of temporality also gives rise to thoughts of the future. Concern with futurity, as demonstrated earlier, is also much more marked in the tageliet, which is, generally, a less static type of lyric because it is more sequentially structured than the French or Provençal dawn songs. There is actual movement in the tageliet much more

often than in the French and Provençal dawn songs. Furthermore, there is more continuity between stanzas in the tageliet where the procession of events is narrated in a logical, sequential order. In the French and Provençal examples, there are far fewer references to the future.

Upon encountering day, the lovers experience the sorrow of endings. At daybreak, the bright eyes of the lady of "Den morgenblic" "grew moist again" (5-6). And the lovers of Heinrich's "Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê" feel the dispersal of all the wonders of their tryst.

With the onrush of the awareness of time, the fact of place must also become an issue. Although they try to barricade themselves from the innundation of sunlight, the lovers' attempt to do so is futile. In "Den morgenblic," Wolfram portrays this explicitly:

Der tac mit kraft al durch diu venster dranc.
vil slôze si besluzzen:
daz half niht. (12-14)

The day with power all through the window pressed.
Many locks they locked:
that helped not.

No physical barrier can exclude dawn. The lovers cannot control time, but they can control space in one way: by moving out of danger and away from each

other. Intimacy sundered, the lovers' perfect union fractures; each lover becomes separate, isolated and individuated as space now filters between them. The lovers' movement may be seen as horizontal--one from inside to outside. But the lovers may also be seen as falling from the heights of spiritual and emotional fulfillment to the depths of deprivation. In fact, the lovers' physical movement will be a vertical one in the sense that they must rise from their relaxed, supine positions. This is the larger, overarching transition, which is a visualization in spatial terms, of the emotional transition. And it is a transition whose movement is vertical and descending as the dawn itself ascends, for the alba is thematically concerned with decline and fall.

Any discussion of transition in the alba must include an analysis of the watchman's mediatory role. In all poems where he plays any part, the watchman serves to announce dawn, but sometimes he says more. He is often so intimately involved in the lovers' affair that he has been described by Marianne Shapiro as "appropriating the song for what he had to say to [the lovers] and to the

audience."¹⁰⁵ Indeed, the watchmen of "Reis glorios," "S'anc fui belha," "Dieus, aydatz," and "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir," "Ich wache umb eines ritters lîp," "Sîne klâwen" and "Von der zinnen" dominate their poems. "Reis glorios," has been described as "a love song without lovers,"¹⁰⁶ because the watchman's is the only voice we hear.

But even in albas where he is merely mentioned, the watchman's "presence" becomes an indispensable and integral element. In "En un vergier," the watchman is present only in the lady's evocation of his cry and shawm playing, sounds by which he records and annunciates the passage of natural time. The watchman, on this simple level, serves as the point of connection between nature and the lovers. As Saville has pointed out, the watchman's

only necessary physical equipment consists
of eyes and voice--the ability to acquire
knowledge and the means to transmit it. 107

In "En un vergier," as in all albas, the watchman is an outsider, his cries and pipe playing intruding into the otherwise idyllic scene and reminding the lovers that separation from one another will soon be necessary. The watchman, who "relates civilization to time,"¹⁰⁸ serves as a bridge between natural time, the cyclical world of nature, and love's time,

the static and unrealistic sense of the passage of time as subjectively experienced by lovers.

The watchman of "Reis glorios," for instance, displays his clear awareness of time. He opens his poem in the present tense, but reverts to the past tense in recalling how the lover parted from him the previous evening. At that strophe's end, he looks ahead to the future, speaking in his refrain of the dawn which "soon will rise" ("e ades sera l'alba"). In one strophe, the watchman encompasses the entire spectrum of time: past, present, future. That the watchman notices "l'estela creguda" ("star grown big")¹⁰⁹ in strophe two of the same alba, demonstrates the watchman's heightened awareness of the movement of nature and time--of that which is impending and imminent. And in his final strophe, the watchman recalls that before the lover's rendezvous with his lady, the lover, too, shared the watchman's sense of real time and danger, for, the lover had implored the watchman to keep a steadfast vigil. Once the watchman has accepted this responsibility, the lover can withdraw into a private domain unafraid that time will elapse without his being warned of it.

The watchman is capable of perceiving a larger, sometimes cosmic perspective. The watchman of the tageliet, an interesting creation in many respects, has particularly wide-ranging vision. Hatto notes

It was in Germany that the vogue of the alba with watchman really caught on, and to a far greater extent than in the land of its origin [Provence]. German tageliet are numbered by the score and they echoed down the centuries until they were succeeded by popular versions, in which the watchman was replaced by the village watchman or even by the police. Within a generation of his introduction he was a famous and controversial figure. But the dawn refrain was generally not preserved. The decisive exponent of the alba in Germany was the great narrative poet Wolfram von Eschenbach. No tageliet with watchman can be proved to be earlier than his. 110

The watchman of "Von der zinnen" warns the lady:

niht gedenken
solt du, vrowe, an scheidens riuwe
ûf kunfte wân. (16-17)

nor should you think,
lady, on the grief of parting in the
hope of new returns.

It is the watchman who envisions prospects for the future. The lovers' intensity of feeling robs them of objectivity and clear sight, causing a myopia in which the present consumes all their attention. The watchman, however, elevated on the battlements or in his tower, sees the broader spectrum of time: past, present and future. He sees far enough ahead

to be prudent, advising in "Sîne klâwen":

lâz in minnen her nâch sô
verholne dich,
daz er behalte êr und den lîp. (19-20)

let him love you later so secretly
that he shall save his honor and life.

The watchman infuses the world of love with a sense of its natural surroundings in time and place, connecting through his song and/or warning realms which the lovers desire to dissociate from one another.

As a reporter of the actions of nature, the watchman has the status of a "necessary though unwelcome prophet who transmits to the lovers inexorable natural law."¹¹¹ His voice penetrates the secreted realm of love. Poised on the threshold of the lovers' domain, his cries penetrate to the very core of their sphere. His song serves to recall the lovers to safety and reality. The watchman of "Reis glorios," concerned for the safety of the lover, calls to him: "Bel companho, en chantan vos apel"(11) ("Fair friend, in singing I call you"). Like a bird's, the watchman's singing can infiltrate the otherwise impenetrable barrier between external reality and the realm of love. The senses of the lover, like the window mentioned by

the watchman in this alba, are vehicles through which reality can enter.

The watchman not only heralds the disruption of the lovers' meeting. He also, even if unwittingly, shields the lovers because his very calling of the hour bears the message not to outstay their allotted time. Because he announces dawn, the lovers are warned of its imminence and have a fair chance of escape. Thus he facilitates the union symbolically if not literally by warning the lovers of threats both natural (dawn) and physical (the gilos), which, ever-impinging on the periphery of their realm, threaten to overrun them.

In some albas, the watchman is much more essential to the security of the love affair. Hatto observes:

the watchman was the official herald of dawn in feudal society and had sufficient prestige as warden of the castle at night and as a distant relation of the watchman on the walls of Zion, to throw the mantle of seemliness--in poetry--over love-affairs that gained his approval. 112

In "S'anc fui belha," the lady speaks, in the opening strophe, of her "guaita plazen/que mi fes son d'alba"(8-9). The watchman is the second of two essential friends (the first being the lady's lover) that has rescued this mal mariée from her fate. In

the second strophe of the poem the watchman himself speaks, announcing in the first line of his speech his courtly identity and in the rest of the strophe, his sympathy with true lovers.

Not only does the watchman of "S'anc fui belha" differentiate between true and false lovers, but such a differentiation also serves to demonstrate his own particular abilities. He claims that he can conceal the very advent of day from false lovers. His motivation is quite clear: He would like such lovers to be exposed because they demean the ideals of fin'amors. Such discriminations between types of lovers present the arbiter as one who relies on his own, obviously good and trustworthy, judgment. His judgment is educated in the ways and rules of love and he knows what obedience to them entails. Distinctions about who is and who is not "true" reflect the subtlety of judgment he possesses and exemplify his own conoissensa. Thus he proclaims his courtliness. The watchman very carefully paints a self-portrait in which his courtly conduct is undeniably evinced.

The watchman of "S'anc fui belha" clearly demonstrates his concern with fulfilling his role

well and with loyalty. He has been and will be a faithful watchman, says he, "tota via"(32) and, in fact, he devotes his entire life to fulfilling his duty toward "fins drutz." Saville explains:

It is true enough that the watchman, considered as a real social being, has a problem of divided loyalties--on the one hand to his lord and on the other hand to the lovers --and that in choosing to be loyal to the lovers he is forced to be disloyal to his lord. It seems quite evident, however, that the writers of courtly albas...did not intend that watchman's choice to be interpreted as a reflection on his untrustworthy character The watchman's disloyalty to his lord reinforces the notion of the values of erotic love as having a greater claim than any social values can have: honor, loyalty, duty or the like. The watchman is a representative of the social order, who, in his changed loyalty, affirms that the love relationship is superior to the whole social order....in choosing [the society of love] above the other, the watchman is not exhibiting his treachery but rather proving himself a wise judge of what constitutes real value. 113

Raimbaut de Vaqueiras begins his alba with the lover's injunction to the watchman to fulfill his function fully: "Gaita be" ("Watch well"). He twice addresses the watchman as "gaiteta"(1, 15), presumably an affectionate name for an aid he assumes is sympathetic. The watchman's role has shifted. No longer is he simply one who awakens the lovers from sleep, or calls the hours to them. He

has become involved and interested in the affair. In this alba, the lover describes the gilos to the watchman as "vostre malveys seynor"(16). Hatto notes:

The further [alba] refinement that the watchman favors the illicit amours of his master's lady--on condition that her love for her knight be "true"--may well have been introduced in the course of the twelfth century, but we have no means of knowing this. 114

The watchman of several tageliet demonstrate concern with the lover's virtue. Some tageliet watchmen mention the lovers' "honor," demonstrating their concern with how the lovers will be viewed by others. Honor, as opposed to virtue, is externally imposed; it concerns one's reputation rather than one's inner identity, one's character.

In many ways, the watchman operates as a link to the world, a link which the lovers must not sever. It is frequently through his warnings alone that the lovers are apprised of external conditions, and are enabled to separate unharmed. He is an intermediary figure, poised between and separating the lovers from the enemy-world, a world that is clearly antagonistic to their love. It is his watchfulness which serves as the connector between the two worlds. He is the one figure in the alba who is

able to exist simultaneously in both worlds. Indeed, as Shapiro notes, the watchman is "the single element that effects a liaison between [the lovers'] world and everything outside of it."¹¹⁵ Poised between the lovers and their antagonistic surroundings, he functions as an intermediary between love's realm and the social domain. By straddling these two worlds, he is the only figure in the dawn-song who serves not only to connect both worlds, but also--and just as importantly--to keep them from colliding.

The lovers in the alba, who are often described as reclining, can afford to adapt such relaxing postures because of the vigilant watchman's presence. Unlike the reclining lovers, the watchman is upright and elevated, perched atop the battlements or tower, while the lovers are most often either in the lady's chamber, or "jos la flor" ("Quan lo rossinhols escria," 4). While the lovers sleep or sport, the watchman keeps a keen eye on his surroundings, guarding those to whom he owes allegiance; the lovers reap the benefits of his toil. The watchman takes the responsibility for guarding the lovers and warning them of danger so

that they can devote themselves to one another.

The watchman serves not only to perceive natural and social realities but also to maintain the social order of civilization. Saville discusses the general function of the watchman in literature:

Medieval literary watchmen...are figures in a picture of society at war. They look out for military threats approaching from outside the town, and they give warning to their own people. 116

As a military presence, the watchman embodies the ubiquitous aura of danger which, in the alba, is "wedded" to illicit love. He may be imagined as standing sentry at the very bounds of two opposing worlds: the social and the private. The military aspect of the watchman is particularly evoked in "Von der zinnen" where the watchman begins the poem speaking of descending from "the battlements." In many albas, the dawn itself is perceived as a violative force. Like a physical foe, the dawn is espied by the watchman and he reports his sighting to the community. Particularly in the tageliet, the dawn is depicted as mighty, piercing, thrusting and violent. But the most powerful portrayal of the physical menace of dawn appears in Troilus's aubade, where dawn, as Troilus describes it, invades and innundates the chamber as would a raging enemy

host.

As a figure who represents social order, the watchman bears the brunt of the lovers' protests:

He is an emblem of rule and order, and, especially, of limitation--because the orderly time divisions of day and night put limits on the propriety of any particular kind of activity. 117

In "Ab la gensor," the lover rails against the watchman for hastening the day, and feels, furthermore, that the watchman has the power to take away his beloved:

Gaita, Dieus ti maldia
lo fils Sancta Maria
quar tant cochas lo dia
gran paor ai
e gran esmai
que no'i perdes m'amia. (19-24)

Watchman, God curse you
the son of Holy Mary
for you so hasten the day
that I have great fear
and great dismay
lest I lose my love.

The lover conceives of the watchman as so powerful that he implores God to curse him. The lover, in accusing the watchman of hastening day, is actually accusing him of falsifying nature. In essence, however, it is the lover, who, desiring nature to be falsified in his favor by prolonging night, is perhaps shifting his own real desires onto the

watchman. In the same alba, the lover expresses his rage against the watchman by threatening to kill him with his bare hands. Similarly, in "Sîne klâwen," the watchman is reprimanded for robbing the lady of her greatest joy and making a great clamor before daylight appears (9, 27-28). Unlike the watchman of "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir" who "prolongs" night, in a sense, by postponing the blowing of his horn until he sees the lover safely escape (56-57), these watchmen, like Aurora in Ovid's Amores 1.13, are accused of curtailing night, shortening it out of jealous spite at the happiness the lovers find together. The lady of the Margrave of Hohenburg's tageliet, "Ich wache umbe eines ritters lîp," exclaims: "Dîn lîp der müeze unsaelic sîn,/wahtaere, und al daz singen dîn!"(12-13) ("May you be wretched,/watchman, and all that singing of yours"). Like the lover of "Ab la gensor," she curses the watchman. She also damns his singing, the very fate feared by the singer of "Reis glorios" (29).

The watchman sometimes literally intercedes between the lovers and society. In "S'anc fui belha," the watchman is potent enough--or desires to be--to obscure day for false lovers. He tells us how he would conceal day from false lovers for as long

as possible, suggesting that he would literally step between them and the sun, and eclipse the sun by blocking their view of it. He would, thereby, aid their enemies in catching them. But he makes sure to give true lovers due warning so that the knight may make good his escape. More active and mobile than the lovers, the watchman of "S'anc fui belha" can choose to hide either the lovers from the world, or the world from the lovers, depending upon how "true" he deems their love to be.

In "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir," the watchman does not blow his horn automatically at dawn. In this alba, the watchman makes a conscious decision about when to blow his horn, doing so only after he sees that the lover is safely riding away:

lo vey lay sos
en son ferran
...
D'eres anan
sonech un corn en l'alba. (49-50, 56-57)

I see him down there
on his iron-grey horse
...
and now forth
I sounded a horn at dawn.

His role suddenly diverges from that of the dawn-annunciating bird because he strives to become a determiner or controller of time or of others'

awareness of it, rather than merely its recorder.
In "Von der zinnen," the watchman, rather than
singing his song of dawning warns the lovers of
approaching danger:

Von der zinnen
wil ich gën, in tagewîse sanc verbern.
(1-2)

From the battlements
I want to go, forbearing from my dawn-song.

In these instances, the watchman becomes an
instrument either of the perpetuation and
preservation or the interruption and destruction of
love.

The watchman intercedes between the lovers and
society on the symbolic level as well. He
represents the laws of society to the lovers, for he
does not take up arms against the society even when
he is on the lovers' side.¹¹⁸ Rather, if he is
sympathetic, he helps the love coexist with society.
He also sometimes represents the lovers' point of
view and feelings to society (as represented by the
present audience of the poem) by his sympathetic
portrayals of them. He refers to them with words
which emphasize the lovers' courtliness or his own.
By placing himself between the lovers and society,
the watchman veils and distances the lovers from

the rest of the world. In providing this distance he also expedites their actions because, even if unwittingly, he serves to insulate these actions from the disapproval of what would assuredly be a critical society.

Although the watchman's function generally is a social one--to protect society--the watchman of many an alba "supervises the enactment of a code"¹¹⁹ that undercuts rather than upholds the status quo:

One has only to reflect on all that went to make a castle to know that no pains would have been spared to find a reliable keeper. Poets have thus chosen of all men the one least likely to admit an outsider at night, whatever his pretext.... 120

This role is clearly depicted in "S'anc fui belha" where the watchman presents himself as a defender of fin'amors. This watchman validates his role by asserting his own fidelity. He argues, independently of the lady, for fin'amors. His own "objective" (because uninvolved) description of love and his assertion of his right to act as a functionary of Love is interwoven with a carefully crafted defense of fin'amors. His qualities of constancy, loyalty and discernment--some of the very qualities of the courtly lover--legitimize and sanction his role. Although he personally suffers

most from it, the watchman of "S'anc fui belha" nonetheless prefers the darkest and coldest of winter nights because during those nights the lovers are safest and can more thoroughly enjoy their tryst. As he presents himself, he emerges not only as a courtly man, but ironically for a poem about adulterous love, he presents himself as selfless and virtuous. In contrast, a passage from Ulrich von Tûrheim's Rennewart (ll. 30317 ff.) seems to depict a more realistic view of the real watchman and

confirms our expectations that the watchman, far from indulging in lofty reflexions on the duties of lovers toward each other and to himself, was waiting for the appearance of the morning star to bring his freezing to an end. 121

Because of his objective stance and his demonstration of loyalty, he adds to our sense of the value of the love.

A new shift in the watchman's role is presented in "Sîne klâwen." The watchman speaks of admitting the noble lover, referring to the day

... der im geselleschaft
erwenden wil, dem werden man,
den ich mit sorgen in bî naht verliez. (4-6)

... which from companionship
will part that worthy man
whom I with danger permitted in.

Although he does so "mit sorgen" ("with danger," "with sorrow," "with misgiving"), the watchman in this tageliet has become responsible for admitting the lover. He also speaks of fetching the lover away, "ob ich kan"(7) ("if I can"). He becomes, the "gatekeeper" rather than merely a watcher, since he, rather than the lady is now responsible for the entry and escape of the lover. Later the watchman remarks:

er gab sich mîner triuwe alsô,
daz ich in braehte ouch wider dan. (21-22)

he gave himself in this way to my loyalty
that I should bring him and also again thence.

The watchman, here, like the faithful friend of "Reis glorios," worries about the lovers' safety, while the lover himself, unheard in either poem, seems oblivious to the trouble the watchman takes on his account. The watchman who sings "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir," also mentions his gate keeping function:

ja del porter
no'l cal temer
car clau ni fer
no'l destreny re; (31-34)

Never the gate keeper
must [the lover] fear
for neither key nor iron bar
will keep him back not at all;

This anonymous alba, found in only one manuscript, is quite different from most of the others. According to Martín de Riquer, who has studied and edited the poem,¹²² it was written in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century by a Catalan poet acquainted with Provençal and French. Indeed, the poem contains Catalan forms. Like "Dieus, aydatz," this alba consists of three long strophes, but unlike Raimon de las Salas' poem, in this one each strophe ends with a different, though refrain-like statement. The watchman takes great care to warn knights in general, but also specifies a particular knight who concerns him most:

Eras diray ço que'us dey dir
e ben lieu porra'm tal ausir
que valgre mays estes susaus;
a celh qui'm fe mon Dieu plavir
la nuyt preyan dins mon hostaus
qu'ieu ans xantes
qu'eperagues
l'alb'e'l jorn clar,
per qu'yeu posques
mils e saubes
son joy s'escay; (1-13)

Now I will say what I must say to you
and perhaps he can hear me
who would wish me to remain quiet;
but not at all must I fail because of that
to that one, who made me swear to my God
at night begging inside my dwelling
that I would sing
when dawn and bright day
should appear
in order that I could
better know how to

hide his joy.

The watchman, as in "Reis glorios," reports that the lover implored his help and asked him to give warning at dawn. The poem, again like Giraut's masterful alba, consists of the watchman's continued urging of this knight to rise and leave. The similarity with "Reis glorios," however, ends here. "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir" lacks the personal and caring, affectionate tone which makes "Reis glorios" such a moving lyric. The relationship between the lover and this watchman is less one of friendship than of cooperation. The relationship to the outside world is, in superficial ways, broader in this poem for the watchman addresses all ("a tuyt" [21, 38]), and speaks more publically and oratorically.

The poem centers more than most Old Provençal dawn songs on the lover's role as "cavalhiers" and warrior:

qu'aysi s'escay;
que del fort fayt
se guard d'uy may
si, no, diray:
Via, sus, cavalhiers
guerrers, que lausangiers
no'us assauton en l'alba! (13-19)

for it is fitting
and against the misdeed
he must guard himself henceforth

if not I will say:
Go! Rise! Knight
Warriors, lest the lausengiers
attack you at dawn!

The watchman warns that the lover must "guard himself against misdeed henceforth" and he addresses all knights, two lines later, as "cavalhiers/guerrers." Furthermore, he mentions a type who, although rarely seen in the alba is quite common in other genres of courtly love poetry, the lausengier: returning to the motif of combat, the watchman advises the knights to guard themselves from the assaults of the lausengiers.

In his second strophe, the watchman speaks of the kind of knight he wishes to regard as his own "companion":

car qui vol far
ar m'es compar. (29-30)

for whoever is willing to do this
now is a companion to me.

Any hierarchical social distinction between the knight/warrior/lover and the watchman/gatekeeper is nullified. The watchman seems to feel himself the social equal of the lover/knight. An alternate reading of these lines stresses the war-like tone of the lyric: "whoever wants to bear arms/let him prepare."

The watchman begins strophe three by speaking to the entire community but also to one man in particular:

A tuyt ho dich cominalmen,
mays un m'en mou major conten
que'l valgre mays qu'axis primer;
pauch li valdra son ardimen
si trop li dura son poch sen (38-42)

To all men I say communally
but there is one who moves a great
dispute against me about it
one to whom it would avail rather to
be the first to get out
little will his courage be worth to him
if his small sense lasts too long.

Adding a clever touch of ironic humor to his warnings, the watchman takes an objective and distant although concerned stance. The narrator speaks of "a great dispute"--presumably one moved against him by the lover himself who wants to delay his departure. In this strophe, the watchman refers to the trappings of knighthood, speaking first of the lover's "ardimen" ("courage"), and then detailing the scene he views below of the knight, mounted on his steed, and riding off with all his chivalric accoutrements:

... car muntat
lo vey lay sos
en son ferran
garnit, frepan,
gent arrear (48-52)

... for mounted

I see him down there
on his iron-grey horse
harnessed, lashing,
urging on his horse
gently with his voice

Only in the last three lines of the final strophe
do we hear from the knight himself who proclaims his
victory over the gilos, shouting out belligerently
and in a manner unusual for the discreet and
secretive alba lover:

Nostr'es lo gan,
d'autrui lo dan! (54-55)

The gain is ours
The other's the loss!

The poem concludes triumphantly with the watchman's
blowing of his "dawn-horn," as though a battle had
just been victoriously won.

In "Von der zinnen," the watchman descends the
battlements without singing his dawning song in
order to aid the lover's departure. Richie notes:

the watchman, prologizing, defers his
matitudinal song. Standing alone on the
battlements, he contemplates his duty to
the lovers, theirs to themselves and him. 123

His role is no longer to sing dawn, but to aid and
protect worthy men:

Niht verkrenken
wil ich aller wahtere triuwe an werden man.
(14-15)

I do not want to violate
the faith of all watchmen to a worthy man.

In speaking of worth, the watchman reveals his own interest in and ability to recognize merit. And in feeling a duty towards a worthy man, he demonstrates a desire and capacity to be worthy himself. Hatto notes:

The [tageliet] watchman was taken from the Troubadours, and since the days of Wolfram he tended to be the dominant figure....What a genial fellow this watchman is! He positively begs the happy knight to depend on him. This is because he has satisfied himself that the lover is high-minded and deserving --far be it from any poet to suggest that the watchman should betray his master's lady to any man unworthy of her. 124

The watchman of "Sîne klâwen" shows similar concern with the lover's virtue and also speaks about his desire to aid the lover:

ich bringe in hinnen, ob ich kan:
sin vil mangui tugent michz leisten hiez.
(7-8)

I shall bring him hence, if I can.
His very many virtues bade me carry this out.

The stress on the lover's virtues is more characteristic of the tageliet than the Old Provençal or Old French dawn songs. In "Von der zinnen," it is the lover's virtues which inspire the watchman's fealty and admiration (8). In "Den morgenblic," too, the knight is "werden"(3), but in

that poem it is the narrator (who is not identified as a watchman and who is not involved in the action of the poem) who deems the lover worthy.

In both "Von der zinnen" and "Sîne klâwen" the watchman emphasizes the lover's individual character. It is the lover's particular virtues and characteristics which impress the watchman. Interestingly enough, this is not true of the Old Provençal and Old French, where words for "virtue" are not used at all with reference to either the lady or the lover. Indeed, even in "S'anc fui belha" the watchman bases his criteria for judging lovers not on the individual characteristics of either of the lovers, but on the quality of their adherence to fin'amors, the "type" of love which he regards as noble. Nothing about them as individuals is important except that they know how to love rightly, to follow the way of fins drutz. In Wolfram's and Walther's tageliet, however, this is no longer the case. The lover is valuable in the watchman's eyes because the watchman recognizes in the lover the qualities of merit and virtue which he esteems. The lover is not described, as he is in the Old Provençal and Old French as fins, bels or cortes, but as werden. Are we encountering a

redefinition of courtliness in which it is virtue and merit which are considered worthy and therefore courtly rather than beauty, sweetness or nobility of carriage?

Interestingly though, the watchman of "Sîne klâwen" does not seem to regard his lady in exactly the same light as he views her knight. Her virtue is not an issue either because it is assumed or insignificant for the meaning of the lyric. She speaks of fealty, too, the fealty the watchman owes to her:

diu solt du mir verswîgen gar.
dar gebiute ich den triuwen dîn:
Des lône ich dir also ich getar.
Sô belîbet hie der geselle mîn. (13-16)

You must be completely quiet about it for me.
I bid you by that troth of yours:
For which I will reward you as I dare.
So that my lover remains here.

The lady claims the feudal allegiance the watchman owes her, commanding him to suppress his message of dawn's arrival in her desire to keep her lover unaware of dawn's imminence. But the watchman, who, perhaps even more than his lady, has a sense of his real duties toward her, reveals his individual will and judgment, his independence of mind, in defying the lady's spoken wish in deference to the feudal

bond he actually owes her as well as what he feels he owes the lover--a pledge based on his own judgment of the lover's virtue rather than on any formal feudal obligation.

As in so many Germanic works, the watchman seems to have torn loyalties: he owes the lady feudal obeisance--how can he disobey her order?--but, because of his feudal bond with the lady, he must disobey her order, and because of the lover's virtue, he has promised to protect him. The greater issue of torn loyalties, however, goes almost completely unacknowledged in these poems--that is, the watchman's betrayal of his lord in aiding the lady in her illicit affair in the first place. It is ironic that the watchman places such great emphasis on his loyalty, because especially when looked at from a particular angle, he is himself a traitor to his feudal lord.

The lady charges the watchman by his "triuwe" to disobey the loyalty he owes both to her and to her lover. She even promises to reward him in some secret way. Hatto notes:

A damaging novelty was the imputation of corruption in the watch. In a sense it is possible to derive this motif from Wolfram, for his lady [in "Sîne klâwen"] says, 'I will reward you as I dare.' But

this is in order to convey the lady's failure to control her passion, the thought has just occurred to her as a means of getting the watchman to defer the parting[sic]. There is no suggestion of venality. Yet, it seems, the words were not without their consequences, for a younger generation soon introduced the motif of the naked bribe. The Burgrave of Lienz (fl. 1231-58; a friend of Ulrich von Lichtenstein), Kristan von Hamle (fl. c. 1225) and Heinrich von Frauenberg (fl. 1257) all present a corrupt watchman, and King Wenceslas II of Bohemia (d. 1305) expands the theme to a point where the watchman blackmails the all too passionate lady [Middle High German no. 11 in Eos]. The ultimate stage is reached when in a late song a watchman fatuously cries to all and sundry: 'I see the day, if any is there to reward me.'

125

But in "Sîne klâwen," Wolfram portrays a watchman whose decision and judgment prove his integrity, as does his contradicting of his mistress' demands. The watchman, the lady's supposed servant, does not defer to her wishes in this case, in order to serve her--nor does the promise of reward move him. No matter what machinations the lady invents, the watchman displays incorruptible integrity, adhering to the responsibility he owes to her and her lover. In these lyrics, he has become the upholder of "triuwe" even more than the lady or her lover. He becomes a model of virtue himself.

The interaction between the lady and watchman of "Sîne klâwen" is quite fascinating because it so

differs from its predecessors, portraying a watchman's faithful adherence to his protective role, even against his lady's own wishes. Simultaneously, Wolfram shows us a love so powerful that a lady recklessly goes against her own best interests (and those of her lover) in order to prolong it. The watchman is so wise that he understands all this and thus overrules her rashness. Hatto comments:

this kindly philosopher has gained sufficient insight into his mistress's ways to make allowance for her. 126

Richie, too, comments on the watchman's gentle behavior:

...though the moment is crucial, he does not speak roughly to [the lady]. Though firm, he shows great tenderness to her in her crying need. 127

The watchman here has truly become an overseer. In a sense, he has been elevated both socially and morally from a mere servant or aide to an advisor and counsellor. He has real influence and although he is unfailingly polite and tactful, never condescending, he speaks almost commandingly.

The relationship between the lady and the watchman of "Sîne klâwen" has interesting repercussions. This tageliet is the first to imply

that the lady is so rash she would actually risk her lover's safety in order to keep him ignorant of the time. Kaske claims that "...in the aube, with a few notable exceptions, it is the lover who is more nearly resigned to the necessity of parting, while the lady emotionally opposes or laments his departure and begs for his quick return."¹²⁸ Yet "Sîne klâwen" is actually the first alba where there seems to be any difference at all in the attitudes of lady and lover. In the Old Provençal and Old French dawn-songs, whoever speaks, whether it is the lady, the lover, or both, expresses tremendous reluctance to part and nowhere is the lover less reluctant than his beloved. Certainly there is not one alba before Wolfram's "Sîne klâwen" where the lady tries to detain her lover. Such behavior on the part of the lady does not indicate any "trend" in the genre, but a variation most likely introduced by Wolfram.

In "Friuntlîchen lac," Walther von der Vogelweide extends this idea even further, and portrays a lady successfully convincing her lover to remain longer. In "Sîne klâwen," the love bond is shown to be fragmenting at dawn into two opposing

camps: the lady desires her lover to stay with her at all costs; the watchman urges an early and safe escape. The lover himself takes no part in the argument. There is the further implication that a struggle over the lover between the lady and watchman ensued prior to the inception of the lovers' rendez-vous and of the poem:

ez ist nu tac; naht was ez, dô
mit drucken an die brust dîn kus mir
in an gewan. (23-24)

It is day now; it was night then, when
with pressing to your breast your kisses
won him from my side.

The watchman claims that the lady "won" the lover from him, implying their struggle over possession of the lover. The watchman has grown into a full-fledged competitor, the lady's equal.

The Margrave of Hohenburg introduces another variation in his poem, "Ich wache umb eines ritters lîp." Here the watchman addresses himself to the lady's and his own self-interest as distinct from the lover's in warning the lady:

vil saelic wîp, sol er den lîp
verliesen, sô sîn wir mit im verlorn.
(29-30)

most blessed lady, should he his life
lose, so are we lost with him.

One of the most striking examples of the

watchman's involvement with lovers and with God is depicted in Giraut de Bornelh's magnificent song, "Reis glorios." The seven extant manuscripts of this alba differ, according to Woledge, "not only in a number of details (for which the reader is referred to Kolsen's edition)¹²⁹ but also in the number of stanzas they include and in the order in which they arrange them."¹³⁰ Like Goldin and Woledge, I have chosen to follow Kolsen's text, which is based on the fourteenth century manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale (français 856). The melody of "Reis glorios" has been preserved, which, as noted earlier, is a sober and somber tune previously used for a hymn to the Virgin and subsequently used for a play in fourteenth century Provençal about St. Agnes' martyrdom.¹³¹ Kolsen's edition of the text has six strophes, each strophe consisting of four decasyllabic lines followed by a four syllable refrain. The rhyme scheme of the poem is coblas doblas.

Some of the manuscripts of "Reis glorios" have additional strophes, and in one manuscript (Munich, Staatsbibliothek, cod. lat. 1759, XIVth century) the strophes are arranged in a different order (what appears in Kolsen's text as the second strophe

appears there as the penultimate strophe, followed by one additional strophe). Scholars do not agree about the authenticity of any of the additional strophes. One particular strophe, which concludes the lyric in two manuscripts, has been accepted by Saville and others as genuine and reads:

Bel dous companh, tan sui en ric sojorn
Qu'eu no volgra mais fos alba ni jorn,
Car la gensor que anc nasques des maire
Tenc e abras, per qu'eu non prezi gaire
Lo fol gilos ni l'alba.

Fair sweet friend, I am so richly resting
That I would wish the dawn nor day never
were,
For the noblest who was ever born of mother
Do I hold in my arms, wherefore I do not
prize at all
The foolish gilos nor the dawn.

This strophe breaks the anaphoric pattern with which the previous strophes begin. Strophes two through six open with "Bel companho," but this strophe begins instead, "Bel dous companh." Not only is the address itself thus altered as well as its meter, but so is the speaker, for it is the lover himself who addresses the watchman with these words. Although the lover does not appear earlier in the lyric, this one strophe speech, even occurring at the end of a lyric, is not completely atypical of the extant genre. Even the alteration of address could

conceivably be an intentional authorial device of conveying the shift in speaker. But in our corpus of extant albas, we have no other example of a watchman addressed in the manner usually reserved for the courtly lover. The most intimate or friendly address for the watchman is the "gaiteta" of "Gaita be."

Furthermore, the refrain "e ades sera l'alba" has been altered in this additional strophe to "lo fol gilos ni l'alba." Not only is this in itself a very distracting and unusual kind of alteration for a poet to make, as it disturbs the unity of the lyric, but in addition, unlike any of the other strophes, the refrain of this additional strophe is linked syntactically to the previous line. In other words, whereas in the six strophes which are accepted as "genuine" the refrain is a separate syntactical unit (and, indeed, a complete sentence and thought)--attached to the strophe with the word "e," this strophe is inconclusive without the refrain. Spence, in her article on this poem, notes that the refrain of strophes one through six "provides no logical conclusion to the strophe."¹³² But the refrain of this additional strophe is so intimately linked to the content of its strophe that

it does provide such a logical conclusion.

Woledge, accepting only the first six strophes as genuine, sums up the situation:

The two mss. [with the additional strophe] are not...particularly good on the whole and Kolsen may well be nearer to Guiraut's own text in giving us the highest common factor of the extant mss., which is at the same time a simple monologue formed of three pairs of stanzas. 133

Not having had the opportunity to research and examine the manuscripts themselves, and finding Saville's reasons for accepting the additional strophe superficial and unconvincing, I defer to the judgment of Kolsen, Goldin and Woledge and follow the text they all agree is most authentic. I do not mean thereby to dismiss as insignificant either this or any of the other additional strophes of "Reis glorios" found in medieval manuscripts. As medieval poetry, these verses are of interest as dialogues with a text, and can illuminate aspects of medieval poetics and its development. I decline to discuss that facet of the poetry here because in order to interpret Giraut's poem, I wish as far as it is possible to view it as an integral and unified lyric.

"Reis glorios" is sung by a watchman/companion

who expresses obsessive anxiety over the safety of a friend who has secreted himself with his beloved somewhere, presumably in the lady's chamber. The watchman attempts to affirm his own faithfulness and trustworthiness to the lover. Saiz suggests that "The watchman's utterance can be called a dramatic monologue" because the watchman's personality and character are gradually revealed.¹³⁴ The watchman's "character," however, if it is revealed at all in the lyric, is clear from the opening strophe and does not undergo any further disclosure. The watchman establishes himself from the opening of the poem as the lover's loyal companion. In fact, the six-strophe poem exists of--and perhaps for--his depiction of his loyal and self-effacing, if not self-sacrificing, actions on behalf of the lover. In this alba, the loyalty between companions is of utmost concern and is announced in the poem's very first lines, when the watchman implores God's aid:

Reis glorios, verais lums e clartatz,
Deus poderos, Senher, si a vos platz,
al meu companh s'iatz fizels ajuda,
qu'eu non lo vi pos la nochs fo venguda,
e ades sera l'alba. (1-5)

Glorious king, true light and brightness,
Powerful God, Lord, if you please,
to my companion be a faithful aid,
for I have not seen him since the night
has come,

and soon it will be dawn.

The watchman formally calls on God, politely and graciously invoking his aid for the lover. In invoking God's aid, he becomes an intercessor between God and the lover, for he is not requesting God's aid on his own behalf, but for the sake of his friend. He asks God to function in the same capacity as he does, as "faithful aid" to his friend who has seemingly vanished within the remote and mysterious domain of the lady's chamber. God is invoked here, not as Saville claims, "to aid the speaker's friend in the safe achievement of an adulterous sexual union!" and "to aid the doings of night"¹³⁵ but rather to aid the speaker's friend to a safe escape from peril. Saville continues:

The suggestion of a symbolic identity between the God who is prayed to and the dawn which is feared leads to the inference that the friend is praying to God, the origin of the Christian moral code, to help the lovers by not being imminent, as the dawn is--that is, to help the lovers by effacing Himself and His moral judgments. 136

But clearly this is not so. The watchman does not ask God, as do other alba watchmen to perpetuate night, postpone dawn, or in any other way alter the cosmos. He accepts the divinely established order of things. The watchman, not only in this opening

prayer, but throughout "Reis glorios" continually tells the lover (and us) about his prayers to God and Mary on the lover's behalf. Although the watchman fears that his friend is endangered, he believes so fervently in God's grace that he has faith God will aid his friend even if his friend sins. Saville observes that

A tension between what God is and what He is asked to do is thus immediately established. 137

But again, Saville misses the point, for this is the very opposite of the case. The watchman asks God to do that which is traditionally ascribed to him: to forgive a sinner. Saville interprets the first strophe

as an artful poetic compromise between the world and God that is characteristic of much of high medieval civilization in general....Indeed, the very existence of a secular literature--of romances, lyrics, fabliaux, and so forth, which make their subject the life of love or sex or chivalric prowess or personal development, without considering God at all, and yet without any implication of an anti-Christian attitude--is a sign of this non-rational compromise. 138

It is not necessary to go outside "Reis glorios" in order to interpret the meaning of the watchman's prayers to God and, in the case of this alba, the idea of a "non-rational compromise" between God and

man is irrelevant, no matter how apt it may be to the other texts to which Saville alludes. Indeed, far from not "considering God at all," Giraut makes the relationship between the watchman and God central to the poem. Spence acknowledges this in her interpretation, which is almost the opposite of Saville's and stresses the sacred imagery and meaning of the poem. Spence, citing St. Ambrose's dawn-hymns, Prudentius' "Ales diei nuntius" as well as a passage in Revelations as "intertexts" of "Reis glorios," proposes "that we are asked to read the poem as both a dawn-hymn and an erotic alba."¹³⁹ The watchman requests God's aid in watching over his friend's safe deliverance from harm. The lover himself may not pray to God or worry about his own salvation, but the watchman, again acting as intercessor, does this for him. In doing so, the watchman establishes his own devout piety and the depth of his faith in God's grace, for he knows full well the extent of the lover's sin and, indeed, of just what it is he is asking God to forgive.

The faithful friend cannot see the lover who is sequestered within the realm of love and night. The watchman evokes God in his manifestation as light with the words "lums," and "clartatz," and even

implicitly with "glorios," "nochs," and "alba."

Spence observes:

In its unmitigated praise of light, its equation of this light with God, and its style marked by strong use of appositives, the first couplet recalls the dawn-hymns of St. Ambrose. 140

Indeed, the watchman consumes two lines of the four-line strophe in phrasing his request. It is not until the third line of the strophe that he actually expresses what it is he wishes for. Whereas for alba lovers, dawn's light is love's desiccator, for the watchman here, God's light, though much more potent and splendid, is praised and desired. The darkness evoked by the watchman's desperate desire for illumination is so profound that only God's true light, of which day is perhaps merely a pale reflection, can penetrate it and protect the lover. The watchman has become so anxious, not, as Saiz claims, because he has grown tired and weary of his chore,¹⁴¹ but rather, because he suspects that only God's aid can restore the lover's senses and rescue him from whatever danger he has placed himself in.

The watchman, in his address, refers not only to "Almighty God"¹⁴² ("Deus poderos"), but also to

"King" ("Reis") and "Lord" ("Senher"). In so doing, he demonstrates an awareness of communal order, social hierarchy and roles, and the loyalty which unites levels of society. God himself is King and Lord, but these titles refer as well to the ruler of the secular realm and to the lords who serve such a ruler. The watchman requests God to fulfill another social function: "siaz fizels ajuda" to the lover, as the watchman himself is. The world depicted by the watchman in his opening lines, then, is one ruled by God, dominated by secular kings, populated by lords and vassals, and, very importantly, held together by companhos, by faithful friends and aids.

The watchman implores God to stand faithfully by his friend, as he himself does, thereby asking that God perform in the same capacity as he does. The relationship between the watchman and God is further reinforced through structural parallels in the poem. A hierarchy is established which stems from God, through the watchman, to the lover. The watchman implies that, in some sense, he is performing a duty appropriate to the Almighty, a divine office. In fact, he not only uses the same word, "fizels" in reference to God's aid, and later to his own activities, but he also uses the word in the same

line of the strophe and in the same metrical position on that line. In the third line of the first strophe he says:

al meu companh siatz fizels ajuda

and in the third line of the fourth strophe he says:

conoisseretz si'us fizels messatge

you will know whether I am a faithful
messenger

Since there are only six different adjectives used in the poem, the repetition is significant. The idea of God's aid and the watchman's message are thus tightly linked, the watchman implying that his message is a form of divine aid. Again, the watchman emphasizes his piety. In addition, the word "verais" in reference to God (which appears as the first word after the first caesura in the lyric and therefore is stressed) also brings up the idea of faithfulness, as does the "lejal" which appears in the fourth line of strophe five and in a similar, though not identical metrical position as the two "fizels."

In the second strophe, the watchman addresses his absent friend:

Bel companho, si dormetz o veillatz?
Non dormatz plus, suau vos ressidatz,
qu'en orient vei l'estela creguda

qu'amenal jorn, qu'eu lai ben coneguda,
e ades sera l'alba. (5-9)

Fair friend, are you asleep or awake?
Sleep no longer, quietly arise,
for in the East I see the star risen
which brings the day, I have known it well,
and soon it will be dawn.

Whereas he opens his song with an invocation to God: "Reis glorios", he opens the next five strophes with an address to "Bel companho." The first two lines are taken up with a question and a command. It is not until line three that we are given the cause or reason for concern. The watchman urges the lover to action, for the natural world around them is in motion. The watchman sees the day-bearing star which has "risen" or "grown big."¹⁴³ The watchman warns the lover also to rise, for it is dangerous to sleep when the rest of the world has begun to arise. The watchman's focus in this strophe is on vision and the knowledge it brings. Saiz asserts that the watchman "takes a certain pride" in being alert enough to descry day's earliest sign--the star.¹⁴⁴ But nowhere else in the poem does the watchman display pride. The emphasis is, rather, on the watchman's devotion and reliability. He has verified with his own experienced eyes that the day-star is visible rather than relying on any other

means of establishing the time. Again the watchman makes no attempt to deny cosmic order and indeed, encourages the lover to make no such attempt either.

In strophe three, the watchman continues his exhortation:

Bel companho, en chantan vos apel:
non dormatz plus, qu'eu aug chantar l'auzel
que vai queren lo jorn per lo boscatge,
et ai paor que'l gilos vos assatge,
e ades sera l'alba. (10-14)

Fair friend, in singing I call you:
sleep no longer, for I hear the bird singing
who goes seeking the day through the wood,
and I fear that the gilos will attack you,
and soon it will be dawn.

The watchman repeats his command "non dormatz plus" in the same position as in the previous strophe. In this strophe, the watchman spends less time setting up the situation. By the middle of line two, he begins his explanation. There is also an increase in activity in this strophe, as well as in verbs and verbals. The watchman sings and calls. He hears the bird who also sings, signaling the reawakening world and searching for day. The watchman and bird are in harmony, for both sing and signal the lover. Saiz's explanation is cogent on this point:

The watchman's repeated call to his comrade, like the bird's song, symbolizes the wakeful conscience which begins to impose itself upon

the adulterous love situation by warning of
the gilos who might surprise the sleeping
lovers. 145

Suddenly, in the last line of the strophe, the beauty of the pastoral and melodious images are shattered by the introduction of the gilos, and danger is brought swiftly to the foreground of the poem.

The actions of this strophe contrast markedly with what has preceded it, but they are conducted around the lover, or are focused at him rather than being conducted by him. The bird joyfully anticipates and even seeks day and, implicitly, God's light. But because the lover does not, he is threatened by the gilos.

In strophe four, as in two and three, the watchman issues a command, but this time he asks the lover to move, not just to awake:

Bel companho, eissetz al fenestrel,
et esgardatz las ensenhas del cel;
conoisseretz si'us sui fizels messatge:
si non o faitz, vostres n'er lo damnatge,
e ades sera l'alba. (16-20)

Fair friend, go to the window,
and look at the signs in the sky;
you will know whether I am a faithful
messenger to you:
if you do not, yours will be the harm,
and soon it will be dawn.

The exhortations have become more urgent and active

as the watchman urges the lover to "go," and "look," which will result in future knowledge. He speaks of the future, of consequence. Previously, it was the watchman who "had known" that day was coming; now he calls on the lover to know that he is faithful--he wants the lover to corroborate what he has reported so that the lover will see for himself how accurate the watchman's report was. Like the star and bird which gave him messages of day's advent, the watchman transmits these messages to his friend. This strophe contains the most action, although none of the actions are performed by the lover or the watchman. The watchman implores the lover to come to the window, metaphorically imploring him to come to his senses--to use his eyes and ears, in order to recognize his own peril. He attempts to spur the lover to action. The watchman can only aid the lover by exhorting and motivating him to help himself, by shaking him from his lethargy. There is an awareness on the part of the narrator (and ultimately, his poet) that there is a limit to one's ability to help another human being. Such an awareness recognizes the inexorable boundaries between individuals--and the real autonomy--or free will--of every man. No matter how much--or what kind

of--love exists between individuals, there is a limit to what one being can do for another. Although the watchman prays fervently, his imprecations can be of no avail if the lover himself does not begin to realize his peril.

The watchman, in his concern for his friend, tries to warn him of the danger toward which he is heading. "Messatge" and "damnatge" two words related by rhyme, are also related in meaning. As a messenger, the watchman is trying to protect the lovers from harm. These words also rhyme with "assatge" in the previous strophe and the association between messenger, harm and the gilos becomes clearly established. He thus warns his friend about the consequences of ignoring his song. The watchman although he watches--and worries--cannot physically intervene and rescue the lover from the dangers that beset him. He can merely provide the lover with information and urge him to use it as best as he can. Saiz interprets "Reis glorios" as moving

from religious invocation to a denouncement of the lovers by the watchman....the watchman who began as the 'friendly protector' of the lovers progressively moves toward the opposite pole as his comrade proves to be unresponsive to his song. 146

But the references to the watchman's piety pervade the entire poem and although the watchman may become more desperate because of the lover's unresponsiveness, he appears not angry but rather frightened and sad.

The relationship between the watchman and God is reinforced in strophe five:

Bel companho, pos mi parti de vos,
eu non dormi ni'm moc de ginohlos,
ans preguei Deu, lo filh Santa Maria,
que'us mi rendes per lejal companhia,
e ades sera l'alba. (21-25)

Fair friend, since I parted from you,
I have not slept nor moved from my knees,
but prayed God, the son of Holy Mary,
that he give you back to me in loyal
 companionship,
and soon it will be dawn.

The strophe is static. The watchman has neither slept nor moved from prayer. He is awake and aware, but still. Saiz suggests that in the fifth stanza, the watchman "pleads with his comrade, asking for some sympathy and understanding...."¹⁴⁷ But again, this interpretation overlooks the pious and deferential tone which pervades the entire lyric. The watchman speaks of his actions, not in order to gain the lover's sympathy or understanding for himself, but rather in order to prove how selflessly he has acted. Saiz suggests, and here on firmer

ground, that the watchman:

If not literally at least figuratively...is
now in a suppliant position to his comrade,
in effect 'on his knees' begging him to
heed his warning. 148

Saiz thus conflates the God who is prayed to for aid, and the lover who may require it; but the watchman does use his act of prayer as a spur to the lover to move. His presentation of his loyalty is deepened and intensified by his use of negations in the first two lines of the strophe. That the watchman begs God for the lover's return suggests that he fears the lover has receded to a domain from which the lover cannot rouse himself. Thus only God--"poderos" and venerated--has the power to retrieve him. The phrases "lo filh Santa Maria" and "per lejal companhia," bound together by rhyme, indicate that "lejal companhia" is so important a relationship that it is almost sacred and would be of concern to God and Mary. The use of the words "lejal companhia" in the context of Mary, God and prayer, and the fact that all the nouns in the strophe are linked to the sacred, further add to the sense of the sanctity of friendship which pervades the poem.

Indeed, there can be no doubt that human, social

relationships as well as the relationship between the human and divine are of utmost concern in this alba. Many of the words in the poem refer to these relationships: "Reis," "Deus," "Senher," "ajuda," (strophe one); "companho" (strophes two through six); "gilos" (strophe three); "messatge," (strophe four); "Deu," "filh," "Santa Maria," "companhia" (strophe five); "paria" (strophe six). How interesting it is, however, that for a love poem, there are no references to sexual love or, in fact, to anything having to do with the female sex. The only woman mentioned in the poem is "Santa Maria."

In the final strophe, we learn that the lover, too, had prayed. The lover initiated the chain of prayers, for because he begged his watchman friend to aid him, the watchman prayed, in turn, for God's help:

Bel companho, la foras als peiros
me prejavatz qu'eu no fos dormilhos,
enans velhas tota noch tro al dia;
aras no'us platz mos chans ni ma paria,
e ades sera l'alba. (26-30)

Fair friend, outside on the steps
you begged me not to fall asleep,
but to watch all night til day;
now neither my song nor my friendship
pleases you
and soon it will be dawn.

The watchman confirms his loyalty by evincing how

faithfully he has done the lover's bidding, how he has suffered for it, and with what little reward. Again, praying, sleeping, awareness and watching are important. The verb "platz" is the only present tense verb in the strophe, but it is negated. Nonetheless, it recalls the positive usage of that word in strophe one. The idea of possession implied with the words "mos chans" and "ma paria" also recalls the other possessive pronoun in the poem, the "meu companh" of strophe one. Interestingly, the poem opens with the watchman's possessiveness of the companion, but concludes with his possession of his own song and friendship which he believes the lover rejects.

"Reis glorios" portrays the intensity of feeling between the two unseen and unheard lovers through its depiction of the watchman's anxious concern for the lover's safety. The more desperately he pleads, the more poignant grows the situation, for even with the greatest urging, the lover remains away and unheard. Wilhelm comments that the lover's reply "is fully evident in the interior dialectic of the poem: his friend's lonely vigil implies the lover's sensual satisfaction."¹⁴⁹

The watchman is in close contact with external and cosmic reality. An unusual number of natural and secular objects, places and roles are included in the poem. In strophes two through four as well as in strophe six, at least one place or aspect of outside is mentioned: "orient" and "l'estela" (strophe two); "boscatge" (strophe three); "cel" and "fenestrel" (strophe four); "foras" and "peiros" (strophe six). Although the watchman is intimately aware of his surroundings and of things of both the secular and sacred realms, the lover is cut off--or has shut himself off--from these realities.

The poem has a large number of verbs: thirty four in all, as well as a number of verbals. When verbs of action are employed, often they are negated. Thus we have six verbs of being (with "sera" repeated six times, once in each strophe), four verbs of vision, several forms of verbs for sleeping, two for waking, two for knowing--one in the past and one in the future--one verb of calling and three of asking, two verbs of emotion (fear, and pleasure and its negation), one verb of motion negated ("ni'm moc"), one of not doing ("si non o faitz"). Of all the verbs in the poem only a few convey actual action: the watchman "parted

[himself]" from the lover ("pos mi parti de vos"), the star "brings" day; several are of envisioned or desired action: the gilos "may attack" ("vos assatge") and God "may return" ("mi rendes") the lover to his friend. There are three verbs of going or coming: one for night having come, one for the bird searching out day, and one an exhortation to the lover to go to the window. The watchman commands the lover to "get up" ("vos ressidatz"). For a poem so full of verbs, there is hardly any action taken by the watchman (except song or speech) and none at all, in the present, by the lover. Both seem to be the passive recipients of the actions of others around them. The actions of the world surround them, but have not yet infiltrated the world of love.

"Reis glorios" also presents a subtle analogue or inversion of the alba situation as typically experienced by the alba lady. The watchman awaits the return of the lover "per lejal companhia," anxiously and with great fear lest the lover's escape be hindered. He speaks of his parting from his friend, recalling their last meeting: "pos mi parti de vos" ("since I parted from you"). Indeed,

this parting is one of the few real actions committed by the lover in the entire poem even though it occurred before the onset of the poem and is expressed as an act performed by the watchman. Spence, sensing the melancholy tone of the watchman's song, characterizes the second couplet of the poem as its "mourning for a missing companion."¹⁵⁰

Another important action the lover did perform was to implore the watchman to keep watch: "me prejavatz qu'eu non fos dormilhos." The lover's actions, rendered in the past tense, seem remote, as though they were committed long ago. The only other act attributed to the lover is one he has not actually committed: "aras no'us platz mos chans ni ma paria" ("and now neither my song nor my friendship pleases you"). The watchman claims that his friend is displeased, but this is an assumption he makes for we in the audience do not hear any response from the lover. Wilhelm interprets this silence as confirmation that the watchman's perception is accurate and that the lover does reject the watchman's song and friendship,¹⁵¹ but whether or not the lover is rejecting the watchman's friendship is left mysteriously unresolved in the

poem itself. The word "aras," used in this concluding line for the first time in the poem, takes on intensified significance because the watchman had earlier used the word "pos" ("since") in strophes one and five. The "aras" therefore really does seem a summing up.

The word "paria" is the last word (minus the refrain) of the poem. It rhymes with "Santa Maria" and "companhia" of the previous strophe. In fact, all the watchman's actions were based on friendship and that relationship and its importance pervade the poem and bind it together. The word "paria" links the strophe to the first strophe in the anaphoric address to "Bel companho"; the idea of friendship is brought up in the same place in the final strophe as in strophe five where the last word of the last line is "companhia."

The watchman is portraying the irony--if not injustice--of the situation, for after all, it was the lover who first begged the watchman to stand guard. The watchman uses the very word, "platz" which is typically used in reference to the pleasingness of one's lover, or the pleasure he or she bestows; but here he uses it not as would a

lover in speaking of a beloved, but in demonstrating his desire to please his friend. And he expects that his message will displease the lover, no matter how faithful a service he performs for him. In fact, like the watchman of "Sîne klâwen," the more faithful he is to his pledge and duty, the more displeasing he fears he will be (or is, as in "Sîne klâwen") to the person for whom he performs that service.

One is almost tempted to conclude that the real lament presented in "Reis glorios" is not caused by the disruption or loss of love between the illicit lovers which, however poignant, occurs off-scene, but by the effects such a love relationship has on the companionship between comrades. Saiz senses the importance of companionship also:

In effect, [the watchman] seems to be offering his friend a choice between true comradeship and an adulterous love affair. 152

The forlorn, melancholy plea of the watchman at center stage who urges, unavailingly, the swift and safe return of his comrade has a resonance and beauty which convey his loneliness while also foreshadowing that of the now united but soon to be separated couple. The friendship between comrades, like the relationship between the lover and his

beloved, is time-bound; the relationship the watchman has with his God, however, is not. It is this relationship which sustains him throughout his vigil, and which can not be severed by others.

The seventh (and controversial) strophe negates everything established in the first six. In this strophe, the lover actually does reject the watchman as well as the peril posed by dawn and the gilos. Saville observes:

...the lover, who speaks in the last strophe of Giraut de Bornelh's alba is setting himself up in opposition to God, in terms of the narrative and perhaps in terms of the light symbolism as well. His inner world....is declared to be superior to God's grace and perhaps to God Himself. 153

Saville overstates here, for although the lover rejects the dawn and the gilos in this final strophe, he does not declare his world "superior to God's grace and perhaps to God Himself"--a most severe form of blasphemy which never occurs even among the most outspoken and angry of adulterous alba lovers. As Wilhelm recognizes, the lover is, in effect, "condemn[ing] his own soul to any hell that awaits him...." But Wilhelm also believed that this strophe "is not essential, and is even inimical to the poem's subtle tones."¹⁵⁴

Saville claims that in the first six strophes of "Reis glorios" "the essential ideological incompatibility between adulterous love and Christian God is blithely ignored."¹⁵⁵ The pervasive infusion of the sacred into the poem and the watchman's continued anxiety over the lover's safety, however, demonstrate not incompatibility between illicit human love and Christian doctrine or an ignoring of such incompatibility, but demonstrates rather faith in the magnanimous splendor of God's power and grace and in His ability to bridge that very chasm which separates man from Him. Spence argues that "the refrain of Reis glorios encourages the listener to make a connection between its lovers and Christian sinners and between the dawn and the Last Judgment."¹⁵⁶ Wilhelm observes:

The romantic world, under [Giraut's] touch, blossoms within a distinctly religious framework, and the painfully repeated refrain 'And soon will come the dawn!' constantly reminds us of the presence of a moral order in the universe which cannot be totally ignored. In the last analysis, Guiraut's alba is moral, for although it supplies us with a sympathetic portrait of an adulterous love affair, the watchman's voice, like that of Vergil speaking to his love-consumed friend Gallus, maintains the other pole of thought by which love, despite its charms, is clearly condemned. The watchman's last outcry about the coming of

dawn sounds like a last judgment being
pronounced on the lovers' souls. 157

If such overtones of the Last Judgment pervade "Reis glorios," then it becomes clear that the watchman is worried not only about the lover's safe escape from the lady's chamber, but about the salvation of his soul. Thus he urges the lover to save himself. In this context, the gilos seems to take on connotations beyond that of the cuckolded husband. He is revenge itself come to exact punishment from the adulterer, a force of darkness which will overwhelm the lover unless he quickly comes to his senses and rouses himself from jeopardy.

In "Von der zinnen," the watchman plays a role similar to the one enacted by the watchman of "Reis glorios" in which he, too, recognizes that he can only urge the lover towards responsible self-interest:

der mich des baete,
deswâr ich taete
ime guote raet
und helfe schîn. (9-12)

Whoever should bid me concerning this,
Indeed I would give him
good advice
and show him help.

The lover must first desire or request such counsel before it can be available to him, as the supplicant

must ask for God's grace before it can be bestowed. Such help is available, but cannot be granted unless first requested.

The watchman of "Sîne klâwen" assumes a stance which may be comparable to a divine one. As Saville has demonstrated, there was biblical precedence for regarding the watchman as a divine figure or having associations with the divine.¹⁵⁸ The watchman here allows the lovers free will and the autonomy to make their own decisions. Even though he may have misgivings about the wisdom of their behavior or decisions, he nonetheless helps them successfully carry out their wishes.

In albas where the watchman does not dominate, the lovers generally speak directly to the audience. They present their plight or lament from their own point of view. But many albas which feature dominant watchmen tend to produce a reporter's, rather than participant's point of view. The watchman, stationed on the periphery of the love relationship presents that relationship with such seeming detachment and objectivity that the audience, too, accepts the affair with removed but sympathetic eyes. But as Jackson notes, the very choice of subject on the part of the poet belies true

objectivity since, presumably, only a poet sympathetic to alba values would write an alba in the first place.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, some watchmen do become directly involved with the lovers, giving advice or guidance to them. In some dawn songs, particularly in the tageliet, the watchman takes it upon himself to advise and counsel the lovers. In "Von der zinnen," as in "Reis glorios," "Dieus, aydatz," "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir," and "Sîne klâwen," the watchman offers advice and help.

In such cases, the watchman functions as an experienced authority and aid of love. The watchman of "Von der zinnen" also offers some of his good counsel, warning:

ez waere unwaege,
swer minne pflaege,
daz ûf ime laege
meldes last. (18-21)

It were unfitting
that the weight of betrayal
should lie on he who
cultivates love.

The watchman here, as in "S'anc fui belha," has become guardian of the rules of love. Two lines earlier, he speaks planning future trysts:

niht gedenken
solt du, vrowe, an scheidens riuwe
ûf kunfte wân. (16-17)

nor should you think,
lady, on the grief of parting
in the hope of new returns.

The watchman, familiar with strategies for carrying on the secret affair, suggests that he knows, better than the lovers themselves, what will nurture and sustain the relationship. The watchman, a man uninvolved in a love-relationship himself, has in this case, become the guardian of love.

From his elevated post, the watchman can view the action of separation between the lovers. In "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir," the watchman relates to the audience what he sees of that action. The lovers themselves are not portrayed enacting their parting, as they are in Wolfram's tageliet. The audience knows little about the lovers, how they feel or behave. We only know that the lover has safely quit his lady because the watchman reports that he sees him riding away. Yet although the lovers themselves are not depicted, this alba is particularly dramatic. The audience is involved from the start as the watchman draws their attention with the opening word "eras" ("now"), with pointing words such as "lay sos" ("down there"), or with his declaration that he speaks to all knights, but with a particular one in mind. In this alba, unlike

most Old Provençal dawn-songs, there is reported movement, but again, unlike most albas, the relationship itself is barely exposed to view. The entire affair remains shrouded and enclosed, curiously undramatized.

Simultaneously a marginal and mediatory figure, the watchman's status as an outsider enables his objectivity and establishes his authority. He thus becomes central to any alba in which he is mentioned. Even though the lady of the Margrave of Hohenburg's "Ich wache umb eines ritters lîp" curses and damns the watchman, his response to her is kind and calm: "Dîn zorn sî dir vil gar vertragen"(23) ("Your anger may be born with endurance for your sake very completely"). He is not drawn into an emotional or even personal response to the lady's rage. He is able to retain his objectivity and, rather than being offended, he seems compassionate to the lady.

Many a watchman is sympathetic to the lovers and understands them. He does not preach to or judge them; rather he accepts their autonomy and tries to help them. But he does not prevent them from acting out their freely willed decisions. Even when the

watchman fails to prevent the lover from acting against his best interests, as in "Sîne klâwen," the watchman does not hold a grudge. He is shown here in his most forbearing and respectful guise. The presence of the watchman in such poems adds perspective to the scene. The lovers, due to the intensity of their emotions, lose all sense of reality and cannot maintain objectivity. Their emotion often robs the lovers of good judgment and a practical perspective. The watchman helps them to orient themselves to the situation. He encourages the lovers to think of future prospects. In poems where he is present, the watchman helps to restore a realistic and practical perspective to the lovers.

The "laws" of love furnish a standard by which the lovers can assess their standing and determine how well they have fulfilled Love's goals--which become their own. They act not only on their own behalf, but also in order to increase Love's glory:

si hâten beide sich bewegen,
ez enwart sô nâhe nie gelegen,
des noch diu minne hât den prîs
("Ez ist nu tac," 31-33)

they both so agreed between themselves
that there was never such a close lying
together.
Wherefore now yet Love has the renown.

Without someone to prize her for what she
believes are her most precious attributes, the lady
of "S'anc fui belha" would die:

e murria
s'ieu fin amic non avia
cuy disses mo marrimen (5-7)

and I would die
if I did not have a noble lover
to whom I could tell my sorrows.

The lady's association of death with the
deprivation of someone who can truly esteem her--
someone to whom she can speak and in whom she can
confide--is one expressed by other courtly singers,
such as the narrator of Bernart de Ventadorn's "Non
es meravelha":

Ben es mortz qui d'amor no sen
al cor cal que dousa sabor;
e que val viure ses valor
mas per enoi far a la gen? 160

A man is really dead when he does not feel
some sweet taste of love in his heart;
and what is it worth to live without worth
except to irritate everyone?

Like the speaker of Bernart's lyric, the alba lady exists to be appreciated for her courtliness, and for those who, like the watchman of Cadenet's alba or the alba lady's lover, recognize its meaning and worth. Alba lovers confer upon one another the gratification of appreciating each other's refinements. They bestow upon each other the worth which validates their lives. And the knight, as well as the lady, endows his beloved with life-sustaining qualities.

Devoted to the Idea of the beloved, the lover worships a lady who possesses certain attributes. Thus in albas, not one of the lovers or ladies is named except "N Esteves" of "Ab la gensor." The lovers never describe each other in specific detail; rather, they describe each other or are described by a narrator in terms which portray them as exemplars of the "courtly". In "En un vergier," the lady establishes her lover as a courtly man by specifically describing him as "cortes"(18) as well as with other stereotypical attributes of a courtly man. The narrator later does the same with the lady who had spoken. In "S'anc fui belha," the watchman declares himself courtly, goes on to

describe his function as one of protecting "fins drutz"(34) or "la leial gen"(25) therefore informing us that the lady and lover in the center of the poem are courtly. Furthermore, the lady herself speaks of the various kinds of behavior that are courtly and noncourtly with respect to love. It seems as though these courtly qualities provide the impetus for the lovers' attraction to one another. And Walther describes the lover of "Friuntlîchen lac" as "ein rîter vil gemeit"(2) ("a very courtly knight").

The great emphasis on role in the alba consequently produces great stress also on its "performance." This is so in two senses: the lover must dutifully and efficiently carry out his obligations; but he must also be seen to do so. This latter type of performance requires an audience. The audience may consist merely of the beloved, or it may include the watchman; the audience may even encompass a larger public. But whatever the size of the audience, public affirmation of the lover's performance is essential to it.

The poet of "En un vergier" includes others in

his assessment of the lady, informing us: "la regardon mantas gens"(22) ("she is regarded by many"). The faithful friend of "Reis glorios" wants the lover to see how faithful a companion he has been: "conoisseretz si'us sui fizels messatge"(18) ("you will know if I have been your faithful messenger"). He desires recognition by those who share the ethic of loyalty, which for him defines his role. And he desires such acknowledgment from those for whose sake he performs his service. The very idea of a "watchman" adds to the idea of the performance. Here is someone to whom the lovers can "play," but who also functions to watch the world beyond the lovers as well. The opening line of one alba immediately focuses on this function in the lover's command to the watchman: "Gaita be" ("Watch well"). The watchman provides either a sympathetic or hostile immediate audience for the lovers' performance, as he also performs a role of watching in the other direction.

In many albas the lovers perceive their actions as the subject and focus of continual scrutiny. This scrutiny is carried out by at least two distinct groups: those who would assess them

according to an exacting love code, evaluating their behavior against a standard established by the "rules" of love; and the authoritarian adherents to traditional values or the moralists who spy on the lovers, trying to seek out so as to destroy the illicit affair.

The lovers, then, become on the one hand, the focus of public attention on the part of "friends." The lady of the aube "Cant voi l'aube dou jor venir" informs her audience:

Quant je me gix dedens mon lit
Et je resgairde encoste mi,
Je n'i truis poent de mon amin,
Se m'en plaing a fins ameraus. (13-15)

When I recline in my bed
And I glance beside me,
And I cannot find my lover,
Then I lament about it to true lovers.

Shortly thereafter, she actually invites all sympathizers to join in her song:

Or pri a tous les vrais amans
Ceste chanson voixent chantant
Ens en despit des medixans
Et des mavais maris jalous. (25-28)

Now I implore all true lovers
To let themselves go singing this song
In spite of slanderers
And wicked jealous husbands.

On the other hand, the lovers' actions also involve a desperate attempt to elude the eyes of those who

oppose the lovers for acting in the name of Love.
Again, we turn to Gace Brulé's lady, who tells her
lover (and us) in a rare explanation of her plight:

Je ne vos puis de jor veoir,
Car trop redout l'apercevoir,
Et se vos di trestout por voir
K'en agait sont li envious. (7-10)

I am not able to see you by day,
For I fear too much that it would be seen,
And indeed I tell you truthfully
That the envious ones are watchful.

The lady of this aube cannot see her lover because
she is afraid that in seeing him, she would be
observed by her enemies. Seeing her lover is
possible only when her enemies cannot see him or
her. Thus she brings together in her song (or at
least addresses herself to) two opposing groups--
the courtly lovers who sympathize with her plight
and the envious slanderers and wicked spies who
oppose her solution to it.

The speakers of tageliet are particularly
sensitive to being seen by the unsympathetic. In
the one stanza tageliet "Ich sich den morgensterne
brehen," the lady tells her love: "nu, helt, la
dich niht gerne sehen"(2) ("now, knight, do not
willingly let yourself be seen"). Especially in the
tageliet where courtliness in general seems less
important a value, the lovers are perpetually

concerned with concealing their illicit allegiance. An interesting variation on this motif is the allusion to spying (which may remind us of Troilus' aubade) found in Wolfram's "Sîne klâwen," where day is described as darting bright glances through the window: "Von der blicken, die der tac tet durh diu glas"(33) ("From the glances that the sun made through the glass").

In the Old Provençal and Old French alba, the lovers exhibit the refinement of their behavior in love to the group of sympathizers, while endeavoring to screen it from the second. Thus, the lady of Cadenet's alba goes to great lengths to demonstrate the strength of her devotion to her lover: nothing could make her part from her lover before the last possible moment, and she would never part in a vulgar or ignorant way. The watchman who sings the central strophes of that alba is able to judge true from false lovers--on the basis of their "performance," for, presumably, he can peer into their affair as well as oversee their actions.

For the lady of the aube, "L'abe c'apiert au jor," being seen by the second group is associated

with being blamed:

Pleüst ore a saint Jaike
Ke nuns ne nos puist veoir ne reprandre (6-7)

I wish now to Saint James
That no one were able to see or blame us

This second group is often accused or condemned by the lovers for being voyeuristic and salacious. And indeed, one of the characteristics of the gilos which defines him as a vilan is that he, unlike the lovers, is not a performer.

The repeated concern with being seen by others manifests the lovers' self-centeredness, their self-absorption and -obsession. They believe that they are the center upon which all eyes are focused. Therefore, they continually suspect that the world around them is spying on their affair. Such suspicion manifests the lovers' implicit desire to flaunt their affair. As much as they fear being caught, they flirt with the idea of being seen. The lady of "En un vergier," encourages her lover "en despieg del gilos"(11). Cadenet's lady will cling to her lover also despite her husband's threats, as will the lady of "Dieus, aydatz." For all their fear of being seen, they are tremendously concerned with the adequacy of their performance.

Both the lady and watchman of "S'anc fui belha" are in the process of crafting images of themselves. They compose verbal self-portraits by demonstrating their achievement of the right to be seen as courtly. They are, at the same time, in the act of performing for two different audiences: they speak of their performance of love-service (which they do for the benefit of the affair); but they are also performing their song. The lady desires to part not "malamen" but well. In whose eyes, we wonder, would her parting well have meaning? She may perhaps have a standard she has established for herself, or that her poet has established for her. Yet her concern for parting in a particular manner suggests that she also expects to be evaluated according to her parting performance. Her private affair has entered a more public realm, her private behavior willingly submitted to a tribunal composed of part of the public. In the eyes of such a forum, she, as do other alba lovers, wants to avoid appearing vulgar or animalistic. Alba lovers thus model their experience into expression and performance. They themselves represent, then, on some level, the

dialectic between nature (feeling, freedom) and artifice (manners, discipline).

The narrator will often use epideitic pointing words to involve the present audience's immediate senses, bringing them closer to the scene of the drama: the lady of "En un vergier" speaks of the breeze "qu'es venguda de lay"(17)--a breeze on which her lover's breath is wafted. In "Gaita be," the lover speaks of "speaking of love" "za jos"(18) ("here below"). The watchman of "Reis glorios" remembers speaking to his friend "la foras als peiros"(26) ("outside on the steps"). The watchman of "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir" tells us that he sees the lover "lay sos"(49) ("down there"). Similarly in "Gaite de la tor," someone is "la jos soz la coudroie"(20) ("down there under the hazel"). The singer attempts to involve the audience, in part, in order to bolster and make more valuable his own choice of the love ethic over all others.

At least if the lovers can align themselves with kindred spirits--other lovers who share their values and who understand the kind of experience they are undergoing--then they have a small community with whom they can identify and will feel

less alone. The narrator of "Cant voi l'aube dou
 jor venir" asks all true lovers in the audience to
 join in her song. It is to them she makes her
 complaint. The song becomes a celebration of the
 ethic as the performer tries, as in the canso, to
 "enlist the audience as co-creator, to make the
 song, their song."¹⁶¹ She invites them to
 participate and share in her invention. She also
 attempts to make the individual situation partake
 of larger meaning--to transcend the personal
 predicament of two lovers. Strophe four of "S'anc
 fui belha" opens up the situation so that it
 applies to all true lovers. The watchman guards
 loyally

per tal que segurs estia
 fins drutz, quan pren jauzimen
 de domna valen (33-35)

so that the fine lover
 may rest secure when he takes pleasure
 from his worthy lady

The watchman, presenting the more "objective"
 stance, displays the wider, more universal
 application of his vision; unlike the
 watchman/companion of "Reis glorios," the watchman
 of "S'anc fui belha" guards the lover because he
 is a "fins drutz" not because he is a personal

friend. And again, in the tornadas, the speaker invokes all lovers in his generalization about how they respond to the dawn:

Anc no vi jauzen
drut que'l plagues l'alba.

Per so no m'es gen
ni'm plai quan vei l'alba. (32-35)

Never saw I a happy lover
such that the dawn pleases.

Wherefore it does not please me
and it is not pleasing when I see dawn.

In "Slâfest du," the more universal aspects of love are presented by the aphoristic, almost gnostic assertion: "liep âne leit mac niht gesîn"(7) ("joy without sorrow there cannot be").

No matter how powerful a bond love forges it is not potent enough to escape mortality. The view of love in the alba is necessarily a tragic one. Time, nature and society all conspire to overwhelm and conquer emotional attachment. Knowing that love is foredoomed to defeat, alba lovers nonetheless valiantly stake their claim to it, risking reputation and safety in order to experience its gratifying fulfillment. And while the experience of secret love is impermanent and the actual time allotted to it, finite, the value of the experience is nonetheless immeasurable and

timeless.

The tone of elegaic pathos in many albas does not belie the courage of their speakers who confront a future grim with pain and loss. Despite the innumerable odds against it and the dire menace that surrounds it, the love secretes its own inestimable worth, a worth that is proof against all resistance to it. The inviability of such love in a world which distrusts and attempts to undermine it is mitigated by the dauntless idealism and vigorous determination of the lovers. Love becomes a force which, through its heroic indomitability, generates its own precious meaning and dignity.

The predominant theme of the dawn-song is the transitoriness and mutability of love. A song of grief, it mourns the anticipated loss, enforced by time, of all that the lovers most value. Yet the song itself functions as an act which prolongs and perpetuates love. A memorial act, it marks a momentous occasion as that event draws to its close. Thus does the song act as a transitive agent, bridging the temporal and physical gap between public and private, social and personal.

The performance of the song concretizes the love, sacramentalizing and enshrining it in a form that is proof against time. The alba remains the enduring monument to vanished, valiant love.

Chapter Three: The Continental Alba

- ¹ Woledge, in Hatto, pp. 383-84
- ² Wolfram von Eschenbach, "Sîne klâwen" (27)
- ³ King Wenceslas II of Bohemia, "Ez taget unmâzen schône," Hatto, pp. 458-59, takes his text from von Kraus, ed., Deutsche Liederdichter des 13. Jahrhunderts, I, 65, III
- ⁴ The Margrave of Hohenburg, "Ich wache umb eines ritters lîp," Hatto, pp 457-58, takes his text from von Kraus, I, 25, V
- ⁵ Anonymous, "L'abe c'apiert au jor," Woledge, in Hatto, p. 375, takes his text from G. Raynaud and Lavoix, eds., Receuil de Motets français 2 vols., (Paris: 1881-83) II, 4
- ⁶ "En un vergier," strophe 2; these lines are further discussed below
- ⁷ Saville, p. 154
- ⁸ Bernart de Ventadorn, "Chantars no pot gaire valer" (48-49), in Moshé Lazar, Bernard de Ventadour: Troubadour du XII^e siècle Chansons D'Amour (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1966), pp. 64-66
- ⁹ Saíz, p. 33, n. 25
- ¹⁰ Hatto, Eos, p. 447, n. 3
- ¹¹ Saville, p. 153
- ¹² These are: "Us cavaliers," "Ab la gensor que sia," "Gaita be," and "Quan lo rossinhols escria"
- ¹³ Lady and lover alternate strophes or the lover otherwise speaks in: "Owê, sol aber mie iemer mê," "Ez ist nu tac," "Den morgenblic," and "Friuntlîchen lac"
- ¹⁴ Jackson, Medieval Lyric, p. 17

- 15 Hatto, p. 432
- 16 Dietmar von Aist(?), "Slâfest du," MF p. 66 (VIII, XIII); in Sayce, p. 4;
- 17 Sayce, p. xv
- 18 Ibid., p. 117-18
- 19 Dronke, The Medieval Lyric, p. 178
- 20 Hatto, p. 436
- 21 Ibid., p. 437
- 22 W.T.H. Jackson, in Newman, pp. 75-76
- 23 Hatto, p. 437
- 24 Hatto, p. 457
- 25 "Us cavaliers si jazia" (23)
- 26 Wolfram von Eschenbach, "Sîne Klâwen" (4)
- 27 Maureen Fries, "The 'Other' Voice: Woman's Song, its Satire and its Transcendence in Late Medieval British Literature," in Plummer, p. 159
- 28 Ibid., p. 158
- 29 Ibid., pp. 161, 162; and Robert W. Kaske, "The Aube in Chaucer's Troilus," in Chaucer Criticism 2 vols., eds., Richard J. Schoeck and Jerome Taylor (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961) II, pp. 167-79
- 30 Kaske, p. 173
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 The most striking example of this is in "Ab la gensor," an alba which is unusual in many respects and which will be discussed in detail below. There are, however, other albas in which the lover also shows reluctance to part: "Us Cavaliers," "Gaita be," "Slâfest du," etc.

- 33 Kaske, p. 176
- 34 Ibid., pp. 175-176
- 35 Goldin, German Lyrics, p. 34
- 36 Hatto, p. 436
- 37 Dronke, The Medieval Lyric, p. 181
- 38 Hatto, p. 436
- 39 Dronke, p. 180
- 40 Evelyn Shaw and Joan Darling, Female Strategies (New York: Walker and Co., 1985)
- 41 Saville, p. 154
- 42 Fries, in Plummer, p. 158
- 43 Saville, p. 153
- 44 Saville, p. 1
- 45 Fries, in Plummer, p. 158
- 46 Jeanroy, Troubadours, p. 296
- 47 Woledge in Hatto, p. 381
- 48 Fries, in Plummer, p. 158
- 49 Dronke, p.175
- 50 Saíz, p. 45
- 51 Dronke, p. 175
- 52 Woledge, in Eos, p.381
- 53 Dronke, p. 175
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Ibid., p. 176

- 57 "Gaita be" (22); "Friuntlîchen lac"; "Ez ist nu tac" (37); etc.
- 58 Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture trans. R.F. C. Hall (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955)
- 59 Saville, p. 146
- 60 Robert Hanning, "Poetic Emblems in Medieval Narrative Texts," Vernacular Poetics in the Middle Ages, Lois Ebin, ed., (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1984) pp. 11-12
- 61 "Ab la gensor" (30)
- 62 Hatto, p. 432
- 63 Hatto, p. 449
- 64 Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, "No m'agrad'ivers ni pascors," in Linskill, XXII, pp. 242-245; English translation, Goldin Troubadours, pp. 270-271
- 65 John Donne, "The Sunne Rising"
- 66 Anonymous, "Est il jors?" Woledge, in Hatto, p. 374, takes his text from G. Raynaud and Lavoix, eds., Receuil de Motets français 2 vols., (Paris, 1881-1883), II, 4-5
- 67 Goldin, "Array of Perspectives," in Pursuit, p. 59
- 68 see, for example, the miraculous feats of Tristan or of Lancelot in Chretien's Le Chevalier de la Charrette
- 69 John Donne, "The Sunne Rising"
- 70 Hatto, p. 451
- 71 Sayce, p. 121
- 72 Richie, p. 99

- 73 Forster, p. 121
- 74 Hatto, p. 451
- 75 Richie, p. 94
- 76 A star is mentioned in "Reis glorios"; a morgensterne in several tageliet
- 77 Dronke, p. 181
- 78 Richie, p. 91
- 79 Ibid., p. 93
- 80 Anonymous, "Ich sich den morgensterne brehen!"
Hatto, p. 446
- 81 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 375
- 82 A beautiful little bird is described by the
lady of Dietmar's "Slâfest du"
- 83 Richie, p. 26
- 84 Hatto, p. 436
- 85 Richie, p. 25
- 86 Dronke, p. 173
- 87 Hatto, p. 793
- 88 Saville, p. 149
- 89 Hatto, p. 811
- 90 Anonymous, "Eras diray ço que'us dey dir,"
Martín de Riquer, "Alba trovadoresca de autor
catalan," Revista de Filología española,
34(1950), 151-165 and reproduced in Hatto, pp.
368-369; Frank 461, 25a
- 91 Saville, p. 148
- 92 Ibid., 148; Alfred Jeanroy, Les Origines de la
poésie lyrique en France au moyen-âge (Paris,
1889), pp. 66-70; Gaston Paris, review of
Jeanroy, Les Origines..., Journal des Savants

(1892), pp. 161-164. Both Jeanroy and Paris see a natural development from the watcher independent of the lovers, who wakes them incidently in pursuit of his duty, to one who is their accomplice and eventually, to one who is a faithful companion

- 93 Baskerville, p. 607, n. 92
- 94 Saville, p. 150
- 95 Ibid., p. 210
- 96 Dronke, p. 179
- 97 Saville, pp. 208-209
- 98 Saville, p. 204
- 99 Dronke, p. 175
- 100 Hatto, p. 431
- 101 There are citations to all these examples interspersed throughout this study
- 102 Dronke, p. 179
- 103 Edmund Stengel, "Der Entwicklungsgang der provenzalischen Alba," Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie 9(1885), 410 and n. 160
- 104 Poe, p. 145, n. 3
- 105 Shapiro, p. 607
- 106 "Reis glorios" was so characterized by the late Professor Helaine Newstead during a 1981 seminar in which I presented a paper on this alba
- 107 Saville, p. 141
- 108 Ibid.
- 109 Translation by Goldin in Troubadours, p. 195 (11)
- 110 Hatto, p. 81

- 111 Shapiro, p. 622
- 112 Hatto, p. 75
- 113 Savillie, p. 147
- 114 Hatto, p. 75
- 115 Shapiro, p. 618
- 116 Saville, p. 144
- 117 Ibid., pp. 145-146
- 118 Saville, p. 156
- 119 Shapiro p. 622
- 120 Hatto, p. 434
- 121 Ibid.
- 122 Martín de Riquer, "Alba trovadoresca de autor catalan," Revista de Filologia Española 34(1950) 151-65
- 123 Richie, p. 93
- 124 Hatto, p. 432
- 125 Ibid., pp. 344-35
- 126 Ibid., 433
- 127 Richie, p. 92
- 128 Kaske, p. 172
- 129 Adolf Kolsen ed., Sämtliche Lieder des Trobadors Giraut de Bornelh I, (Halle: 1910), 342-47, and II (Halle, 1935), 95-96
- 130 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 381
- 131 Saville, p. 93, quotes the older Provençal hymn, as follows:

O Maria, Deu maire,

Deu t'es e filh e paire;
Domna, preira per nos,
To fil lo glorios.

O Mary, mother of God,
God is son and father to you.
Lady, supplicate for us
your son the glorious one.

(Text: Diego Zorzi, Valori religiosi nella letteratura provenzale: La spiritualità trinitaria, Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica del S. Cuore, N.S., No. 44 (Milan, 1954), p. 112, quoting from Amédée Gastoué, Le Cantique populaire en France (Lyon, 1924), p. 34. The same melody was used for Adam of St. Victor's "O Maria stella maris," and Folquet de Marselha's "Bem platz lingua.") See Saville, p. 276, n. 57; See also Woledge in Hatto, p. 381 and Sarah Spence, "Et Ades Sera L'alba: Revelations as Intertext for the Provençal Alba," Romance Philology 35(1981), p. 213

- 132 Spence, p. 214
- 133 Woledge, in Hatto, p. 383
- 134 Saíz, pp. 38-39
- 135 Saville, p. 94
- 136 Ibid., p. 95
- 137 Ibid., p. 94
- 138 Ibid., p. 101
- 139 Spence, p. 214
- 140 Ibid., p. 214
- 141 Saíz, p. 39
- 142 English translation by Goldin, in Troubadours, p. 195
- 143 Ibid.

- 144 Saíz, p. 40
- 145 Ibid., p. 41
- 146 Ibid., p. 39
- 147 Ibid., p. 42
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 James J. Wilhelm, The Cruellest Month (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965) p. 200
- 150 Spence, p. 214
- 151 Ibid.
- 152 Saíz, p. 42
- 153 Saville, p. 105
- 154 Wilhelm, p. 200
- 155 Saville, p. 105
- 156 Spence, p. 216
- 157 Wilhelm, p. 199
- 158 Saville, pp. 123 ff.
- 159 Jackson, Medieval Lyric, p. 13
- 160 Bernart de Ventadorn, "Non es meravelha," in Carl Appel, ed., Bernart von Ventadorn, seine Lieder, mit Einleitung und Glossar (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1915); also Goldin, Troubadours, pp. 126-127
- 161 Goldin, "The Array of Perspectives," in Pursuit, pp. 93-94

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MIDDLE ENGLISH AUBADE AND GEOFFREY CHAUCER

In English, as Baskerville and after him Spencer have shown, the dawn-song has had a broken tradition. Spencer discerns three elements in the English treatment of the dawn theme: a fragmentary folk tradition stronger in Scotland than in England; imitations of classical poetry, especially Ovid; and the expression of a recurring human situation.¹ It has also been noted that no trace of the alba can be found in Old English literature.² Spencer explains that our knowledge of the English tradition is slight and insufficient, derived mostly from "dispersed evidence--allusion, fragments, adaptations, sophistications and late versions,"³ the same kind of evidence upon which Baskerville relied in his study. Spencer continues that "no actual example" of an alba exists in Middle English lyric,⁴ an assertion that my research corroborates. References to dawn in Middle English lyrics before Chaucer exist, but these rarely coincide with the motif of parting lovers⁵ although the later ballads Baskerville

cites and which deal with the theme may have had medieval roots or indicate an ancient or lost oral or folk tradition.

Although the Middle English lyric canon up until Chaucer lacks aubades, there survive Middle English lyrics with parting lovers. The lament, "I may well sygh for greuous ys my payne" (simply entitled "Lament" in Cambridge Middle English Lyrics [poem #43]), is a three stanza poem with the refrain: "Alas for woo departynge hath me slayn." Certain of the images and motifs present in this poem resemble those in albas. The same edition includes three other Middle English poems (all poems of one stanza) on the theme of parting, whose titles reveal their relationship to the parting-lament theme: "The Wounds of Love," "Parting is Sorrow," and "Parting is Death."⁶ These interesting lyrics, will however, not receive attention in the present study since in none of them is the dawn a factor.

The thirteenth century rhymed romance, King Alisaunder, contains the first extant relevant reference to dawn:

Mery it is in sonnes risynge --
The rose openeth and wile upsprynge.
Wayes faireth, the clayes clyngeth,

The medes floureth, the foules syngeth.
Damoysels maketh mourning,
Whan her leues shullen make partyng. 7

While this passage is reminiscent of Middle English nature passages, such as those of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,⁸ and functions primarily to set the time, it does portray the kernel of the dawn-song situation, albeit not as the dawn affects one lady or couple personally, but as it affects lovers -- or rather, the female half of the couple -- universally. The use of the word "damoysels" is a reflection of the infiltration of French vocabulary, and the use of rhymed metrics indicates the possible influence of French lyric poetry.

It is not until Chaucer, however, that the dawn theme receives a treatment that parallels its significance in France and Germany. And it is Chaucer, too, who, having introduced the genre into English, also embeds it within a larger narrative.⁹

Surprisingly, Chaucer's model seems not to have influenced most of his followers as far as the dawn-parting theme is concerned. Gower alone contributes a beautiful lyrical passage in Confessio Amantis. In Confessio Amantis, John

Gower presents Cephalus' complaint to the Sun. The story recounted here is particularly interesting because in this telling, Cephalus is with "that swete may," Aurora--herself the traditional focus of the lover's complaint at dawn!¹⁰ Spencer notes that Gower's rendition of this encounter is original in that "no source has been found for this story of an amorous meeting of Cephalus and Aurora," and it is presumed to be either Gower's own invention, or his misreading of lines 39-40 of Ovid's Amores 1.13.¹¹ Certainly, it is a clever inversion of Amores 1.13, for Gower dramatizes the scene Ovid alludes to from Cephalus' rather than Aurora's point of view.

Gower's Cephalus, like Chaucer's Criseyde, requests the sun to withdraw, here asking that he "be unborn" (IV, 3320) and Cephalus, in lines which recall both Chaucer's aubade and Ovid's Amores 1.13, "so ordeigne[s]":

that thou thi swifte hors restreigne
Lowe under Erthe in Occident,
That thei towardes Orient
Be cercle go the longe weie. (IV, 33-37)

But Gower's originality, according to Burke, is much more significant here than has been previously noted, for Burke demonstrates that in Cephalus'

prayer Gower merges the alba with the epithalamion genre. 12

Lydgate, in Complaint of the Black Night, a poem also known as A Complaint of a Loveres Lyfe, has an interesting reference to dawn and parting lovers, closer in purpose and style to the citation in King Alisaunder, where love is associated with dawn merely to set the scene:

In May when Flora, the fresshe lusty quene,
The soyle hath clad in grene, rede and white,
And Phebus gan to shede his stremes shene
Amyd the Bole wyth al the bemes bryght,
And Lucifer to chace away the nyght
Ayen the morrow our orysont hath take
To bydde lovers out of her slepe awake.
(111-117) 13

Lovers here are awakened at dawn, but there is no implicit suggestion that they are secret or adulterous lovers. It is possible that lovers here must arise merely because day brings with it tasks toward which everyone must turn. In the Troy Book, too, Lydgate makes several references to dawn, and in some he alludes to classical mythology. In Book I (3093-3107) he first introduces the motif, and he employs it again, twice, in Book III:

Whan Aurora, with silver dropes schene,
Hir teris shadde upon þe freshe grene,
Compleynynge ay in wepinge and in sorwe
Hir childis deth, every somer morwe--
þis the seyne, when þe dew so sote

Embaumed hath þe flour and eke þe rote
With lusty lycour, in April and in May;
Whan þe larke, messenger of day,
Of custom ay Aurora doth salue
With sondry notis, hir sowre to transmue
Or Phebus ryse to joye and gladnes,
þoruz armonye to live hir hevynes,
Takynge hir leve, with seinte John to borwe--
þe same tyme, Grekis.... (III, 2745-2758)

Aurora's sorrow here is unrelated to love-parting. Rather, she mourns, her son Memnon's death (which is briefly alluded to at the opening of Ovid's Amores 1.13 (lines 3-4). Aurora's tears become the dew which freshens the earth. It is the lark, not Aurora, who serves as day's messenger and who attempts with his harmonious music to cheer the lamenting Aurora.

In his second reference to Aurora in Book III, there are some interesting oddities:

The next morwe, whan Titan hath forsake
The under party of oure Emysperye,
Where al the nyght he hadde be ful merye
With Aurora liggyng by his side,--
But in his bedde hym list no lenger bide,
But shope hym up, and cast his stremys shene
On Troye wall.... (III, 4449-4456)

Here Lydgate not only conflates Tithonus, Aurora's mythological husband, and Titan, the Sun-God (as Chaucer possibly did before him),¹⁴ but he also shows Titan, as the Sun-God, leaving Aurora's side, instead of vice versa.

Baskerville presents a number of late Middle

English and Elizabethan literary references to dawn's association with love. And Spencer traces the existence of the erotic dawn-song in fifteenth century Scotland, while noting that despite Chaucer's excellent models (or perhaps because of them?), few traces can be found of such a tradition immediately following him in England.¹⁵ In England, however, we chart the powerful resurgence of the motif in Edmund Spenser, who plays a number of variations on the classical but now familiar motif of the parting between Aurora and Tithonus, beginning in his Epithalamion, but appearing also in The Fairie Queene.¹⁶ Marlowe, too, in his Hero and Leander (517-18) has a relevant reference, derived, as is apparent, from his source in Ovid's Heroides.¹⁷

In English drama, Arthur Broke's The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Iuliet (published 1562), and "apparently Shakespeare's principal source" for Romeo and Juliet,¹⁸ describes the parting between the young lovers in some detail:

Thus these two lovers passe away the wery night,
In payne and plaint, not (as they wont)
in pleasure and delight.
But now (somewhat too soone) in farthest
East arose,
Fayre Lucifer, the golden starre that Lady

Venus chose;
 Whose course appoynted is with spedy race
 to ronne,
 A messenger of dawning daye, and of the
 rysing sonne.
 Then freshe Aurora with her pale and silver
 glade
 Did clear the skyes, and from the earth had
 chased ougly shade.
 When thou ne lookest wide, ne closely dost
 thou winke,
 When Phoebus from our hemysphere in westerne
 wave doth sinke.
 Whatcooller then the heauens do shew vnto
 thine eyes,
 The same, (or like) saw Romeus in farthest
 Esterne skyes.
 As yet he saw no day, ne could he call it night,
 With equall force decreasing darke fought
 with increasing light.
 Then Romeus in armes his lady gan to folde,
 With friendly kisse, and ruthfully she gan
 her knight beholde.
 With solemne othe they both theyr sorowfull
 leave do take;
 They sweare no stormy troubles shall theyr
 steady frendship shake.
 Then carefull Romeus agayne to cell retoornes,
 And in her chamber secretly our ioyles
 Iuliet moornes. (1701-20) 19

According to Spencer, Broke expanded the episode
 from his sources (of which an important one is no
 longer extant), adding many of the original
 effects.²⁰ Yet many conventional alba motifs are
 absent, for instance, bird-song or a watchman's
 cries announcing the dawn, speeches by one or both
 of the lovers, railing against the sun or dawn.
 Indeed, the passage, although literary, is hardly
 dramatic in contrast to the earlier alba and the

later Shakespeare. Night, in the passage, is an "ougly shade," whereas when night is described in Criseyde's aubade, it is beautiful, kind, nurturing. Aurora, rather than being reviled and hated, is seen as "freshe", as a purge. The passage does retain, however, the lovers' sorrowful response to parting and the typical exchange of pledges between them.

Although Shakespeare referred to the classical Aurora-Tithonus theme,²¹ he abandoned such mythologizing in the renowned parting scene between Romeo and Juliet at dawn. The passage has received intricate and lengthy analyses, many of which concern themselves with outlining the nature of Shakespearean innovations of the genre and the effectiveness as well as magnificence of the scene.²² As Spencer says:

Returning to the scene in Shakespeare's play after a detailed examination of the possible sources, one can only record the impression that here all his merely literary precedents become insignificant. 23

Shakespeare's lovers, like Broke's, are aware that the morning to which they arise is beautiful, although they themselves are bitterly opposed to it. But even further than variations on the by-now age-old motifs (and for many variations at

least some precedent can be found), Shakespeare's whole dramatic portrayal is most strikingly different from what preceded it. Romeo and Juliet speak to each other and respond dramatically in a way utterly foreign to speakers in a medieval lyric. Their relationship to the audience as well as to each other is markedly at variance with the alba. Romeo and Juliet speak directly to one another exchanging speeches with each other without directly including the audience. The involvement in the action of the drama is so complete that the audience is involved without being directly appealed to. The characters are developed as personalities; they are given human features.

After the glorious examples set first by Chaucer and subsequently, by Shakespeare, the aubade initiates its own fertile flowering in English literature. Donne and Milton adapted or played upon dawn-song themes and in ways which suggest an intimate grasp of the genre's significance.²⁴

Although, according to Spencer, serious treatment of the dawn-theme by English poets "disappeared from English poetry between the middle

of the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries,"²⁵ the dawn-song was revived in Victorian poetry by Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne and others.²⁶ A new interest in the medieval form is evinced by the fact that Swinburne, George Moore and Ezra Pound each attempt to adapt or translate the same Old Provençal alba, "En un vergier."²⁷ Pound's "Alba Innominata," however, is not the only alba he translated: his "Alba Belingalis" is based on the enigmatic "Phoebe claro"; and his "Alba" from Langue d'Oc, is a beautiful and powerful translation of the Old Provençal one-strophe lyric, "Quan lo rossinhols escria."²⁸

Housman, Yeats, Sitwell, Auden, Ransom and Williams also display an interest in the theme as do the contemporary poets, Karl Shapiro (b. 1913), who includes in his Collected Poems his "Aubade," and Richard Wilbur (b. 1912) who wrote "A Late Aubade."²⁹ These returns to or revivals of the medieval form also provide fascinating material for study and richly deserve further examination, but to do so would be much too extensive a range for the present work.

In effect, the Middle English aubade tradition begins as well as culminates in Chaucer's poetry.

Saville goes a step further, claiming that: "the entire text of the alba scene in Troilus [is] in many ways the culminating point in the medieval development of the genre...."³⁰ But in acknowledging Chaucer's piece as the zenith of a tradition, many critics have tried to place his lyric within the context of its influences and sources. Several theories have been put forward as to the source of Chaucer's familiarity with the dawn-song genre. Some critics have suggested that Chaucer discovered the genre while translating a passage from Le Roman de la Rose which prescribes the appropriate actions a lover should take before dawn. Chaucer's translation reads:

'A, Lord! wher I shall byde the day
 That evere she shall my lady be?
 He is full cured that may hir see.
 A, God! whanne shal the dawning spring?
 To ligen thus is an angry thyng;
 I have no joye thus heere to ly,
 Whanne that my love is not me by.
 A man to lyen hath gret disese,
 Which may not slepe ne reste in ese.
 I wolde it dawed, and were now day,
 And that the nyght were went away;
 For were it day, I wolde uprise.
 A, slowe sonne! shewe thin enprise!
 Sped thee to sprede thy beemys bright,
 And chace the derknesse of the nyght,
 To putte away the stoundes stronge,
 Whiche in me lasten all to longe.'
 The nyght shalt thou contene soo,
 Withoute rest, in peyne and woo.
 If evere thou knewe of love distresse,

Thou shalt mowe lerne in that siknesse,
 And thus endurying shalt thou ly,
 And ryse on morwe up erly
 Out of thy bedde, and harneyse thee,
 Er evere dawning thou maist see.
 All pryvyly thanne shalt thou goon,
 What weder it be, thisilf alloon,
 For reyn or hayl, for snow, for slet,
 Thider she dwellith, that is so swet,
 The which may fall a-slepe be,
 And thenkith but lytel upon thee
 Thanne shalt thou goon, ful foule afeered,
 Loke if the gate be unspered,
 And waite without, in woo and peyn,
 Ful yvel a-coold, in wynd and reyn.
 Thanne shal thou go the dore before,
 If thou maist fynde ony score,
 Or hool, or reef, whatever it were;
 Thanne shalt thou stoupe, and lay top ere,
 If they withynne a-slepe be,-
 I mene, all save thy lady free
 Whom wakyng if thou maist asprie,
 Go putte thisilf in jupartie,
 To aske grace, and thee bimene,
 That she may wite, withouten wene,
 That thou [a-] nyght no rest hast had,
 So sore for hir thou were bystad.
 Wommen wel ought pite to take
 Of hem that sorwen for her sake.
 And loke, for love of that relyk,
 That thou thenke noon other lyk;
 For whom thou hast so gret annoy
 Shall kysse thee, er thou go away,
 And holde that in full gret deynte.
 And for that no man shal thee see
 Bifore the hous, ne in the way,
 Loke thou be goon ageyn er day. (2624-2680)

This passage, however, is not an alba and indeed,
 does not concern itself much with whether the lover
 is requited. Rather, the passage is didactic,
 counselling the lover about how to court his lady.
 The reference to dawn is significant since the
 lover's activities are associated with it: L'amant

is advised to rise before dawn, visit his lady, but make sure to return home "er day" so that "no man shal thee see". Nonetheless, Chaucer's familiarity with French courtly poetry has been suggested as the source and inspiration of the alba theme in his works.³¹

Kaske has suggested that Chaucer was familiar with the tageliet because of similarities between certain Middle High German dawn-songs and Chaucer's aubades:

The long exchange of speeches in Troilus ...represents a much more complex development of the form, hardly paralleled except in the German tagelieder....if the aube in Troilus does somehow reflect a traditional poetic form, the major components of that form can be recognized also in the tage-
lieder. 32

And Hatto has observed that English "stylisation of the dawn-parting in a neo-classical sense comes in with Chaucer, at first under the influence of Italian literature"³³--a reference, I assume, to Chaucer's readings in Boccaccio. Kaske, too, suggests that Chaucer saw "a latent aube-pattern inadvertently created by the narrative and Boccaccio's treatment of it."³⁴ Although these conjectures are more or less plausible, none but the obvious influence of Boccaccio is certifiable.

According to other scholars, however, Chaucer's debt belongs rather to Ovid than to his French, German or Italian sources.³⁵ Certainly, one need first refer to Ovid who provides inspiration for so many Chaucerian themes and motifs in seeking a major influence on his aubades.

Nevertheless, Chaucer's originality and his innovative treatment of the alba genre turns influence into inspiration, and provides ample material to interest the scholar without requiring the discovery of the one or the many sources upon which he drew. Kaske observes that the dawn-parting theme must have been significant for Chaucer since he utilized the motif more than once:

However the aube may have reached Chaucer, it must have held a somehow significant place in his cultural repertory. 36

Indeed, not only does it play a central role in Troilus and Criseyde, but the theme is central to The Complaynt of Mars, also occurs in "The Reeve's Tale" and, according to Kaske, its outlines can be traced in "The Merchant's Tale" as well.

Both Muscatine and Kaske discuss the parody of the alba in "The Reeve's Tale." Saville, too, agrees that Chaucer is purposely parodying the

"lovers" in his use of the aubade. Certainly, the entire fabliau is far from Chaucer's courtly, refined and elegant romance Troilus and Criseyde, Muscatine observes that the aubade functions to emphasize the Miller's social pretensions. Kaske makes one observation which strikes directly at the heart of the tale in that he sees an "underlying subtle burlesque of the aube situation itself...with one convention after another turned upside-down or otherwise distorted into comedy."³⁷ The burlesque incorporates the entire fabliau and can occur only because of Chaucer's narrative frame. Kaske explains:

the lover finds himself announcing the night's achievements gleefully into the ear of the fol gelos himself; and the result answers the absorbing question--left forever poised in the true aube--of what happens when the fol gelos finds out. 38

The Compleynt of Mars, an early lyric (c. 1380) not much examined by Chaucer scholars, is a poem in which Mars makes an elaborate complaint about parting from Venus at dawn on St. Valentine's Day. Saville characterizes the poem as "a rumination on time and love closely connected to the themes of the alba."³⁹ Chaucer leads up to Mars' actual

"Compleynt" which is a lyric-set piece, in an interesting and circuitous fashion (at least in the form in which Robinson publishes the poem), with several "Proems". The first and second "Proems" are separated by an intervening section, "The Story," which is then followed by the actual "Compleynt". The poem opens with a joyous celebration of the new day which includes an admonishment to lovers to flee before "wikked tongues you espye!"(6) At the end of the exordium, a narrator informs us that everything we have been hearing has been his recital of a bird's song:

. . . a foul thus herde I synge
Upon thy day, er sonne gan up-sprynge. (13-14)

The Compleynt of Mars too, has been considered to have derived from Chaucer's reading of French poetry.⁴⁰ The scholarship on Chaucer's The Compleynt of Mars focuses primarily on the historical context of the piece: one approach has been to try to discover the identity of the "real" personages about whom Chaucer was writing incognito; the second approach has been to decipher the astrological significance of the planets mentioned in the piece in order to figure out the possible dates about or during which the poem could

have been written. Robbins characterizes the poem as "ambiguous and impenetrable" and as "a typical example of sophisticated court poetry."⁴¹ Certainly, there has been little valuable scholarship to date on the work, and neither of the current scholarly approaches are is very intriguing.

Chaucer's masterly aubades in Troilus and Criseyde may be viewed as the crowning achievement of an entire medieval tradition. Chaucer shows clear command of the themes of the genre while he powerfully redirects them to serve his own narrative purposes. It is not until Shakespeare that the theme again emerges in such an exciting, memorable way.

Chaucer's treatment of the alba theme is on a much more human and humane plane in Troilus and Criseyde than in his earlier poem, The Complaynt of Mars. As Robert O. Payne has shown us, Chaucer's narratives are interspersed, at various strategic points, with lyric set pieces:

These ten lyrics [set within the larger narrative of Troilus and Criseyde] constitute a kind of distillation of the emotional progress of the poem, held together by a thread of thematic imagery in much the manner of a very condensed sonnet sequence.... They interrupt the action at each major turn

of events, and four of them are interspersed in the almost continuous lyric high plane in the action from the consummation scene through to the end of Book III. 43

The aubades are certainly among the most interesting and significant: they mark off--isolating, preserving and commemorating--"the two completely happy meetings which are presented in detail."⁴⁴ Schibanoff comments that Chaucer's aubade (she does not distinguish between Troilus and Criseyde's as separate lyrics, but links the two as one aubade):

occupies a central, even pivotal, position in Troilus and Criseyde: it commemorates the previous night's joys toward which Troilus and Pandarus--and perhaps Criseyde herself--have been working for the whole first part of the poem, and it should foreshadow the continuation of this pleasure in the second half of the poem. 45

Chaucer does not deny his audience a glimpse into the nocturnal activities of his couple. Before giving us the aubades, he portrays for us the joys experienced by the couple, without glossing over the pleasures of intimacy his lovers have achieved:

Resoun wol nought that I speke of slep,
For it acordeth nought to my matere.
God woot, they took of that ful litel kep!
But lest this nyght, that was to hem so deere,
Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manere,
It was byset in joie and bisynesse
Of al that souneth into gentillesse.
(III, 1408-1414)

If Chaucer does not give us the kind of detailed and explicit report which Wolfram presents, he nonetheless conveys the sense of great fulfillment and joy the lovers achieve. The narrator acknowledges that he is recording their "joie and...gentillesse" "lest this nyght.../Ne sholde in veyn escape in no manere." Like the alba poets before him, he wishes to preserve this night for all time--even though, or perhaps because--within the context of this very narrative the lovers' happiness will be so short-lived.

Similarly, because we are in the midst of a story, the action does not end at the conclusion of the aubades. After they are sung, the narrator describes not only the lovers parting, but their actions once they are apart. We even have a homely picture of Troilus returned home and crawling into his own bed:

Retorned to his real paleys soon
He softe into his bed gan for to slynke,
To slepe longe, as he was wont to doone.
(III, 1534-1536)

Kaske comments cogently about the difference in effect between the courtly love lyric and the post-aubade scene Chaucer gives us here:

In the courtly aube the curtain falls discreetly on the lovers' departure, preserving around it an air of ardor undiminished and heroism somberly undaunted in the face of the undescribed separation and hardships ahead. At the close of the aube in Troilus and Criseyde it is as though the curtain had momentarily stuck, affording a small anticlimactic glimpse of a world in which flesh and spirit have, alas, their limitations. 46

In the narrative, the aubades come after the description of the lovers' rendez-vous. Meech notes that Chaucer greatly expands on his source in Boccaccio (and notes Dante and Ovid as sources for particular motifs as well).⁴⁷ Kaske notes:

Chaucer's largest single addition to the aube-passage is the arraignment of night spoken by Criseyde (1427-42) and the arraignment of day spoken by Troilus (1450-70--the latter represented by three lines in the Filostrato (III, 46, 4-6), and both apparently modelled to some extent on a passage in the Filocolo (I, 173). 48

Payne outlines several of the effects resulting from Chaucer divergences from Il Filostrato:

Chaucer--and here is a key to the whole difference between [Il Filostoto and Troilus and Criseyde]--reemphasizes an old narrative in order to point out in it particular aspects of the truths it may exemplify, and he begins by separating himself sharply and completely from the action and all the characters in it. 49

Before the actual speeches by the lovers, Chaucer sets the scene for us:

Gan on his brest to bete and atter crowe,
And Lucyter, the dayes messenger,
Gan for to rise, and out hire bemes throwe,
And estward roos, to hym that koude it knowe,
Fortuna Major, that anoon Criseyde,
With herte soor, to Troilus thus seyde;
(III, 1415-1421)

The use of concrete imagery--both of the mundane and common ("the cok") and of the cosmic ("astrologer," "Lucyfer," "Fortuna Major")--is a notable divergence from the typical medieval alba as is the cock's breast beating which is reminiscent of some of the more histrionic ladies of the Heroides, rather than of the typical alba lady. Indeed, the actual sun-rise scene is never the focus of the alba, which begins most often in mediis rebus and does not explicitly depict the movements of the natural environment except for quick allusions to the day-star or the birds' song. Certainly, the startling reference to Lucyfer--with its double meaning: the pagan day-bearing star and deity, and the Christian Satan--is found nowhere else in the genre, and implicitly evokes the double framework (pagan and Christian) within which Chaucer is working. The outward-oriented actions of the cock (its calling out) and the day-star (its throwing out of its beams) contrasts with the inward-turning response of the lovers, as Criseyde turns to

Troilus to begin her lament.

The actual aubades themselves are symmetrical, each consisting of three stanzas; one is assigned to Criseyde, the other to Troilus. Most readers concur that Chaucer greatly surpasses any and all supposed sources for this passage. Among those who do not share this view is Kirby, who argues against the view that Chaucer was influenced by, or indeed even familiar with the courtly alba:

Criseyde's address to night and Troilus' apostrophe to dawn are Chaucerian additions. They are both traditional literary devices and neither is conceived particularly well. Troilus' aubade is sufficient proof that Chaucer had not had first hand acquaintance with the love poetry of the troubadours. Had that been the case, he would have produced something much finer. 50

For most contemporary critics, however, the aubades are exceptionally distinguished. Indeed, Saville calls them the culmination of the entire medieval alba tradition, an assertion that has since gone unchallenged. Whether Chaucer's aubades are the culmination of the tradition, or the beginning of an entirely new one is not necessarily a fruitful question, but there is no doubt that they are tremendously important, not only for the poem itself, but for the subsequent history of English

poetry as well. Because Chaucer has set the aubades within a narrative frame, he can employ them in developing and extending our perceptions and understanding of the characters. Payne explains that the lyric set pieces help to accomplish two very striking results: "a great increase in attention to characters and a simultaneous broadening and intensification of their representativeness, their typicality."⁵¹ Since we have seen each lover before the onset of the affair, we are given an opportunity (never available in the alba not set within a narrative) to assess how that affair has altered them. Prior to the consummation of the love affair, we have seen Troilus transformed from a scorner of love, to its most ardent disciple. We have witnessed his sufferings and confession. We have seen Criseyde wooed; we have seen her hesitations and ruminations, her anxieties and concerns. And we have seen her finally won.

The aubades present an epiphanic moment, for the two speeches highlight the lovers divergence from one another. In his highly innovative adaptation of the alba, Chaucer dramatizes Troilus' and Criseyde's laments, not as a single

unified outcry against dawn, but rather as two discrete lyrics separated by an intervening stanza of narrative. Although earlier albas sometimes separate the speeches of the lovers, in Chaucer's version, unlike any other, each lover addresses a different component of dawn, rather than the dawn itself.

As if to stress Troilus and Criseyde's distance from one another, Chaucer sunders the image of dawn, fracturing it into night and day. The lovers' intimacy is thereby symbolically severed as well, foreshadowing the physical sundering that is soon to come and that is the impetus of the lovers' songs. The fact that each lover addresses only one aspect of the dawn further accentuates their disengagement from one another. Criseyde apostrophizes night, while Troilus addresses day. Rather than huddling together in unanimous opposition to a dawn which will disrupt their union, they turn away from each other and address its separate, disparate halves.

Chaucer's aubades are unique in explicitly outlining the symbolic values of night and day. Ovid also delineates some of the meanings of night

and day, and along similar lines. Indeed, the aubades in Troilus and Criseyde, like Ovid's Amores 1.13, contain mythological allusions as well as a kind of concrete imagery and splendor that is found nowhere else in the genre. The incorporation of mundane details such as the plaint of beasts, the idea of the labor brought on by day, and the inclusion of the rest of the world in general is new to the medieval genre. New, too, is the reference to "bokes," a reference which did not come from Amores 1.13, but which may have been inspired by Chaucer's familiarity with classical works.

O blake nyght, as folk in bokes rede,
 That shapen art by God this world to hide
 At certeyn tymes wyth thi derke wede,
 That under that men myghte in reste abide,
 Wel oughten bestes pleyne, and folk the chide,
 That there as day wyth labour wolde us breste,
 That thow thus fleest, and deynest
 us nought reste. (III, 1429-1435)

Payne notes:

In light of all the debate there has been over the problems of characterization in the poem, it is interesting to note that of these most graphically emotional projections in the poem, Criseyde is given only one, the first of the two aubades which conclude the consummation scene. 52

In the first stanza of her aubade, Criseyde addresses Troilus:

Myn hertes lif, my trist, and my plesaunce,
That I was born, alas, what me is wo,
That day of us moot make disseveraunce!
For tyme it is to ryse and hennes go,
Or ellis I am lost for evere mo!
O nyght, alas! why nyltow over us hove,
As longe as whan Almena lay by Jove?
(III, 1422-1428)

Criseyde's obsession with being exposed to public scrutiny is a typical alba motif. But here it is used with additional force: Criseyde believes that if exposed: "I am lost for evere mo!" Yet, her assiduous guarding of her secret love (the act of every true "courtly" lover), ironically, is an indirect cause of her later damnation. Because Troilus and Criseyde keep their furtive love so secreted, the ignorant Trojans willingly sacrifice Criseyde in exchange for Antenor, and she is thoughtlessly delivered over into the Greek camp where she does become "lost for evere mo!"

In her next stanza, Criseyde addresses night. Nighttime presides over love, as the God of Love presides over it. Criseyde's paeon to night sums up the protective and nurturing role which lovers in the alba and in Ovid ascribe to night. Like Ovid's lover, Criseyde does not separate her own situation from that of others, but speaks of her complaint as a universal one; she speaks of the

"folk" that chide night for fleeing. Rather than contrasting her negative response to day's advent to the joy of natural creatures at the same phenomenon, as the lady of "Den morgenblic" does, Criseyde speaks of the similarity of the responses of beasts and humans to dawn: beasts, too, complain. Night affords an arena for rest as well as for private activities, an arena ascribed by Criseyde to night's divine ordination, for night "shapen art by God." Night is not merely a void, for God has deliberately "shaped" it, thereby bestowing upon it form and purpose. God intentionally shaped night with the purpose of shielding what occurs within it from discovery and scrutiny: to hide the world "at certeyn tymes." Thus, Criseyde claims that God implicitly extends his grace to this shadowed world--and hence to the lovers who seek its refuge. Night envelopes the world with its "derke wede," wrapping a protective cloak--soft, receptive, embracing--around it.

As day impinges, Criseyde's increasing awareness of time is evinced by her continued and accretive observations of night's haste. Each stanza of her aubade refers, at least once, to night's short length. In her first stanza,

Criseyde implores night to extend its stay:

O night, allas! why niltow over us hove,
As longe as whanne Almena lay by Jove?
(III, 1427-1428)

Again, Chaucer, alone among writers of albas, returns to classical and mythic sources. In the second stanza, Criseyde laments that night "thus fleest" (III, 1435). In her third and final stanza of this set piece, she refers to night's fugacity twice: she claims, first, that night is not fulfilling its divinely decreed duty: "Thow doost, allas, to shortly thyn office,/Thow rakle nyght..."(III, 1436-37). The reference to night's "office" is reminiscent of the classical--hence, pagan--conception of night and again, is atypical of alba poets. Second, Criseyde accuses night of hastily hieing out of Troy: "for thow so hiest out of Troie..."(III, 1441). Suddenly, time appears to be swiftly fleeing, hurtling ahead at breakneck speed. Even as she is bestirred from her experience of love, night is swiftly receding into the irretrievable, ungraspable past. Dependent as they are on the tenure of night, her love and joy simultaneously withdraw. Criseyde yearns to accompany night and retreat along with it,

ensconcing herself in its bed of peace and pleasure. She experiences withdrawal of night's protective "wede" as its deliberate desertion of her, leaving her vulnerable, exposed. Night's ebon mantle is unravelling, disrobing Criseyde and baring her, naked, to day's invasive and pitiless glare.

Criseyde's aubade is elegiac; it is a song of desire. She laments her plight without contemplating practical solutions to it. She fantasizes, uttering an unfulfillable prayer that God bind night so firmly to the hemisphere that it can never again flee underground:

Thow rakle nyght, ther God, maker of kynde,
The, for thyn haste and thyn unkynde vice,
So faste ay to oure hemysperie bynde,
That nevere more under the ground thow
wynde! (III, 1437-1440)

This prayer, like those of other alba ladies, is a strident desire for stasis, union and possession. The references to "kynde" and "unkynde" allude to the natural, sexual activities of the lovers. Furthermore, the wish that God "bynde" night "faste" to the hemisphere is also suggestive of the lover's own bonding. The expression, "under the ground thow wynde" subtly evokes death, adumbrating the fatal effect of the lovers' parting. The

extremity of her wish reveals not only her desperation, but also the fact that her love pits itself against natural, social and cosmic law. She advocates, in defiance of all law, perpetual night, and desires to be engulfed by the womblike oblivion of night and love. Craving to be immersed in pleasure, she yearns for integration, union.

Chaucer's Criseyde, who among alba ladies (if we can so designate her since she does sing an alba during the work) is the character we know most about since she appears as part of a long narrative, and she remains in the audience's view, a "courtly" lady, even though she totters on the brink of a tumultuous fall from nobility to vilany. Indeed, she is most careful (excessively so, perhaps) to follow all the "courtly rules." She is sure to behave, if only for the sake of appearances, with irreproachable, refined etiquette and manners. Criseyde, in contrast to Troilus (who, although inherently refined and aristocratic, is not familiar with the "game" of love), knows the "rules" intimately. That she plays this game expertly contributes to our perception of her as an eminently courtly lady, and her financial status is

irrelevant to her being so considered. Living on the fringe of the aristocracy, she curries the favor of those in power, and her ability to act refined in view of the change in her circumstances after her father's treason is partly what enables the reigning family to accept Criseyde and persuades them to aid her.

Although on the moral scale we (unlike Henryson) may not know exactly where to place her, we do acknowledge, nonetheless, Criseyde's general refinement of manners, her "courtliness." But Criseyde's "courtliness" may diverge from our expectation of the courtly lady, and perhaps from the conception of the original composers of erotic albas. Certainly, even for some of the troubadours there was ambivalence about an ethic of ennoblement through romantic love, but by the time an influential work such as Le Roman de la Rose came to be written, "courtliness" was exposed as a mode of behavior which could be practiced with disregard to the moral significance of that behavior. The split between decorum (the way one behaves) and emotion (the way one feels) has so widened that, as in Jean de Meun's section of Le Roman de la Rose, "love etiquette" can be used manipulatively, to

mask, at the very least, an insincerity beneath which may lurk evil intentions.

The idea of using courtly behavior in order to manipulate exists even in troubadour poetry and is represented by the stock figures known as the fals'amadors and lausengiers, but it reaches a culmination in Jean de Meun's section of Le Roman de la Rose. Scaglione notes:

The dissolution of the courtly code rings through the speech of Friend (Amis) who instructs the Dreamer in the unholy art of deception: 'Only let them not perceive that you aim to deceive them.' [vv. 7420-7421] The loyalty and trust preached by Capellanus have vanished as delusions for day-dreamers. 53

Thus, in some works "courtliness" even becomes the epitome of immorality, for only its form is used, and solely in order to deceive.

The earlier albas, aubes, and tageliet, never consider the prolonged aspect of the love affair. Just as the genesis of the love relationship is not portrayed in the alba, there is also no focus on what happens when the lovers meet on a regular basis, week after week, or if they tire of each other. The poems begin in mediis rebus, with the lovers already very much together. But unless such a fact is mentioned, it becomes irrelevant, for

each meeting is unique and a new experience for the lovers no matter how many times they have previously met. Furthermore, they can never know whether the current meeting will be their last. Whatever dilemmas or hesitations the lovers may have had about participating in the dangerous liaison, these have been vanquished by dawn, when the alba is sung. Similarly, we assume that the couple somehow manages to part just in the nick of time. The lovers are certainly never apprehended while the lyric is in progress, and the listener, involved in the fictionalized plot, assumes they escape unscathed. Most often, however, the poem does not venture far enough into the real future for us to learn anything that might occur after the song's conclusion. We do not even know if the lovers are lamenting the ending of their first night together, or whether they are enacting an oft-repeated lament. It is only in narratives that such aspects of the adulterous relationship are worked out. And Chaucer, following his narrative antecedents, makes Criseyde betray her courtly lover.

By the end of her third stanza, Criseyde has

"forgon" her joy. She has moved from immersion in present happiness to recollection of the past and lament for its passing. During her song, a transition from present to past has occurred. Even as she quixotically insists on clinging to the past, Criseyde defers and then reconciles herself to the morrow by allowing the present to recede into the past. As she releases her hold on the present, she frees herself to face the world once more. Remarkably, this transition occurs via her song, for Criseyde has not physically moved and Troilus is still beside her. Yet it is through her song that Criseyde not only accommodates herself to separation, but actually achieves it. Her lament inherently signifies her acceptance of the change about to take place. The song provides her reconciliation, albeit an elegiac one, to the imperatives of social reality, even though these are never confronted directly in her song.

Troilus's aubade is divided from Criseyde's by a stanza of intervening narrative, in which Troilus's state of melodramatic pathos, his "pietous distresse" and "bloody teris" are portrayed. The separation of Troilus's aubade from Criseyde's textually parallels their emotional

disengagement from one another.

Troilus attends, not to night nor dawn, but to day, thus signifying that the transition from night to day has transpired during Criseyde's song, or during the intervening stanza which separates Criseyde's aubade from Troilus'. Clearly, it has dawned, although Chaucer allows neither lover to focus his outcry on the precise moment of daybreak. Their individual, specifically focused songs reflect in which half of a bisected world they abide. Criseyde looks back, toward a happy past as it flees, attempting to cling to its last seconds of grace. Troilus, however, across dawn's divide, looks ahead, toward a dreaded future, as it impends. The present seems to have vanished altogether and serves as a time of readjustment, occupied only with song. The lyrics become the vehicle through which each lover verbally and emotionally reorients himself to the tragic alteration in circumstance come upon them.

Troilus sees day, not merely as a time during which he must reorient himself. He personifies it as a violently willful antagonist. Like a vicious rapist, day's light forcibly reveals and exposes

the shrouded sacraments of love. Day penetrates the very hearts and souls of its victimized lovers, as it invades Troy, which stands, in Troilus's lyric, as a metaphor for the lovers:

O cruel day, accusour of the joie
That nyght and love han stole and faste
iwryen,
Acorsed be thi comyng into Troye,
For every bore hath oon of thi bryghte yēn!
Envyous day, what list the so to spien?
(III, 1450-1454)

Chaucer takes up the alba motif of "audience"--this time a hostile one--in these lines where day itself is depicted as possessing spying eyes which invade love's sanctum and seek out the sequestered pair. For secret lovers, being exposed to daylight is almost equivalent to being found out by society. The "eyes" of day are cosmic weapons turned against the lovers. Like so many alba lovers, Troilus alludes to theft. In this case, however, day is not the culprit, but the revealer of the crime. Night and love are the thieves, stealing joy and attempting to hide it. As in Ovid, day is envious and vengeful. Day symbolizes for Troilus, action and aggression, for he perceives its approach in terms of a military attack. Day is tantamount to a cruel and pitiless foe who aims to seek out and rout Troilus's precious treasure of love; its

illumination is likened to the omnipresent eyes of spies.

The advent of day, for Troilus, is apocalyptic in its decimation of his joys. Payne observes a jolt in the voice--and characterization--of Troilus in his next stanza, and comments:

Perhaps, in the Donne-like thrust and the faintly sardonic edge to the imagery here, there is a suggestion that Troilus is about to achieve a sophistication (in its old sense) which would destroy him as an ideal courtly lover. 54

Troilus accuses day of murder, shouting:

Allas! what have thise loveris the agylt,
Dispitous day? Thyn be the peyne of helle!
For many a love-re hastow slayn, and wilt;
Thy pourynge in wol nowher lat hem dwelle.
What profrestow this light here for to selle?
Go selle it hem that smale selys grave;
We wol the nought, us nedeth no day have.
(III, 1456-1463)

Day forces the lovers asunder, leaving dissolution, fragmentation, and even death in its wake. This conception of day is consistent with the flow of the larger narrative, for the day also brings back the reality of war with the Greeks. In terms of the poem's resolution, the oncoming day may truly be seen to adumbrate apocalypse, for the imagery in which day is described in Troilus' lyric quite clearly presages the invasion and conquest of Troy

by the Greek army.

If day is perceived by Troilus in militaristic terms, his response to it is defiant and martial as well. He aggressively retaliates against day's onslaught, addressing to day a series of antagonistic, rhetorical questions. Nevertheless, although he is a valiant warrior, Troilus cannot vanquish the ferocious oppressor. He himself realizes the futility of attempting to immunize or shield himself from day's accursed infiltrations in his exclamation: "Thy pourynge in wol nowher lat hem dwelle." Instead, he hurls insults at day, calling it cruel, envious, dispitous. As though facing a triumphant rampaging enemy, Troilus strikes out, desperately seeking respite from its wrath.

The last three lines of this stanza reinforce an important theme and, as pointed out by Payne, may be "one of the ways (others are more certain) of suggesting that his integrity is a kind of blindness, or at least a sharply limited range of vision."⁵⁵ They also strongly reinforce the idea that love flourishes in darkness, shunning light.

Troilus turns to insulting the sun as well. He conflates into one character Titan and Tithonus:

And ek the sonne, Titan, gan he chide,
And seyde, "O fool, wel may men the dispise,
That hast the dawyng al nyght by thi syde,
And suffrest hire so soone up fro the rise,
For to diseis loveris in this wyse.
(III, 1464-1468)

Whereas Ovid's narrator was sympathetic to the imagined sufferings of Aurora's mate, Troilus calls Titan (who, in Chaucer's conflation can represent both the Sun and Aurora's spouse) a fool for showing such weakness as to suffer Aurora to rise from his side so early; he slurs Titan's manhood.

Kaske proposes the theory that Chaucer bestows the typical speeches of the alba lady on Troilus and assigns to Criseyde the usual speeches of the lover, and achieving "the reversal of the roles of man and woman as they are popularly or romantically conceived."⁵⁶ As I pointed out in chapter two, Chaucer had no typical role pattern to reverse. But beyond this, if we examine the speeches of Troilus and Criseyde without referring to the previous alba tradition, it becomes clear that Troilus's response to his plight, though extreme and melodramatic as any previous alba lover's, is also aggressive, martial, angry and, if somewhat peevish, nonetheless, what some of us would define as "masculine." Criseyde, though she may be

presented as the more practical of the two, may not necessarily be exhibiting a masculine trait thereby. Her aubade is more dreamy, less antagonistic; it is elegiac, wish- rather than action-oriented--in other words--quite "feminine."

Furthermore, in his delineation of the purported reversal of male and female roles in the poem, Kaske cites lines which are not strictly part of the aubades themselves, if we mean by the aubades the two lyric set pieces of three stanzas each apostrophizing night and day which are spoken by the two lovers. In other words, Kaske is not keeping within the bounds of the "lyric" itself, but is referring to the dialogue between the lovers which occurs after their individual apostrophes to night and day. At the same time, however, he contrasts these exchanges with the antecedent lyric tradition in which no real dialogue between lovers actually occurs. Kaske conflates or confuses lyric with narrative, going outside the lyric and into the narrative and then contrasting the narrative with other earlier lyrics. In other words, Kaske would view everything in Book III from the incipit of the aubades to the end of the book as "the aube"

of Troilus and Criseyde. He thereby, presumably unwittingly, points to a general difference between the lyric set pieces and the narrative itself.

Like Troy itself, Criseyde's and Troilus' love is short-lived but precious, valiant but doomed. The couple's painful first parting, at which the aubades are sung, adumbrates their later, final separation, just as their final separation presages the complete destruction of Troy itself. Economou comments:

The dissolution of the bond between Troilus and Criseyde presages the fall of the city. Both are inevitable, and the realization of one reminds us of the imminence of the other. 57

Schibanoff uncovers a second "submerged" dawn-song in Book IV (1440-1690) in which the lovers are parting, not just for a few days, but for an indeterminate span of time, and which suggests a final parting between them. Although this is a hidden alba, Schibanoff claims that its outlines are unmistakable, and that it is less conventional and more realistic than the more celebrated alba passages of Book III.

The lovers will be forced permanently apart by the unwitting Trojans. Criseyde will be cruelly exchanged for the arch-traitor, Antenor, whose

reentry into Troy seals its doom. Thus, the initial parting of the lovers which is lamented in these aubades (and caused by Criseyde's fear of exposure of their love) prefigures their later "disseveraunce" (III, 1424) (caused again in part because the Trojans do not know of the secret affair) and prefigures the utter devastation of Troy.

The more objective, prudent viewpoint of the alba watchman is present to some degree in the character of the ever-practical Pandarus. Kaske asks:

Does Pandarus--the sole confidant, sympathizer, and general accessory--assume temporarily the role of the watchman, who in the aube frequently plays a similar part? 58

Payne notes:

it is a large part of the function of Pandarus to point up by contrast the exaggeration of Troilus's commitment to love ...just as Troilus's idealism measures the shallowness and narrowness of Pandarus's commitment to practicality and platitude. 59

Although Troilus is blinded as well as ennobled by love, Pandarus has more practical knowledge of love and sees farther, beyond the present, and can therefore plan strategies and design tactics to aid Troilus' affair. But, alas, Pandarus' vision,

while initially helpful in certain respects, is very limited; his advice abounds with sententia which he turns to whatever meaning is needed⁶⁰ and his vision falls far short of what would be necessary to foresee the catastrophic fate awaiting not only Troilus, but all of Troy. The narrator of Troilus and Criseyde is perhaps a better choice as the one who partially fulfills the typical watchman's role. Early on he says:

For I, that God of Loves servantz serve,
Ne dar to Love, for myn unliklynesse,
Preyen for speed, al sholde I therfore sterve,
So fer am I from his help in derknesse.
But natheles, if this may don gladnesse
To any lovere, and his cause availle,
Have he my thonk, and myn be this travaille.
(I, 15-21)

The alba watchman often characterizes himself as an aid to true lovers, who, in the darkness, calls to the lovers and advises them, attempting, in various ways to "don gladnesse/To any lovere."

Through its promotion of prowess, self-abnegation and generosity of heart, love transforms noble Troilus into a valiant and mighty hero:

In alle nedes, for the townes werre,
He was, and ay, the first in armes dyght,
And certeynly, but if that bokes erre,
Save Ector most ydred of any wight;
And this encrees of hardynesse and myght
Come hym of love, his ladies thank to wynne,
That altered his spirit so withinne.
(III, 1772-1778)

And four stanzas later, still describing the miraculous effect of love on Troilus, the narrator tells us:

And though that he be come of blood roial,
Hym liste of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to eche in general,
For which he gat hym thank in every place.
Thus wolde Love, yheried be his grace,
That Pride, Envye, and Ire, and Avarice
He gan to fle, and everich other vice.
(III, 1804-1806)

The intimacy and mutuality of love temporarily dissolves the discrepancy in social position also between Troilus and Criseyde. No longer the cold and distant idealized lady, Criseyde has become warm, affectionate. She calls Troilus "Myn hertes life, my trist, and my plesaunce." Troilus, on the other hand, no longer goes unnoticed nor unrewarded, but he is transformed, through Love's alchemy, into Criseyde's subject. Troilus, Prince of Troy and leader of men becomes Troilus, disciple of Love and worshipper of Criseyde. Criseyde, Troilus' erstwhile inferior, is transmuted into his sovereign commander.

Yet love, though presented as an ennobling virtue, has no hope of sustained victory over the cataclysmic destiny awaiting Troy. Despite its ability to endow man with nobility, resilience and

fortitude, love, in Troilus and Criseyde, is nevertheless genuinely benighted both literally and figuratively. It flourishes in dusky shadow and clandestine concealment, knowing neither enlightenment or understanding. It is truly blind.

Like the first rays of daylight, the aubades of Troilus and Criseyde engender revelation. The lovers' imminent separation forces them to reassert their individual, social identities, and in doing so, each one bares his unique character and speaks in his distinctive voice. Troilus is concerned, not as is Criseyde, with the joys of love bestowed by night, but rather with the pain of separation enforced by day. Where Criseyde devotes her song to pleasure and the wish to prolong it at all costs, Troilus struggles with feelings of impotent rage at his inability to defend himself from the incursion of light brought about by day's advent. Criseyde feels abandoned and deserted by night, while Troilus feels deluged and attacked by day.

Chaucer's bifurcation of dawn into night and day suggests that we view the lovers similarly as components of a divided whole, dramatized in terms of its parts. Regarded either as complements or as

contrasts to each other, the parts, in the final analysis, can be summed up only in terms of a negative whole. Whether apostrophizing night or day, both aubades address the irremediability of Troilus and Criseyde's situation. Both stances to the day's advent manifest the catastrophic nature of the love affair; no matter how it is perceived, the result is tragic. All that remains of joy is a past that is swiftly receding. The future brings but dreaded consequences and anguish. And although each lover maintains a different point of view, both suffer deeply, for despite the fact that Chaucer presents the dawn in terms of polarities, neither pole proffers forth a future of hope. One pole reveals the passively lamented loss and retreat of love; the other, the aggressively confronted impossibility of averting pain. This duality serves, then, to compound the negativity of love, since from both angles, the love provides pleasures that are, at best, transient, but pain that is certain and enduring. In the end, their love has a dual negativity: it withdraws and abandons; it engenders pain and avoidance of reality.

Night and day, as viewed by the lovers, are

forces of deterministic inevitability. Troilus and Criseyde are continually beset by social and cosmic forces beyond their control. Ruled equally by the overwhelming passions within them, and the potent forces outside them, neither of which they can master, the lovers have forfeited the ability to determine the course of their own lives. Guideless, they wander amidst the confusion that has claimed their lives. Through the dark mystery that has become their existence, Troilus and Criseyde can find no lighted path.

Chapter Four:

The Middle English Aubade and Geoffrey Chaucer

- ¹ Hatto, p. 31
- ² Ibid., p. 35
- ³ T. J. B. Spencer, "English (English, Scots, Anglo-Irish and American)," in Hatto, p. 505
- ⁴ Ibid., p. 505
- ⁵ See further discussion, below
- ⁶ Henry A. Person, ed., Cambridge Middle English Lyrics (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1953) p. 33, no. 43; see also p. 150, nos. 156, 157
- ⁷ Dronke, p. 167
- ⁸ Sir Gawain and the Green Knight -- specifically the nature passage which opens Fitt 2.
- ⁹ A detailed discussion of Chaucer's aubades follows the survey of English poetry
- ¹⁰ Gower, Confessio Amantis, iv, 3187-3237
- ¹¹ Hatto, p. 508
- ¹² Linda Barney Burke, MLA 1981, New York City, "The Prayer of Cephalus: Gower's Comedic Alba." I am grateful to Dr. Burke for sending me a copy of her paper.
- ¹³ John Lydgate, Complaint of the Black Knight, 111-7
- ¹⁴ Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde, III, 1464-1468
- ¹⁵ Spencer, in Hatto, p. 508
- ¹⁶ Ibid., p. 517
- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 518

- 18 Ibid., p. 520
- 19 Arthur Broke, The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Iuliet, P. A. Daniel, ed., (New Shakspeare Society, 1857), pp. 53-54; also in Hazlitt's Shakespeares Library, i, 149 and Hatto, p. 520
- 20 Spencer, in Hatto, p. 520
- 21 William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, I, i, 142-44
- 22 Spencer in Hatto, pp. 520-521
- 23 Ibid., p. 521
- 24 John Donne, "Breake of Day," "The Sunne Rising," in The Poems, Herbert J. C. Grierson ed., (Oxford, 1912) I, 11-12; John Milton, The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton, ed., Douglas Bush (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), Paradise Lost, V, 1-28; VIII, 510-20; IX, 188-204; "Carmina Elegiaca," (pp. 8-9)
- 25 Spencer, in Hatto, p. 529
- 26 Ibid., pp. 529-530
- 27 Algernon Charles Swinburne, "In the Orchard" The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne, Poetical Works Volume I ed., Sir Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), pp. 234-235, also see "Before Dawn," pp. 281-83; Ezra Pound, "Alba Innominata," Collected Early Poems of Ezra Pound, ed., Michael John King (New York: New Directions Publishing Co., 1976), p. 25
- 28 Ezra Pound, "Alba" or "Langue D'Oc" in Selected Poems (London: Faber and Faber, 1928) pp. 89, 142
- 29 A. E. Housman, "The Fairies Break Their Dances," The Collected Poems of A. E. Housman (London: J. Cape, 1953); W. B. Yeats, "The Dawn," "Parting," The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1956) p. 44, p. 269; W. H. Auden, "What's in Your Mind, My Dove?" The Collected Poetry of W. H. Auden (New York: Random House, 1945); John Crowe Ransome, "Parting at Dawn," Selected Poems (New York: Knopf, 1952);

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- 30 Saville, p. 213n
- 31 John Lydgate, Troy Book, ed., H. Bergen, EETS, ES 97, 107, 106, 126 (1906-20) I, 3093-107, III 1449-56; III, 2745-58
- 32 Robert E. Kaske, "The Aube in Chaucer's Troilus," eds., Richard J. Schoeck and Jerome Taylor, Chaucer Criticism (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961), II, 169
- 33 Hatto, p. 35
- 34 Kaske, p. 170
- 35 See, for example, John McCall, Chaucer among the Gods: The Poetics of Classical Myth (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1979); E. K. Rand, Ovid and His Influence (Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1925); Edgar Finley Shannon, Chaucer and the Roman Poets (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929)
- 36 Kaske, p. 167-168
- 37 Charles Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition: A Study in Style and Meaning (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 203; Robert E. Kaske, "An Aube in the Reeve's Tale," ELH, 34(1959), p. 308
- 38 Robert E. Kaske, "An Aube in the Reeve's Tale," p. 308
- 39 Saville, p. 238
- 40 Hatto, p. 506

- 41 Russell Hope Robbins, "The Middle English Courtly Love Lyric," in W. T. H. Jackson ed., The Interpretation of Medieval Lyric Poetry, p. 215
- 43 Payne, pp. 184-185
- 44 Ibid., p. 185
- 45 Susan Schibanoff, "Criseyde's 'Impossible' Aubes," Journal of English and Germanic Philology 76 (1977) 326-33
- 46 Kaske, "The Aube in Chaucer's Troilus," p. 175
- 47 Sanford Meech, pp. 75-76
- 48 Kaske, "Troilus," p. 172
- 49 Payne, p. 177
- 50 Kirby, p. 212
- 51 Payne, p. 182
- 52 Ibid., p. 186
- 53 Scaglione, p. 16
- 54 Payne, pp. 225-226
- 55 Ibid., p. 226
- 56 Kaske, "Troilus," p. 171
- 57 Economou, in Pursuit, p. 41
- 58 Kaske, "Troilus," p. 176
- 59 Payne, p. 209 and n. 49
- 60 See Payne, pp. 209-211

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