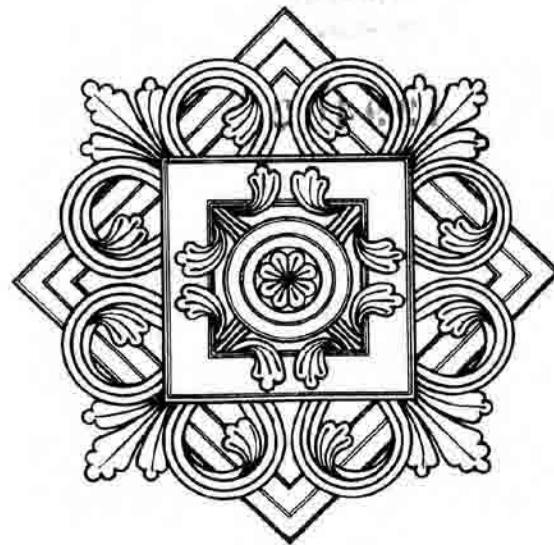


Etymologies and Genealogies
A Literary Anthropology
of the French Middle Ages



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The University of Chicago Press
Chicago and London

TWO *Kinship*

What, it may be asked, does either the originary, diachronic, and “etymological” grammar of the early Middle Ages or sacramental theology have to do with the constitution of actual families some five to seven centuries later? Apparently little, if we expect to find tangible proof that feudal magnates—heads of household—knew Isidore, Augustine, Priscian, or Donatus. And apparently a great deal, when we begin to examine some of the implicit ways in which grammar, the basic discipline of the early medieval language arts, served to ground a world view expressed in social institutions. More precisely, the connection between linguistic and lineal orders becomes compelling when we seek to understand how such an idealized vision of earthly lineage served to mediate a radical reorganization of the aristocratic family of twelfth-century France. For it can be shown that an essentially verbal model, which lay at the center of a prevailing epistemological mode, worked not only to define the family ideologically but to found a more global pattern of social relations and to

bolster a strategy of political hegemony operative until the time of the Revolution. And if the goal of the previous chapter was to demonstrate the degree to which a grammatical model was dominated by a familial one, our purpose at present is to show the extent to which the patterns of late medieval kinship were, in turn, molded by those of grammar.

The question of what “actually” happened in “real” medieval families is one of the most difficult areas of European historiography—difficult, first of all, because of the embryonic state of our knowledge of medieval kinship. Despite the survival of numerous canonical precepts—synodal rulings, papal bulls, and interdictions, we still know relatively little about the composition, living arrangements, and sexual habits of the consanguineal group. We are particularly ill-informed about those families (the so-called quiet communities) whose less-than-aristocratic origin or rural isolation left such a meager trace. Moreover, in the era before the Church’s hegemony over family law, this sphere was largely a private affair and, as such, entered only tangentially upon the public stage of history. To this blindness are added the difficulty of assessing the difference between what texts prescribe and what men actually did as well as a number of complicating factors specific both to the historical era and the family as an institution. There is, for example, an enormous variation in the structure of kin groups according to region, period, and social class; and such diversity is compounded by the personality of law in the centuries following the invasions as well as by the overlapping of jurisdictions—ecclesiastical, seigneurial, municipal, royal—when law becomes more territorially defined. We find, in addition, a serious problem of “negativity” haunting all of medieval legal studies—that is, the fact that family history tends to become most explicit only when the standard prescriptions of permissible conduct are transgressed as in cases of prohibited marriages, disputed inheritances, bigamy, incest, and divorce. It is precisely the routinely accepted norms of everyday life that, because they are perceived as natural, pass unnoticed and are in some sense systematically “refused” by history.

Due to a general decline in literacy and the official uses of writing, the period between the collapse of Carolingian sovereignty and the reign of the late Capetians represents an especially obscure point within an already dim field. Nonetheless, the image of the noble family that emerges from this “dark” age is of a legal community reduced to its simplest terms, a conjugal unit sometimes prolonged after the death of the parents by an association of brothers (*a frèrèche*). This loosely defined grouping of relatives and retainers, “friends” and neighbors, gravitated around the residence of a lord, who was, above all, a patron, a distributor of gifts and land, the spoils of war or exchange.¹ Within such an extended relatively undifferentiated crowd of all living family members, there was

little distinction between the lineage of husband and wife. Both agnatic and cognatic lines were of equal importance, as were relatives linked by marriage (*propinqui*) and by blood (*consanguinei*).

From what we know about the post-Carolingian kin group, several defining principles are of paramount relevance to the present discussion: (1) The noble family of the ninth and tenth centuries seems to have been articulated "spatially," that is to say, as a "horizontal" grouping, spread out in the present, without fixed or precise limits.² Though its members may descend from a common ancestor, the family had little consciousness of itself as a temporally defined entity, a succession of generations, a lineage, or genealogy; nor does it emerge from existing documentation that ancestors were privileged over relatives. Descent was a less potent force of family cohesion than affiliation with living relatives, just as within the economic sphere, benefices (lifetime grants) were more important than fiefs, which were not heritable, and which, theoretically at least, reverted to the lord upon the grantee's death. (2) The noble family of this period had no fixed residence. Though its members may have lived in a common region and held land in common, they had little sense of self-definition in terms of a "family seat." (3) Until the eleventh century the clan had no family name. Individuals had a single Christian name, and indeed certain families seemed to have had proprietary rights over certain of these; but they had no *cognomen* or *surnom* (see below, pp. 78–79). There were no dynastic houses and no patronyms. Evidence shows, in fact, a relative inattentiveness to the mixing of names from either the maternal or the paternal lines. (4) Finally, because the institutions of the Carolingian state were, for a long time after its disintegration, still intact, the family had not yet assumed what would become its role in the keeping of the public peace. This means that the family holding was not yet attached to a system of heritable military tenure and that women, as a rule, enjoyed relative economic independence. In theory, a woman could inherit land, was free to manage her own marriage part, and, if widowed, could pass the property of her deceased husband to the children of a "second bed."³

In the light of what we know about the kin groups of the post-Carolingian era, it is difficult not to dramatize the startling transformation in the internal makeup of the noble family beginning in the eleventh century. This change varied according to date, region, and social status. It occurred earlier in the North and the West of France, later in the South; earlier among great feudal magnates (counts and dukes) than among simple knights. And though the causes of such a shift are difficult to assess, there is general agreement among historians of the medieval family that what happened to the aristocratic clan happened in response

to its own changing relation to the primary source of wealth in a profoundly agrarian age—land. G. Duby (Mâcon, the North), R. Fossier (Picardy), L. Génicot (Namur), R. Hajdu (Poitou), D. Herlihy (the South), L. Musset (Normandy), and P. Bonnassie (Catalonia) all point to a dispersion of patrimony endemic to the "horizontal" clan.⁴ Given the capacity of women to inherit as well as the relative equality of heirs (male and female, older and younger), there was a tendency for familial holdings to become increasingly fragmented. This trend was, in the period under consideration, exacerbated by a resurgence of pious donation, gifts *inter vivos* which furthered the process of partition by irrevocably channeling considerable amounts of property in the direction of the Church.

The parceling of land through division across successive generations and its cession to the ecclesiastical see (which was not, it must be noted, plagued by partition by inheritance) contributed to the gradual impoverishment of the clan. Nor did the "horizontal family" develop a coherent policy of land management. On the contrary, its *patrimoine* was continually diminished by the centrifugal erosion of territory, which was often distant, scattered, crossed by parcels belonging to others, abandoned, or, in the phrase of one southern witness, "confused."⁵ In fact, such a demographic state of affairs had deep social implications, for it is the sign of an infrastructure in which personal ties of dependence between individual men are more important than the rights and duties attached to land. Put another way, the authority of those with the power of command, like the legal institutions at their disposal, were not territorially defined. A local lord might rule those under his protection, he might control those living on his domain; but he did not yet dominate a unified region.

Was their relative newness to the areas settled a factor in the incoherency of family policy? What was the effect of a lack of agricultural and administrative experience on the part of those who had been primarily nomadic warriors? Did the Germanic people lack the notion of full ownership so dear to the Roman legal mind? These hypotheses have been advanced to explain the seeming inconsistency of the clan regarding the management of its lands; and they are to some degree relevant and just. The search for causes is, however, less pertinent to the present discussion than the fact that, beginning in the 1000s, the relation of noble families to land began to shift, and this shift accompanied a fundamental change in the family's definition of itself.

There can be little doubt that time alone favored the sense of geographic stability which characterize the families of what M. Bloch termed the "first feudal age." Implantation on a specific piece of land increasingly regarded as a familial possession, a developing patrilocal sense of

the kin group bound by reference to a common residence, a castle and cradle of the paternal *alodium* (free holding)—these were important factors in the passage from personal to territorial control. But, most of all, it was the transformation of the fief into a hereditary right, a phenomenon perhaps linked to feudalism itself, that marked a radical break with the “horizontal” clan. From the second half of the eleventh century on, the family began increasingly to receive its fortune by inheritance rather than from a patron. Access to the holdings which had once depended upon the discretion of a lord became at first automatically renewable and then an integral part of a transmissible *patrimoine*. The knight, in turn, was less a retainer than the heir to a domain, function, and title. Chivalry itself, transformed from a relatively open class into a closed and patrilinuous caste, was no longer merely an indication of economic status but a hereditary sign of superiority.⁶ Henceforth, nobility represented a quality of birth, and a man was powerful because his ancestors, sometime around the year 1000, were already in command.

Such a shift carried enormous consequences; in particular, the tie to heritable land changed the shape of the family in two important ways:

1. There occurred, first of all, a shrinking of the extended clan. This is a phenomenon that remains hard to measure but that is nonetheless reflected (with an obvious delay with respect to actual practice) in Church doctrine. Before the thirteenth century, the endogamic field within which marriage was officially prohibited extended not only to the seventh canonical degree but included prohibitions against marriage to those whose relationship was defined by secondary and tertiary categories of affinity. For example, the *affinitas secundi generis* produced a diriment impediment up to the third degree of kinship between relatives of the second wife of a widower and those of his deceased wife. It even—*mirabile dictu!*—applied in cases where fornication without marriage had occurred. Thus, when a man successively had sexual relations with two women, the relatives to the third degree of the first could not marry the second. The even more arcane *affinitas tertium genus* provided for the inclusion of relatives of the second marriages of the dead spouses of the affines of the *secundi generis*, which, again, also applied in cases of extra-marital intercourse.⁷ What this means is that the legal definition of such a family was inordinately large. This is obvious in the exaggerated calculation of the degrees of paternity within which marriage was prohibited, or within which sexual relations were considered incestuous—the factors, in short, which define the rules of exogamy coterminous with the bounds of the family itself. And—this is essential within the medieval setting—it is also visible in the excessively wide limits within which property could be inherited, within which loyalty in blood feuds was required, and within which the family was responsible economically for each of its

members, and shared, in case of his death, in the distribution of compensatory payment.

The enormous extension of the clan—a breadth beyond the reckoning of most of its members and accessible only to those with canonical training—was severely attenuated by the Lateran Council of 1215. Under the direction of Innocent III, both the *secundum* and the *tertium genus affinitatis* were eliminated along with the rule concerning *suboles ex secundis nuptiis*. Even more important, the degrees of consanguinity within which marriage was prohibited were reduced from seven to four. This may seem like an academic distinction within a marital system whose margins are so broad as to appear hopelessly vague. But here again, it must be remembered that more was at stake than merely the establishment of new conjugal cells. Attenuation of the interdiction against marriage also implied an attenuation of the capacity to inherit and the legal responsibility for military aid. Later in the same century, Beaumanoir, evoking the ancient rule of *auxilium*, will remind his readers that the duty of a kinsman to participate in the wars of another is, like the rule of marriage, now restricted to the fourth degree.⁸

2. Alongside the narrowing of the outer limits of the noble family there occurred an internal restriction whose consequences reached beyond the quantitative extension of the marital prohibition, along with mutual military and economic obligations, toward a substantive redefinition of the concept of family itself. For, beginning in the eleventh century, and at different times in different regions, historians detect the onset of a marked preference for consanguineal over affinal kin. That is, the transformation of fiefs into heritable *patrimoines* was accompanied by a growing consciousness of blood relations in distinction to those by marriage. The kin group as a spatial extension was displaced from within by the notion of the blood group as a diachronic progression: the power of feudal princes, once established geographically, produced a corresponding sense of the family through time. And not just any sense, since the “horizontal” clan, loosely and spatially conceived, took on, through increased emphasis upon time and blood, a necessarily tighter and more “vertical” slant.⁹ Nobility became, in the period under consideration, synonymous with race (*sanguine nobilitatis*), as the undifferentiated bilateral mixture of agnatic and cognatic kin ceded to the enhanced prestige of a unilateral descent group.

Here we touch upon the central axiom of twelfth-century aristocracy. For the family, narrowed around its outer edges, temporalized and rendered vertical, also underwent a reorientation, an axial shift, such that its articulation of itself acquired the dimensions of a straight line. Linearity is the defining principle of the noble house, dynasty, and—the partial homonymy is striking—of lineage. Henceforth, nobility was no longer

dependent upon the bestowal of function or benefice but was a quality of those whose origin can be traced along a continuum of descent. "To be noble," as G. Duby notes, "is to be able to refer to a genealogy."¹⁰

From clan to lineage, the phrase is all too facile and broad to account for the characteristic development of specific regions. And yet, regional studies seem not only to confirm—without naming—the timeworn cliché but to suggest something beyond an apparently unconscious, historically determined change in family focus—something that borders on the realm of intention: that is, the radicalness of aristocracy's lineal "reorientation" lies less in the notion of race, dynastic order, or house than in the growing consciousness with which it began to manage what can only be described as a "biopolitics" of lineage.

The Biopolitics of Lineage

1. The genealogical family implies, first of all, the exercise of a certain discipline with respect to marriage, more precisely, the restriction of unions to the minimum necessary to assure the continuity of the family line. This was not always easy given the high rate of infant mortality in such uncertain times. Nonetheless, as Duby has demonstrated for the regions of Mâcon and the Northwest, noble families permitted the establishment of only one or two new households per generation, the rest of the unmarried sons being housed in monasteries and chapters, or simply remaining unattached and disenfranchised.¹¹ Bonnassie finds the same to be true of Catalonia; and Hajdu calculates that in twelfth-century Poitou the number of married eldest sons exceeds that of their younger brothers by a factor of two.¹² When younger siblings were allowed to marry, the family frequently tried to find a wealthy mate, or, that failing, to protect the familial *patrimoine* by a limited endowment (*droit de viage*). Similarly, the marriage of daughters, part of family policy aimed at the deliberate creation of a "network of alliances," often involved a restriction of inheritance to the dowry or marriage portion (*maritagium*).¹³

2. Implicit to the production of sufficient progeny to insure dynastic continuity without a surplus to deplete its wealth is a model of marriage essential to the transmission of the fief and to the organization of feudal society as a series of alliances between landholders with mutual obligations to each other. Marriage represented, above all, a treaty (*pactum conjugale*) to be negotiated between families; and it has often been said that the chivalric houses of twelfth-century France were so closely connected through common ancestry, matrimony, and collateral relation (not to mention fictive forms of kinship like adoption and participation in certain sacraments) that the nobles of the realm must have seemed like one big family. So complex a web of kinship depended upon careful surveillance of marital ties. More precisely, it assumed a matrimonial system involving early betrothal (often at the age of seven to ten), early

marriage (often at puberty), and, above all, the choice of partners to be made by the family or feudal lord. A marriage was, under normal circumstances, concluded by the head of household (*caput mansi*) or the elders (*seniores*) of the lineage; in their absence, by the relatives—the *amis charnels*—mother, brother, sister, or uncle; and, when the potential spouse was an orphan, by the lord who exercised the right of wardship.¹⁴ Under this "lay aristocratic model of marriage" (Duby), the consent of parties mattered little, while that of parents and guardians was the *sine qua non* of a legal union. The question of who may marry whom was based upon a certain respect for canonical impediments and upon a careful husbanding of the paternal fief in accordance with an interlocking series of military, political, and social ties.

3. The biopolitics of lineage cannot be separated from a system of property rights and practices designed to insure the integrity of the ancestral domain. These include: the *laudatio parentum*, by which relatives participated in the alienation of family lands; the *proisme*, an offer to purchase tendered in the first instance to kin; and, eventually, the *retrait lignager* (*redemptio, retractus*) by which a member of the lineage retained the right, even after sale to an outsider had been concluded, to substitute himself for the original purchaser.¹⁵

A general prohibition against the division of noble fiefs served to reinforce the ties between those whose sense of cohesion was increasingly tied to land. The *Très Ancien Coutumier*, transcribed around 1200 in the region (Normandy) where the force of lineage was stronger than anywhere else, forbids the dismemberment of large holdings: "Ne fiez de hauberc, ne sergenterie qui apartiegne a la seignorie au duc, ne baronie ne sera pas partie."¹⁶ Compiled three-quarters of a century later and in a less seigneurial spirit, the *Etablissements de Saint Louis* displays nonetheless a similar interdiction: "Baronie ne depart mie entre freres. . . ." ¹⁷ The trend against division was also reflected in the property arrangements surrounding marriage, for here the economics of the conjugal couple was tailored to affect minimally the rights of lineage. Gifts between spouses were prohibited where inherited property was concerned.¹⁸ Even when specifically sanctioned, as in the case of dowries and marriage offerings, these still retained the qualities of a loan. More important, husband and wife did not inherit from one another. Upon the death of either, the surviving spouse reserved control of the dead partner's marriage portion; but at the time of his or her death, and in the absence of descendants, this property reverted to the lineage of its origin. The devolution of family holdings was, in other words, coterminous with blood, a principle which Beaumanoir puts succinctly as follows:

Se j'ai eritage de par mon pere et mes peres muert et après je muir sans oir de mon cors, mes eritages de par mon pere ne revient pas a ma mere, ainçois eschiet au plus prochien qui m'apartient de par le pere; neis s'il estoit

ou quart degre de lignage, car ma mere est estrange de l'eritage qui me vient de par le pere, et aussi est mes peres estranges de l'eritage qui me vient de par ma mere."²¹

If I have an inheritance from my father and my father dies and I die heirless after him, my inheritance from my father does not revert to my mother, for it escheats to my closest relative on my father's side; even if this means going as far as the fourth degree of paternity, since my mother is a stranger to the inheritance that comes to me from my father, and, likewise, is my father a stranger to the inheritance that comes to me from my mother.

Beaumanoir's prescription does not cover goods acquired during the course of marriage, but it does provide categorically that noble property belonging originally to one lineage cannot pass to another. The rule of *paterna paternis, materna maternis* as stated above served, moreover, to stress the ephemeral nature of marriage itself. The conjugal couple represented a temporary coupling of two separate kin groups for the purpose of procreation and did not constitute an independent economic unit.²⁰

The rules governing *indivision* and the separation of property would have had little effect if it were not for the inauguration, at about the same time, of the practice of primogeniture. Whether primogeniture represented, as some have suggested, the aristocratic appropriation of a royal model, or, as others have held, a return to Roman notions of property, is less important than the fact that beginning in the eleventh century the privileging of one heir over all others became the law of noble succession.²¹ Here again, there is a certain amount of variation according to region—earlier in Mâcon and Normandy than in Poitou and Provence—and according to status—earlier among great feudal chiefs than among lesser knights. In addition, the actual techniques of primogeniture reflected local legal usage—customary in the North and by testament in the romanized South. Be these differences as they may, primogeniture implied inheritance by the oldest male of the most profitable and prestigious domains, usually the castle and the central family fief; this accompanied by the distribution of marginal holdings among younger siblings. The *Très Ancien Coutumier* provides that "li chevaliers ainznez avra le fief de hauberc tout entier"; and this prescription is echoed in the *Grand Coutumier*, whose author elaborates a line of succession by sex and age:

Unde notandum est quod primogenitus filius patri succedit, et omnes ei debent succedere qui primo nati sunt in eadem linea consanguinitatis.

...²²

Whence let it be noted that the first born son succeeds to the father, and all should succeed to him in the same blood line by order of birth. . . .

According to Beaumanoir, the oldest son gets the principal manor and two-thirds of all the fiefs, while the rest of the family inheritance is to be

divided equally among younger sons and the daughters, who become vassals of their brother. Saint Louis concurs, specifying that, "gentis homine ne puet doner à ses anfans, à ces qui sont puisné que le tiers de son heritaige."²³

The practice of primogeniture represented the keystone of a familial strategy that did much to foster lineage's vertical, agnatic, patrilinear articulation of itself. Through it property descended in a straight vertical line, "like," in the words of E. Le Roy Ladurie, "sap flowing downward, according to some mysterious force, to nourish the lower limits and offshoots of a tall tree."²⁴ The stress placed not only upon the unidimensionality but upon the unidirectionality of lineage is significant and will seem even more so when we examine other systems of inheritance and other kinds of wealth (see below, pp. 163–174). Paternal property is transferred only in one direction—downward (*quasi ponderosum quid*); in the phrase of a popular adage found in the customary material, "fiefs ne remontent pas."

4. Primogeniture and the law of *paterna paternis, materna maternis* assumes that each piece of property follows, according to origin, its own particular course of descent—has, so to speak, its own genealogy. Here, however, we must not forget that the notion of property refers to a specifically aristocratic mode of wealth and that the rule of primogenital inheritance applies to it alone. Noble property is, above all, immobile, *real* estate, which remains, at least in theory, also unsalable. The vagueness of such an associative nexus is, in fact, itself significant. The term *immeuble*, still reflected in the French word for real estate, is, as customary material makes clear, primarily a *res soli* characterized by its fixity. "We call an immobile possession," states the *Grand Coutumier*, "one that cannot be moved from place to place, as a field, a meadow and all possessions inherent to the soil."²⁵ And Beaumanoir's definition of "l'immeuble" as fixed ("heritages sont choses qui ne peuvent être mues"), as producing annual income ("qui valent par années"), and as permanent ("heritage ne peut faillir") is telling in two important ways.²⁶ First, immobile property is considered generally to be inalienable. Creditors could not touch a debtor's *immobilier*; nor could the husband who controlled his wife's dowry arbitrarily divest her of it. Second, and this is but a corollary of the first, the *immeuble*, because of its inalienability, is the equivalent of a "heritage"; and in its association with inheritance, the concept of an immobile good becomes synonymous with the *propre*, or with property itself.

The Barbarian codes had distinguished between marked and unmarked property, which, in Frankish law, amounted to a difference between personal (temporary) and familial (perpetual) modes of possession.²⁷ To the former category belonged individually owned acquisitions (*comparatus, conquisitum*), while to the latter belonged inalien-

able, unseizable, collectively owned land—*terra paterna* or *proprietas*. The affiliation between the proper and the paternal strikes to the core of the medieval concept of property, for land that is inherited—whether over the course of many generations or only once—becomes a *propre*, the possession of ancestors (*terra aviatica*, *avitins*).²⁸ A *propre* is an *immeuble* owned by one partner at the time of marriage, or that is inherited after marriage. It belongs, in essence, to a lineage rather than to the individuals through whom it descends. And not only is the *propre* the equivalent of *heritage*, but it is synonymous with ancestry (nobility) itself. Property and genealogy are superimposed upon each other, as the order of proper descent is identified with the descent of the proper. This is why bastards cannot accede to *propres*—because, as Saint Louis states, “they have no lineage” (“Bastard n’a point de lignage”); and why, as Louis also prescribes, it is sufficient, in order to prove possession by *parage*, merely to “recount one’s lineage.”²⁹ The history of the noble family is, at bottom, the history of its land.

The association of paternity and property is nowhere more evident than in the Latinized term *alod* (*alodis*, *alodium*, OF *alleu*). Whether or not *alod* derives etymologically from the Scandinavian *ódal*—and there has been much discussion—the two words are, as A. Guerevič has convincingly argued, conceptually identical.³⁰ The root *odal* refers to a family possession or to property which has been transmitted from generation to generation. Old Norwegian texts speak of land that “can trace its genealogy back to the sepulchral grounds and to paganism.”³¹ The *odal* embodies the combined idea of *pater* or *patria*, the paternal and the geographic locus of origin—a place of birth and of hereditary life. In the Germanic tongues this notion is expressed by the term *epel* (*adal*, *aepel*), meaning “inheritance,” “possession,” and “country,” from which is derived *aepeling*, *adaling* (Scand. *arborinn*, *aettborinn*), meaning “a man born of an ancient clan” or “belonging to high lineage.” In any case, from the common radical *Adal*, signifying “father” and “paternal,” spreads the family of Icelandic *adal* (“innate quality,” “substance,” “lineage”); the High German *adal*, *uodal*; Old Saxon *adal*, *edili*, *odil*; and Old English *epel*, *opel*, *aepel*. The nuances of each may vary, but the general semantic range includes “nobility of race,” “high birth,” and “innate quality.”

And yet, there is another and even more compelling sense in which the progeny of *odal* is crucial to an understanding of the medieval concept of property, since the term *alod* also contains the notion of “free holding”—full possession. The *alod* designates land which belongs exclusively to the family and which, unlike that held in fief, neither depends on anyone outside the kin group nor incurs obligations of service or dues. By the twelfth century there may be, practically speaking, little difference between the de facto heritability of many fiefs and succession to the auton-

omous *alod*. But the latter still remains less subject to alienation than other modes of possessory concession—use, benefice, *saisine*, *viager*, or *parage*. Transmitted along patrilinear lines, the allodial holding stands as the fullest expression of the interpenetration of property and genealogy. The devolution of *terra propria* remains indissociable from that of lineage.

The Aristocratic Practice of Signs

We began from the premise that there occurred, beginning in the eleventh century, a fundamental change in the nature of the family, a change whose ultimate cause may lie beyond the ken of historians in regions as mysterious and as historically undetermined as a long-range shift of climate.³² Nonetheless, we accepted as a viable—not wholly arbitrary, minimally “grounded”—point of departure the phenomenon of geographic implantation along with the transformation of provisional benefices into heritable fiefs. With the fixation of the noble family upon its own soil came a certain narrowing of its peripheral limits and a reorientation of its conceptual base—from the spatialized “horizontal” clan to the more vertically and temporally conceived lineage. This process represented more than a mere institutional shift; it implied, in fact, an important “prise de conscience” on the part of the aristocratic kin group of the necessity for biopolitical management of its own resources, both human and material. More precisely, it involved: restriction and control of marriage in consonance with social, military, and economic interests; adoption of a system of succession that assured the integral transmission of family holdings; and certain awareness of a specifically aristocratic mode of wealth, real property (*proprietas*), which is connatural—both historically and ideologically—with the primogenital articulation of lineage itself.

These are the symptoms of institutional change and of a change in the consciousness of a caste, if not a class. We would, however, ourselves be guilty of practicing a kind of diachronically descriptive history of “mentalités,” and, ultimately, of a lapse of consciousness of our own historical moment were we to fail to realize that the institutional signs of a shift in the limits and internal structure of the clan represented, above all, a shift in its relation to signs. This idea cannot be overstressed. It is really the essence and the keystone of our discussion. Given that much of what a family—any family—is depends upon how it is represented, we must, if we are to understand the evolution of medieval kin groups, look first to their constitution of themselves through certain symbols. More important, we must look to the various modes and strategies of symbolic production—to what might be termed the family’s “practice of signs.” For then it becomes increasingly evident that when the noble family of the twelfth century became conscious of itself as a sign-producing organism,

it did so *around* the notion of dynasty or lineage as well as *through* the mediatory semiotic fields of heraldry, patronymics, the plastic arts, and historical narrative. Above all, the organization of family lines coincides with the appropriation of vernacular literary forms.

Heraldry

The phenomenon of heraldry or blazonry is the most obvious European example of a universal totemic activity by which a particular sign or logos is, within a differentiated system of similar interrelated symbols, associated with a particular family or clan. But such generalizations, despite the convincing anthropological identification of totemism and cultural order, remain too broad and ahistorical for this stage of an already historically engaged discussion. More germane is the fact that before the twelfth century there is little evidence of systematic heraldic display. In fact, much of what we know about the use of military insignias points to the contrary. The banners that appear in the Bayeux Tapestry, for example, resemble crude armorials, yet none can be identified with post-Conquest bearings; and a seemingly internal incoherence in their attribution shows even the same warrior carrying different devices in different embroidered sequences. There is, in other words, no necessary "totemic" link between a particular figure and his heraldic sign, much less between his coat of arms and family.

This begins to change in the 1100s as shown by the inventory of the Norman seals and numerous other examples from high princely and royal courts.³³ John of Marmoustier's description of the marriage of Geoffrey of Anjou (died 1151) and Maude the Empress, daughter of Henry I, speaks of the king's having suspended around his son-in-law's neck a shield of golden "lioncels." This is significant because we know, from his tomb at Salisbury, that Henry II's bastard son (and Geoffrey's grandson) William with the Long Sword bore arms of six golden lions in a blue field. We also know that the arms of the King of France consisted of a blue shield with scattered fleurs-de-lis. Louis VII, at the crowning of Philip Augustus, is supposed to have ordered the young prince clad in a blue dalmatic and blue shoes, sewn with golden "Fleurs-de-Loys," the floral name playing upon his own epithetic name of "Florus." Among the great feudal magnates, Philip of Alsace, Count of Flanders, is said to have been the first to bear family arms (1164). And there is from the twelfth century, also in a playful vein, the example of Enguerrand of Candavène, Count of Saint Pol, whose shield shows a horseman uncharged and sheaves of oats, symbols which, perhaps because of the pun involved, become the bearing of the Candavènes when that house came to display arms.

It is worth recalling that the heraldic signs of this period were, above all, personal devices that had not developed into full armorial charges.

Nonetheless, they demonstrate a close, even a necessary, connection between the individual and his insignia. We are tempted even to speak of property or propriety in the relation of figures like Philip Augustus or Enguerrand and the devices unique to them alone; and here the logician's concept of physical property as that which distinguishes an object from all others in its class along with the rhetorician's notion of correct imposition are both pertinent to the particularized relation between the prince, his family, and its singular sign. The propriety of heraldic signs will become even more elaborate in the thirteenth century when the system of ordinaries, tinctures, and identifying objects (still referred to in French as "meubles") became so refined as to offer to each household, each family attached to a piece of property, its own distinctive—proper—design.

These early armorial examples also show that the family insignia, like its land, was, from about 1150 on, transmitted lineally; and in this it constituted an integral part of the primogenital *patrimoine*. First used for military purposes, in tournaments and battles, and first connected only loosely to individuals, certain banners and pennants came to belong exclusively to certain families and to represent, as Duby notes, "a memory of common agnatic origin."³⁴ The inherited heraldic sign was an important expression of the continuity of lineage—of its origin in property, attachment to a distinct locus, and to a logos that was the sign of place. And if, as we have seen, rhetoric is the science of *topoi*, or of proper places from which to speak, heraldry constituted the rhetoric of aristocratic possession—a differential system of signs guaranteeing the propriety (discreteness) of the family in relation to similar groups, in relation to its land, and even in relation to its separate subbranches.

The diachronic heraldic progression by agnation within the context of a more synchronic pattern of difference among identically constituted lineages was doubled by a system of armorial signs internal to the family and indicative of its most basic inner relations. Thus, only the primogenital heir had the right to the "whole coat," the undifferenced "full" arms, which were, in turn, inherited in toto by his eldest son. The insignias of younger brothers and their (cadet) lines were "differed" by a change in color, a variation in the number of charges, a bend over the shield, a border, etc. The difference customarily reserved for illegitimate sons was a "baston," a stripe whose homonymy with the civil status of its bearer could not have escaped the eye of even the least playful heraldist. Then too, once the use of armorial signs had generalized beyond its original military function, the case of women's bearings became especially intricate. Sometimes an heiress, for example, bore the undifferenced shield of her father. A married woman often adopted a parted or "impaled" double shield to express both her consanguineal origin and her marital affiliation. And, in some exaggerated instances, a woman who had been

married more than once might display, as in the late English example of Beatrice Stafford (1404), a shield charged with her ancestral arms between those of both her husbands. Finally, the practice of marshaling by quarters, increasingly popular from the time of Edward I on, reflected in the separate quadrants of the shield a complete pedigree. Isabel of France, wife of Edward II, took as her seal a shield in whose four quarters were placed the arms of England, France, Navarre, and Champagne. The history of the family, which remains inseparable from the history of its feudal holdings, is in this way inscribed in the logos that was a kind of map—a grammar—both of lineage and of land.³⁵

Patronymics

The aristocratic family's constitution of itself through certain representational practices goes hand in hand with a grouping around a family name, a *cognomen*. In the era preceding the formation of the great feudal lineages, there were no formal patronyms. The usual single baptismal or Christian name did not function as a designator of the kin group; and although Carolingian onomastics, for example, showed dynastic and tribal preferences for certain names, these were, even at the upper levels of society, only loosely hereditary.³⁶ Nor do historians of this "middle period" of the Middle Ages detect a marked preference for the privileged names of the paternal over the maternal line; the single name seems to have been taken indiscriminately from the most prestigious side.³⁷

The process of patronymic doubling, like that of the formation of lineages itself, occurred at different times according to region and social status—earlier in the South than in Picardy, and earlier among high aristocrats than among the squireen. Most of all, however, it occurred in different ways according to what can only be characterized as the discrete social spaces of city and countryside, which, in the French case, corresponds maximally to class. And whereas in urban areas family names were often derived from town or country of origin, profession, or nickname, the aristocratic *surnom* represented an unmistakable marker of genealogical and territorial attachment. As early as in the last decade of the tenth century, certain southern charters contain patronyms (e.g., Rainaldus filius Novilongi [979], Isanarus filius Rangardae [989]); and the practice will in the succeeding century generalize throughout the Midi, spreading also to the North. Often too, and again first in the region of Roman occupation, filiation is expressed by suppression of the *filius* in the formation *ille filius illius* and by the adoption of the genitive of paternity (e.g., Ingelbertus Pitacis, Guillelmus Hibrini, Hugo Bardulfi).³⁸

Alongside of the patronymic (or matronymic) *cognomen* indicating genealogical filiation stood the toponymic *cognomen* which served to fuse metonymically the family name with its hereditary property rights.³⁹

Much of the research in this particular area of onomastics pertains to the region of Allemania. The group around K. Schmid, in particular, has convincingly shown the degree to which "Staufen" and other aristocratic names derive from what Schmid calls the "house seat" (*Stammsitz*).⁴⁰ Within the French setting there is also much evidence to indicate that adoption of a family name identical to the name of the paternal castle or fief was prevalent among the chatelains of the South as early as the last decade of the tenth century and that the practice spread throughout the Norman nobility in the eleventh. Duby maintains that in twelfth-century Mâcon 90 percent of noble family names were identical to that of the castle. R. Fossier makes a similar claim for Picardy, showing how between 1050 and 1110 those with the power of the ban, which was practically synonymous with possession of a castle, took surnames.⁴¹ These oscillated between the names of fiefs and of alods but were fixed sometime between 1125 and 1175, by which time even simple knights bore patronyms, titles attached directly to a baptismal name without any necessary link to the function of the chatelain.

What is to be retained from such a cursory glance at onomastic trends of the High Middle Ages? Above all, that the noble family name passed from a title of possession and dominance, the name of a geographically rooted place and a fixed locus of power, to a designator of lineage which, along with the castle, land, and heraldic sign, formed part of the noble *patrimoine*. In this passage from topology to genealogy the aristocratic *cognomen* came to constitute a central symbol of the unity of lineage, an indicator of race, and a mnemonic key to genealogical consciousness.

Genealogical Narrative

If the noble *cognomen* produced heightened awareness of the family as an eponymically unified group, the integral transmission of patronym and title contributed to its articulation as a transtemporal continuum—a linear series of homonymic figures at whose source the name of the father (*pater*) fuses with that of the land (*patria, proprietas*). Nor is it possible to separate the eruption of the family *into* history from the early accounts of titular progression, the genealogical records of a succession of names which form its early history. I am referring to the numerous genealogies edited at the time great lineages came to power and stemming no doubt from a general effort to preserve the memory of ancestors also expressed in the organization of ancestral burial grounds and renewed interest in epitaphs. The family chronicles which began to appear as early as the tenth century were first written by domestic clerics in the high princely courts or private monasteries of northern and western France. But like the heraldic sign and the *cognomen*, they too gradually permeated all echelons of aristocracy as the twelfth century drew to a close. Included among

these early family histories are: a tenth-century genealogy of the Count of Flanders, Arnoul le Grand, composed by Vuitgerius between 951 and 959; a notice concerning the ascendance of Arnoul le Jeune edited in the monastery of Saint-Pierre-au-Mont-Bertin, a genealogy of the counts of Vendome, one of the counts of Boulogne, and six of the counts of Anjou, all produced between the mid-eleventh century and 1109; two new genealogies (first third of the twelfth century) of the counts of Flanders, one composed at Saint Bertin and the other inserted by Lambert de Saint Omer in the *Liber Floridus*, along with the earliest-preserved *Geste* of the counts of Anjou attributed to Thomas of Loches; a revision (ca. 1160) of the Flemish and Angevine genealogies (e.g., *Flandria generosa*), a reworking of the *Gesta consulum andegavorum*, two new ancestral sketches composed at Saint Aubin d'Angers, and, in this flowering period of genealogical production, texts dedicated to the sires d'Amboise, the counts of Angoulême and of Nevers, these in addition to numerous local histories whose authors are increasingly attentive to family questions.⁴² Finally, two texts from the end of the twelfth century are exemplary in their genealogical focus—Lambert de Wattrelos's *Genealogia antecessorum parentum meorum* and Lambert d'Ardres's *Historia comitum Ghisnensium* (History of the Counts of Guines).

What these early chronicles show is that when aristocratic families began to write their own history, they did so, first of all, in terms of a heroic foundation in a mythic past. The invention of ancestral heroes increased the prestige of the lineage and was the sine qua non of genealogical consciousness which took the shape of "a tree rooted in the person of the founding ancestor."⁴³ Moreover, there is a tendency in these in-house fabrications of houses not only to push back the moment of origin as far as possible (sometimes through successive revisions) but to equate social status with antiquity. As Duby observes, the genealogical memory of small aristocrats does not go back beyond the mid-eleventh century, that of chatelains reaches as far as the first third of the eleventh, and that of counts extends in some instances all the way to the Carolingian period.⁴⁴

The second notable characteristic of these private family histories is that of attachment to land and castle, a rooting of the family tree in its own soil. In fact, this aspect of family fiction is related to the myth of foundation since the progenitor of the line is often also the captor of the land and the builder of the castle. In any case, both serve as structuring principles of genealogical memory, which crystallizes concretely around family real estate. "The origin of the lineage coincides exactly with the institution of autonomous power around a fortress with the titles and rights incumbent upon owning a castle."⁴⁵

Finally, aristocracy's representation of itself confirms what we have already deduced from other sources concerning the importance of the family *cognomen*, which is also the name of the land and castle, and concerning the biopolitics of lineage. For here the noble family is depicted as a linear progression along a vertical axis. The early family chronicles organize the kin group, and are themselves organized, according to a pattern of primogenital inheritance and according to the straightforward narrative presentation of a series of successions.⁴⁶ The image that emerges from these private histories is of a family which, geographically implanted, begins to temporalize itself in terms of a lineal descent from the founding ancestor—the original possessor of land, castle, and name—toward the present holder of all three.

What the family chronicle tells us about lineage is elaborated within the more "literary" genealogical works from the same period, or a little later. In these the invention of ancestors takes the guise of pseudohistorical fantasy, and fanciful genealogies doubly defy the imagination. Nonetheless, the implicit discursive strategy remains the same: to establish the most ancient ancestry possible and to create the most coherent continuity between this mythic beginning and the present. As early as Nennius's compilation grouped under the heading of the *Historia Brittonum* (seventh to mid-ninth century), it is possible to detect a turning away from universal ecclesiastical history and a tendency to situate the origin of Britain within the secular context of the Graeco-Roman as well as the Judaic past. The *Historia Brittonum* is filled with genealogies—of the Britons, Saxons, and Welsh. Manuscript MN2 even contains a section entitled "De origine Brittonum de Romanis et Grecis trahunt ethimologiam" (Concerning the origin of the Britons, who derive their origin from the Romans and Greeks).⁴⁷ This chapter traces the lineage of Brutus, one of the founders of Rome and the conqueror of Britain, to Trous, the builder of Troy. Geoffrey of Monmouth presents, in the *Historia regum Britanniae*, an even more secular vision of history than that of the *Historia Brittonum*, dispensing entirely with Nennius's Biblical trappings in favor of Trojan origins. In fact, Geoffrey's account of Brutus's arrival in Albion (Britain) offers as fine an illustration as can be found of the eponymic fusion of names, land, and language:

Agros colere incipiunt, domos aedificare, ita ut brevi tempore terram ab aevo habitam censeret. Denique Brutus de nomine suo insulam Britanniam, sociosque suos Britones appellat; volebat enim ex derivatione nominis memoriam habere perpetuam. Unde postmodum loquela gentis, quae prius Trojana sive curvum Graecum nuncupabatur, Britannica dicta est.⁴⁸

They began to till the fields, and to build houses in such a way that after a brief time you might have thought it inhabited from the beginning. Then,

at last Brutus called the island Britain, and his companions Britons, after his own name, for he was insistent that his memory should be preserved in the derivation of the name. Whence afterward the country speech, which had been called Trojan or crooked Greek, was called British.

The *Historia regum Britanniae* can only be understood within a nationalist context, since there is little doubt that it was intended to serve the ideological interests of the Angevine monarchy as against the kings of France. And yet, even here, what remains most important, especially in a passage like that above, lies beyond the specifics of a struggle between opposing dynastic houses. It resides in the region of a deep, though historically determined, mental structure that assumed power to be legitimated through recourse to origins.

This originary principle is equally evident in Wace's translation of Geoffrey (*Le Roman de Brut*) and in his *Roman de Rou*, the first part of which contains a chronologically reversed genealogy from Henry II, through William the Conqueror, all the way back to William Long Sword, the son of Rou (Rollo) and the heroic originator of the lineage:

Guillaume fu fiz Rou, au bon conquereour
au vassal, au hardi, au bon combateour
qui fist mainte bataille et souffri maint estour;
de lignage le claimment le chief et la flour.⁴⁹

William was the son of Rollo, the great conqueror
the brave, hardy, and great warrior
who fought many a battle and settled many a score;
and whom they claim as head of the lineage and its flower.

The rest of the *Roman de Rou* is a chronological telling of a tale of successions, as the order of lineage determines the order of the text.

The *Chronique des ducs de Normandie* is, in many ways, the most striking twelfth-century example of literary chronicle—all the more so since Benoît de Sainte Maure explicitly recognizes the role of Isidore's etymologies in the generation of his own story:

Qui cuidera que bien ne die
Si lise en l'etimologie
Que fait Ysidorus, li proz,
Qui plus en parla bel sor toz.⁵⁰

He who believes I am telling lies
Can read it in the etymologies
Of Isidore, the wise,
Who told the truth about all.

Following the model of universal history, Benoît traces the lineage of mankind from Creation to the early Germanic ancestors of the Normans; he even links the etymology of "Germania" to the act of generation:

De ce nos dit Isidorus
—Qu'autor n'en fait a creire plus—
Que por si fait engendrement
Est dit Jermaine dreitement,
Et d'enjendrer Jermaine est dite,
Eisi mo dit la letre escrete.⁵¹

This is what Isidore tells us
—And no author is more worthy of trust—
That for such copious generation
Was named the Germanic nation,
And from engendering was Germania proclaimed,
As the written letter does maintain.

What remains most significant, however, is not so much Isidore's status as the guarantor of truth but that this truth, like the mythic ancestors of the private chronicle, is itself invented. In the *Etymologiae* the name "Germania" is derived from "the immoderate body size and frigid climate of this people" (*Etym.*, 9:ii, iiic). Isidore has, in other words, come to play for Benoît that founding role which the seventh-century bishop had reserved for sacred scripture and for Adam himself. The authority of a false etymology is assured merely by reference to a prior text (*la letre escrit*), as philological accuracy cedes to a literary strategy of origins.

Grammar and Lineage

Benoît's association of the etymology of racial names and the genealogy of the dukes of Normandy, like Nennius's and Geoffrey's conflation of the origin (*ethimologia*) of the Britons and their tongue, points in the direction that we have been moving all along: and that is, stated simply, that early medieval grammar and lineage are, despite the chronological hiatus which separates them, part and parcel of a common representational model and of a similar set of representational practices, which can be characterized by:

1. *Linearity*. The founding moment of the family, situated in a mythic time beyond memory, is synonymous with attachment to land and castle. The kin group is unified by the property which establishes it both *at* a place and *as* a place within a differential typology of similarly grounded groups. Each family has its proper locus, its own territory, which remains indissociable from its proper name and from its proper place within the social hierarchy. Property is, moreover, transmitted patrilineally from the original possessor of land, castle, and name to their present bearer. Thus a linear contiguity is preserved in the succession of family chiefs—the firstborn of the line—and in the metonymic relation of lineage to the symbols of traditional power. For just as the current heir retains metonymically a part of the essence of his original ancestor, both name and heraldic emblem, integral parts of the noble patrimony, are the synec-

doctic expressions of race and of land. The individual member of the continuous descent maintains a genetic, organic, and participatory relation both to the property that passes through him and to its sacred signs.

Early medieval grammar is, as its exponents are quick to note and its name implies, the science of the straight—of letters (lines), rectitude (correctness), and literal (true) interpretation. Here again, a founding linguistic moment is posited in *illo tempore*. And whether this primal eponymous event is conceived to have been the result of Adam's divine inspiration or of the acumen of an original *impositor*, it is both determined by and expresses an adequation between words and the physical properties of things. Through it meaning is established, or, as in the phrase of rhetoricians and grammarians, a proper place (*locus, topos*) from which to speak is identified. From such places words then evolve lineally—by catastrophe, translation, poetry, and use, through Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—to the present set of terms which is bound metonymically both to meaning and to source. Despite change, the verbal sign still retains a part of the essence of that to which it refers; and, through time, it conserves something of the elements (semblance) of the original word from which it derives.

2. *Temporality*. Consciousness of lineage implies an awareness of the family as a diachronic sequence of relations as opposed to the less temporalized notion of a clan extended in space. Ancestry supersedes affiliation within the noble kin group articulated as a series of successions, a race of heirs with a common past. In fact, antiquity is lineage's chief claim to legitimacy; and the older the genealogy, the more prestigious and powerful that claim becomes.

Similarly, the grammar of the early Middle Ages represents a diachronic system in which the roots of words, their etymology, authorizes meaning. The further back one can trace the history of a particular lexical term, the closer one gets to the primal linguistic elements whose sense borders on the stuff of things. And while internal grammar is characterized by emphasis upon the sources of words (etymology) and the causes of their imposition (definition), external grammar is dominated by a genealogically defined historical linguistics that subtends the dominant model of history itself.

3. *Verticality*. A corollary of the emphasis upon temporal definition is a tendency to stress the autonomy of each lineal strand. Blood ties are more important than affinal relations within a system of kinship which privileges descent—and even the consanguineal bonds between oldest males—while precluding any broader sense of horizontal integration. The verticality of the noble family is especially visible in the range of

customs—*laudatio parentum, maritagium, retraits lignager*—which assure the independence of property within marriage. According to the general rule of *paterna paternis, materna maternis*, the patrimony descended from a common ancestor is programmed to devolve exclusively to those who are genetically related. Property, like blood, flows downward in a straight line.

To the economic autonomy of noble *proprietas* corresponds the lexical independence of the individual term within a semantically oriented grammar centered more upon words and classes than their interrelation. Not only is the study of syntax obscured by an insistence upon etymology, the history of single words, but even within the field of semantics we can detect an insistence upon extrinsic meaning (the relation of a word to its extralinguistic referent) as opposed to contextual definition (the modalized relation of words to other words).

4. *Fixity*. Along with the linearity, temporality, and verticality of lineage is a general sense of fixity both in the family's relation to property and in relation to other families. A dynasty or house is rooted in the soil of its ancestral home; it is grounded by a sacred bond to the land and castle which define it as a cohesive group, provide a source of income, and afford the means of strategic domination. The organic, inalienable quality of the tie to the family *patrimoine* is reflected in the terms "alod," designating both paternity and property, and "immeuble," the immutable *real* estate that constitutes the ancestral holding. Thus fixed once and for all, property rights remain relatively stable despite the introduction through marriage of some "new men." Social relations between various dynastic houses as well as between aristocracy and other levels of society tend to be perceived as inflexible, "grounded," permanent.⁵² Within the confines of such a fixed hierarchy, those with access to the sole source of power—*immobile* wealth—govern because their ancestors have always governed. Social movement is reduced to a minimum, and nobility, not mobility, is the defining social rule.

In early medieval grammar the truth of words is assumed to have been fixed once and for all in a primal instance of signification. The proper meaning is both the true and original one, as the status of words—literally their establishment or foundation—is equated with the ontological status—the existence—of things. An original order of language expressed an original order of the world and continues, despite linguistic change, to reflect it. What this means is that language does not so much determine as uncover the earthly reality it transmits. As a tool used primarily in the quest for first meanings, grammar retains a somewhat passive character more suited to the chronological restoration of a lost and ontologically fixed origin than to the creation of meaning through logical deduction.

5. *Continuity.* The lineal family model is predicated upon the principles of partial resemblance, contiguity, and, above all, continuity. Thus the son reproduces the father, accedes to the paternal name, title, heraldic sign, and land. He represents an essential link in a genealogical chain, each part of which shares certain common traits with all others, and which, at least in theory if not in practice, remains unbroken from the first ancestor to the current heir.

Likewise, early medieval grammar functions according to an assumed continuity not only between the original properties of things and of words but between the components of original words and their successive phonetic and morphological stages. Such an assumption lies at the center of etymological thought, for without the survival of some recognizable element through each lexical change it would be impossible to retrace the history of a word. The importance of at least partial identity also accounts for the insistence upon analogy both as a principle of linguistic evolution and as a technique of definition. The attempt to move by resemblance from that which is certain to that which is less certain, and thus to arrive at the proper definition of things and of words, is, in a very real sense, the cornerstone of etymological grammar. A true etymology is the equivalent of a correct definition; and any break in the etymological chain linking a term to its origin threatens to upset the entire process.

6. *Inherence of value.* One consequence of our argument is that within the lineal family social value remains a quality internal to those who have it. Nobility becomes, in the centuries during which lineages were formed, a relatively closed caste. Aristocrats are born, and noble status is, by definition, inherited; it cannot, in principle, be earned or acquired. "To be noble," again, "is to be able to refer to a genealogy"; and to be able to refer to a genealogy is to affirm automatically one's place in the upper echelons of a highly hierarchized social network.

Like the social worth of the aristocrat, semantic value remains, within a system of grammar based upon etymology as well as an exegetical tradition based upon the mysticism of Hebrew names, an inherent quality of the word itself. It is, in fact, the inherence of meaning in its sign that allows etymology to function as an epistemological tool: the word abstracted from its referent represents the primary vehicle and the agent of first recourse in the recuperation of the meaning of the physical world. Even the end product of the search for etymological roots transmits the specifically political sense of domination, since, as Isidore asserts, "the more we know about the source of words, the faster we can understand the 'nature' or 'force' (*vim*) of things" (*Etym.*, 1:xxix, ii).

But what is the relation of genealogy as a means of naturalizing lineage to etymology as a means of naturalizing language? Where can we locate this relation? And what do we call it? Social infrastructure? Global homol-

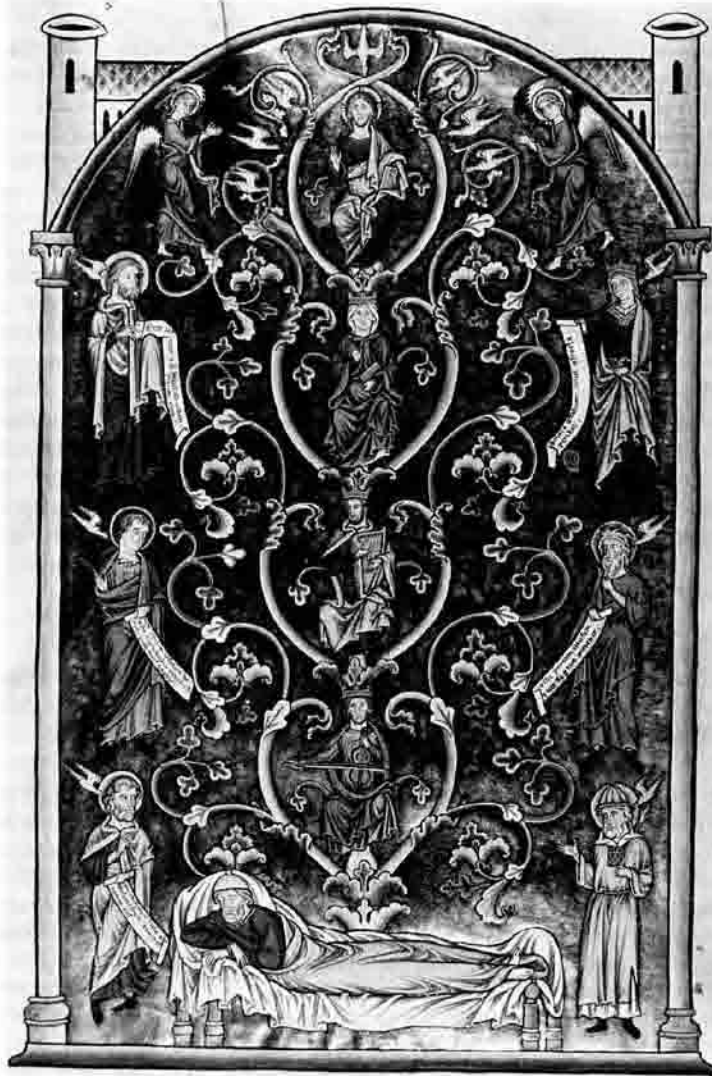
ogy? Subconscious crystallization? Collective unconscious? Mental structure?

I am not convinced that we can situate it in the sense of the early medieval *locus*, a place where speech stops. Nor is it possible to identify positively such a conjunction. There is no recognizable point of which we can assert the coincidence of the laws of kinship and of language—no medieval grammarian who has treated consciously the family, no canonist who deals with family matters in explicitly grammatical terms. What seems certain is that the discourse of the family and the discourse governing discourse meet somewhere deep in the zone where language, etched in grammatical reflex, shapes perception, and where ties of kinship, inscribed in something resembling taboo, program the social attitudes that become manifest in institutions. Here the term "manifest" is crucial, for all we possess of such a relation are the external symptoms that point like vectors to a point of convergence where more direct connection becomes elusive. Or, can it be that we have conceptualized only partially the problem of location, looked too directly to linguistics and to family history for answers that are to be found elsewhere? I think a rapid look at another kind of manifestation may serve to clarify our phrasing of the question, and, ultimately, may steer us toward the locus of mediation par excellence, which lies neither in the realm of grammar nor of kinship, but in that of poetry.

The Tree of Jesse

One area in which representation of the family as lineage makes a startling appearance in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries is that of religious art.³³ I am referring to the numerous stained glass and manuscript illustrations of the Tree of Jesse, which was also the subject of sculptural and dramatic treatment. The original reference of all of these is the passage from Isaiah 11:1–3, in which it is prophesied "that there shall come forth a rod (*uirga*) out of the stem of Jesse (*radice lesse*), and a branch shall grow out of its roots. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. . . ." From Isaiah's prophecy or signification of what was interpreted to be the Incarnation stems a long exegetical tradition. According to Eusebius, Ambrose, Jerome, and Rabanus Maurus, for example, the lineage of Christ stretches from Jesse through David to Mary. The word "*uirga*" was even taken to be the equivalent of the Virgin; and some commentators point to the homonymic resemblance of "Jesse" and its diminutive "Jesus" as combined proof of etymological and genealogical connection.

The descentance of Jesse constituted a virtual *topos* alongside of other genealogical forms of late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages—the Roman *stemma*, Arabic tables of consanguinity, and the canonical *arbor*



Tree of Jesse from the Ingeborg Psalter.
Ms. 1695 Musée Condé, Chantilly, France. (Printed with permission.)

uris. But the idealized family trees that began to appear around the time of the organization of France's feudal lineages betray a remarkable change in focus, which is, as A. Watson claims, best understood by reference to a Carolingian text. The ninth-century poem *De Septem Liberalibus Artibus in quadam Pictura depictis* by Theodolph of Orleans portrays a disk out of which grows a tree: "Discus erat tereti formatus imagine mundi, / Arboris unius quem decorabat opus."⁵⁵ At the base of the tree stands the figure of Grammar:

Huius Grammatica ingens in radice sedebat,
Gignere eam semet seu retinere monens.
Omnis ab hac ideo procedere cernitur arbor,
Ars quia proferri hac sine nulla ualet.⁵⁶

Mighty Grammar was sitting at its root,
Counseling it to produce and yet to keep her, Grammar, fast.
Thus every tree is seen to grow from Grammar,
Because no art has the strength to arise without her.

The central position of Grammar within an allegory of learning was no doubt inspired by Martianus Capella and again attests to the interpenetration of genealogy and etymology. Yet, Theodolph's originality consists in the modification of the paradigm of the liberal arts into a progression from the most basic toward the highest. As articulated by the motif of the tree, the *De Septem Liberalibus Artibus* (which was intended as a guide for painters) transforms the linguistic and practical disciplines into a graded scale. "It only remained," as A. K. Porter notes, "to substitute Jesse for Grammar, the Kings of Judah and the Virgin for the other arts."⁵⁷

This is exactly what happened in the trees of the High Middle Ages, which include: several doubtful identifications like the Canterbury Candlabrum, the Tree of the University of Prague (Vyšehrad MS xiv), and a twelfth-century copy of Jerome's *Explanatio in Isaiam* (Dijon MS 129); a number of simple trees depicting David and Solomon, for example, that of a Premonstratensian Missal (Bibliothèque nationale MS Lat. 833), that of a mid-twelfth-century *Psalter* in Latin and French from Winchester Cathedral (British Museum MS Nero C. iv), the *Huntingfield Psalter* (Morgan MS 43), and a Bible of Saint Bertin de Saint Omer (Bibliothèque nationale MS Lat. 16746); and, finally, complete illustrations of the descentance of Jesse—through David, Solomon, and other kings—toward Mary and Christ. These full-blown Trees of Jesse, including the famous windows at Saint Denis and Chartres as well as the elaborate ceiling of Saint Michaels, Hildesheim, portray kinship (and kingship) as a complex and complete genealogical series. History is thus inscribed in the Tree of Jesse, which, unlike Theodolph's allegory of the Arts, transforms pater-

nity into a pictorial narrative in which story line and family line coincide. Also, unlike the spatially organized Roman and canonical tables of consanguinity, which are paradigms of possible relation to be used to determine who may marry whom and who may inherit what, the Tree of Jesse stands as the iconographic equivalent of the lineal family and an idealized representation of lineage: it organizes visual space such that the eye is forced to read paternity through time. Based upon a contiguous relation of ancestor to heir, it is, again unlike the *tabula consanguinitatis*, an organic tree ordered vertically from the roots up as a graded continuity of being, a participation of elements within an ascending whole.

Art historians have posed a number of probing questions in relation to the historical status of the Tree of Jesse. At what point, for instance, does a diagram become a tree? Did Suger invent the genre in its final form? Do the series of conjoined figures refer in the first instance to a Biblical succession or to the line of Capetian monarchs? And yet, no art historian to my knowledge has attempted to associate the Tree of Jesse with the contemporaneous articulation of the noble family as lineage; nor has anyone posed the question that led us to it in the first place—namely, the problem of situating the mediatory locus between grammar and the lineal kin group.

Indeed, the *uirga lesse* raises an issue that responds in part to our original inquiry. For the portrayal of Jesse's line did not, in its fullest expression, originate in the family circles that produced the genealogical chronicle or even the "literary" genealogy. It was not intended explicitly to serve in the invention of ancestors and hence in the legitimation of family power; nor did its Biblical roots encourage those who saw it to experience anything but a temporally distant, mythically removed vision of the family surrounded by the trappings of legend. No particular dynasty, with the possible exception of the kings of France, could identify with the line of Christ. This is because the Tree of Jesse remains, above all, a model, an idealization, that, unlike both the wholly specific private chronicle and the wholly abstract *arbor iuris*, tells a story of paternity with no direct relation to the noble houses of feudal France. It narrates lineage without narrating a definite lineage. Neither paradigm nor event, the *uirga lesse* retains the ambiguous status of fact cloaked in fiction and of fiction grounded in fact. It is, moreover, precisely this equivocal position between form devoid of content and pure manifestation that speaks to the issue of convergence. What we are suggesting is that early medieval grammar, the formal discourse on discourse, and family structure, a set of formalized precepts governing marriage and inheritance, coincide most intensely in the area of cultural superstructure, of which the Tree of Jesse is but one relatively minor example. This amounts to asserting that the

two poles that have dominated our discussion up until now, language theory and paternity, meet neither in the social infrastructure nor in any deep "mentalité," but in the forms of expression ruled by grammar which also served, as we shall see in the following chapter, to articulate the elementary laws of kinship—that is to say, in the poetic forms whose appearance coincided almost exactly with the advent of lineage.

THREE *Literature and Lineage*

In the preceding chapter we traced what might be described broadly as the constitution of lineage as a principle of noble family order in eleventh- and twelfth-century France. This movement away from the horizontally and spatially defined kin group toward the notion of dynasty or house was sparked internally by the menacing dispersion of family lands alienated by division and pious donation; and it was catalyzed by geographic implantation along with the transformation of benefices (fiefs by concession) into hereditary rights. Where the boundaries of kinship are concerned, the clan underwent a process of "narrowing" visible in a relaxation of the extremely wide impediments to marriage of an earlier age and in a shift of focus away from affinal and toward consanguineal relations. The organization of noble family lines was inseparable from a biopolitics of lineage: a restriction and control of marriages, a husbanding of family property through such practices as the *laudatio parentum*, the *retrait lignager*, and *indivision*. Then too, lineage was practically synonymous with

specifically aristocratic modes of wealth (the *immeuble*, real estate, *propre*) and of inheritance (primogeniture).

We also saw that such a transformation was furthered by a change in the relation of noble lineages to the signs of nobility. In particular, the family's appropriation of a heraldic emblem, a patronymic name, and a historical discourse by which to articulate its own genealogical past served to mediate the thrust toward lineal arrangement. And alongside the shift in legal, economic, and social institutions there occurred a less visible but equally important shift in the nature of certain key familial symbols as well as in their practice. Such a transformation would not have been so significant, however, were it not for the fact that it also represented, as we saw in Chapter 1, the assimilation of an essentially grammatical model implying an epistemological one as well. Early medieval grammar, based upon the principle of etymology, and lineage, predicated upon that of genealogy, participate in a common representational paradigm characterized by linearity, temporality, verticality, fixity, continuity, and the inherence of semantic and social value. The attempt to locate this rapport remains, however, problematic, since linguistic and paternal models converge neither in the realm of linguistics nor in that of the family. Rather, we hypothesized after a consideration of contemporaneous figurations of the Tree of Jesse that the most promising line of inquiry lies in the area of cultural superstructure; and for that reason, it is to poetry that we now turn.

The Epic

France's earliest epic literature is deeply implicated in the strategy of linguistic and familial origins that we have outlined thus far. In the *chanson de geste* more than anywhere else lineage serves to organize an entire literary mode. Not only are these heroic poems (which Duby thinks may have served as sources of inspiration for family chronicles) filled with catalogues of noble families whose origins are fixed in the Carolingian past, but they are themselves disposed in groups according to the nature of dynastic association:

A Seint Denis, en la mestre abaie,
trovon escrit, de ce ne doute mie,
dedanz un livre de grant encesorie,
n'ot que trois gestes en France la garnie.¹

At Saint Denis, in the great abbey,
we find written, in a book of high ancestry,
of this there can be no doubt or chance,
that there are only three *gestes* in richest France.

Thus the author of *Girart de Vienne* lays the foundation for classification of the epic into separate cycles by reason of family relation. The term

"geste" refers generally to events or deeds, to the family and to the chronicle of family deeds (e. g., the *geste Francor* of the *Chanson de Roland*);² and here it designates specifically the three main houses of France as well as the series of legends surrounding each. Nor can the legitimating antiquity of the *livre de grant encesorie*, like Benoit's reliance upon *la lettre escrit*, be divorced from the authority conferred by ancestors (see above, pp. 82–83). Family relations are coterminous with literary relations; the songs of the deeds of Charlemagne, Doon de Maience, or Garin de Monglane engender poems about the other members of their lineages, as even Ganelon becomes the focus of a family *geste*:

Et ausin furent li parant Ganelon,
qui tant estoient riche et de grant renom,
se il ne fussent si plain de traïson
De ce lingnaje, qui ne fist se mal non,
fu la seconde geste.³

And thus were the relatives of Ganelon,
who were so rich and of great renown,
if they had not been so full of treason.
Of this lineage which only had evil done,
was the second *geste*.

Lineage and *geste* are synonymous, as the epic cycle constitutes itself according to a pattern of affiliation between families of heroes and families of poems.

The close connection of genealogy and poetic groupings can partially be explained by the technique of elaboration of the *chansons de geste*, which were, like the private chronicle, composed in keeping with a reverse chronology pointed always toward the origin of the family line. This is another way of saying that the thematic sequence that links the various separate texts of what seems often like a simple enormous cyclical poem is the opposite of the sequence of composition of its interrelated parts. The earlier a character or event can be situated chronologically within the global cycle, the later, generally speaking, the date of its addition to the whole. This is true even of the more biographically organized *gestes* such as the Cycle of Charlemagne or of the King. The *Chanson de Roland*, a saga of old age, can be dated approximately a century and three-quarters before Adenet le Roi's *Berte aus grans piés* (ca. 1275), which contains the story of the emperor's youth and parents; two other poems which form a kind of minicycle of the "Enfances Charlemagne"—the *Chanson de Mainet* and the *Chanson de Basin* (only known in a Scandinavian version)—also belong to this later period. The composition of the stories about the emperor's mature exploits as narrated in the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* and *Aspremont* fall chronologically in between those of the deeds of his youth and old age.

The Cycle of Garin de Monglane or of William offers, in many respects, the most complete assimilation of genealogy and intertextuality. Here, however, the question of cyclical extension is complicated by the simultaneous development of direct and lateral familial and textual branches. The earliest work in the direct group is the *Chanson de Guillaume*, which is roughly contemporaneous with the *Roland*. From *Guillaume* the order of composition stretches back to poems about William's parents, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Garin, the founding ancestor and originator of the line. Where William's affines are concerned, the order of textual elaboration follows a natural chronology: *La Chanson de Renier*, which narrates the deeds of the grandson of William's brother-in-law (Rainouart), was composed at about the same time as the poems attached to Garin.

Altogether the Cycle of William comprehends seven generations, including both consanguineal and affinal relations; and the lineage whose history it recounts remains indissociable from a series of literary successions. Thus, *Garin de Monglane* and the *Enfances Garin* deal with the early history of the family, Garin's father and mother, as well as the capture of the fief of Monglane. The next poem in the generational sequence, *Girart de Vienne*, tells of the exploits of Garin's four sons who leave the paternal castle in search of their own lands, and, in particular, of the war of Garin's lineage against that of Charlemagne. A third epic, *Aymeri de Narbonne*, narrates the capture of Narbonne by Garin's grandson, his marriage, and battles against Saracen invaders. Two other texts in the group attached to Aymeri are particularly significant: the dramatic interest of *Les Narbonnais* is generated by the father's privileging of one heir (in this case the youngest) and the struggle of the disinherited sons to obtain their own holdings; *La Mort Aymeri de Narbonne* depicts the hero's final exploits and death.

As we move to the texts associated with the fourth generation of Garin's lineage, the field thickens. Two works each portray the deeds of Aymeri's sons Beuve (*Le Siege de Barbastre, Beuvon de Commarquis*) and Guibert (*Guibert d'Andresnas, La Prise de Cordres et de Sebille*). No less than six epics recount the life of their brother William (*Les Enfances Guillaume, Le Couronnement Louis, Le Charroi de Nimes, La Prise d'Orange, La Chanson de Guillaume, Le Moniage Guillaume*). There are, in addition, three works attached collaterally to William's nephew Vivien (*Les Enfances Vivien, La Chevalerie Vivien, Aliscans*); these in addition to the poems based upon the life of his affinal kin (*La Bataille Loquifer, Le Moniage Rainouart, La Chanson de Renier*). The Cycle of Garin de Monglane thus appears, from the perspective of the literary historian, as an enormous reverse genealogy in which, to quote J. Frappier, "sons have engendered fathers."⁴ On the level of theme, and certain manuscript collections specify the thematic

rappart between texts, the reconstructed narrative gives the impression of a continuous series of intertextual relations determined by an unbroken genealogical chain.⁵

The antiheroic traitors of the *geste* of Doon de Maience belonged, according to the author of *Girart de Vienne*, to the "family of Ganelon." And though such a claim is not justified by a pattern of textual interrelation as comprehensive as that of the Cycle of William, it is nonetheless indicative of the degree to which action, within this more loosely linked body of poems, is a function of familial affiliation. Here, as elsewhere, lineage functions as a principle of internal organization. The hero's situation, along with the limits of his freedom, are determined by duty to clan; even character seems to be inherited. The numerous wars chronicled in the Cycle of the Rebellious Barons are fought strictly along family lines, sometimes across several generations. In *Raoul de Cambrai*, for example, an initial quarrel over the heritability of fiefs devolving to a minor erupts into a full-scale conflict between Raoul's lineage and the sons of Herbert de Vermandois.⁶ Despite numerous truces, an expiatory pilgrimage, and even marriage between the two kin groups, the great-grandsons of Herbert continue to battle their own maternal grandfather, Raoul's uncle Guerri. In *Renaut de Montauban* the sons of Aymon de Dordogne are pitted against the forces of Charlemagne as Aymon himself, like Bernier of *Raoul de Cambrai*, is obliged to choose between loyalty to lord and to family. Other works of this series present less elaborate portrayals of kinship, but the law of affiliation remains the same. *La Chevalerie Ogier* depicts an extended series of encounters between Charlemagne and Ogier over the death of the latter's son; *Girart de Roussillon* narrates the wars between Charles Martel and the hero whose *geste* (family and poem) bears his name.⁷

What is to be learned from such a long litany of *chansons de geste*? Not simply that a model of the family as lineage determines a textual genealogy. Nor that lineage is an important thematic component of epic poetry. These are already commonplaces of medieval literary studies. What has been less explored—or ill-defined—is the relation which our discussion of language theory, family, and poetic cycle suggests between genealogical succession and narrative structure. For if the disposition of epic families of poems functions according to the paradigm of human generation, it is because the epic is, at bottom, a genre which breeds according to the nature of narrative itself. Rather, the Old French *chanson de geste* conforms, in its broad macrostructure, to what was considered throughout the Middle Ages to constitute a historical or natural order of events; and such an order, as we shall see, remains indistinguishable from that of lineage.

Classical rhetoricians distinguished generally between a natural exposition (*ordo naturalis*) in which an argument follows the prescribed order of presentation (*exordium, narratio, partes argumentationis, peroratio*), and an artificial one (*ordo artificialis*) in which the traditional arrangement is altered to suit a particular purpose. This distinction focused, in turn, exclusively upon the *narratio* or statement of facts. Cicero, for example, defines the narrative as "an exposition of events that have occurred or that are supposed to have occurred"; and he further discriminates between its three types—*fabula, argumentum, and historia*, the last of which is characterized as "gesta res, ab aetatis nostrae memoria remota."⁸ Quintilian distinguishes between "fictitious narrative . . . which is not merely not true but which has little resemblance to the truth," "realistic narrative . . . which has a certain verisimilitude," and "historical narrative, which is an exposition of actual fact" ("historiam, in qua est gestae rei expositio").⁹ Priscian too separates *narratio fictilis*, "the stuff of tragedies or comedies," and *narratio historica*, "which pertains to events" ("ad res gestas exponendas").¹⁰ But it was really with the Carolingian grammarian Alcuin that the conformity of presentation to what is perceived as a natural historical order, and not the order of rhetorical argument or the verisimilitude of discourse, determines the status of narrative: "Omnis ordo naturalis aut artificialis est. Naturalis ordo est si quis narret rem ordine quo gesta est."¹¹ A natural narrative order is, then, one that corresponds to the "order of events."

Alcuin's distinction was adopted by rhetoricians and even philosophers of the High Middle Ages. Conrad of Hirschau (1070–1150) claims that, "naturalem noveris ordinem cum liber juxta gestae rei seriem incipitur."¹² In the tradition of Virgil's medieval commentators, he also cites as an example of artificial order the placement of the fall of Troy in the second book of the *Aeneid* instead of at the beginning where it belongs according to the natural course of historical events. Hugh of Saint-Victor maintains that:

Ordo . . . attenditur . . . in narratione secundum dispositionem, quae duplex est: naturalis, scilicet quando res eo referitur ordine quo gesta est, et artificialis, id est quando in quod postea gestum est prius narratur, et quod prius postmodum dicitur. . . .¹³

Order . . . is determined . . . in narration according to disposition, which is double: natural, that is to say when an affair is presented in the order in which it happened, and artificial, that is, when a subsequent event is narrated first, and a previous event is narrated after

The thirteenth-century rhetorician Geoffrey of Vinsauf concurs. The order of presentation, he claims, is a "double path": sometimes artificial, othertimes "it follows the way of nature" ("Tum sequitur stratum na-

turae"). In this case "an extended line serves as guide, since the thing and words follow the same course" ("Linea stratae est ibi dux, ubi res et verba sequuntur eumdem cursum"); "nor does language veer from the order of things" ("nec sermo declinat ab ordine rerum").¹⁴

This extraordinary conjunction of nature, narrative, linearity, and history is significant for our understanding of the discourse of the epic. Not only does the *chanson de geste* stand as the presentation of historical events, but the sequence of such a presentation follows a natural—that is, chronologically consecutive—order. In its overall design the epic pursues Geoffrey's "path of nature" and is the literary equivalent of a straight line along which "things and words follow the same course." As a genre of origins always situated in historical time, the Old French heroic poem thus assumes, as a condition of its own possibility, a discursive progression in which the literary text and history function side by side; and, further, in which both are implicated in the discourse of the noble family. *Narratio (ordo) naturalis*, the natural sequence of events (*gestae rei*), and the order of familial succession converge in the *chanson de geste*, which is the poetic form of family history. Like the Tree of Jesse, however, the epic only vaguely narrates the genealogy of any historically identifiable clan; rather, it provides a global model of the type of kinship we associate with dynastic order. And if the linearity of its own poetic process rests on a chronological connection of supposedly factual events that remains inseparable from the sequential linking of ancestors, it is because the epic stands both as the poetic transposition of a straight line and the literary equivalent of lineage.

Here we touch upon another rich and revealing semantic nexus alongside the term "geste." In fact, to the extent to which *geste*—family, deeds, and the story of family deeds—came to mean the straightforward narrative presentation of events, it also tended to fuse with the word "estoire," which, as Zumthor points out, represented a generic marker of diverse narrative types, including those later classified under the separate headings of history and fiction.¹⁵ There was, for example, no distinction until the fourteenth century between "estoire" and "roman." But, more important, this last term also enjoyed the resonance—and indeed was employed as a synonym—of "lineage." *Geste* refers to deeds, the natural order of their presentation, family and the family of heroic poems, while its analogue *estoire* captures much of the same semantic field. When, for instance, Wace seeks to "recount and record the *geste* of Rou" ("La geste voil de Rou et des Normanz cunter / Lur faiz et lur proesce dei ço bien recorder"), he conflates the reference to Rollo's ancestors, their story, and his own narrative. Nor does the Anglo-Norman poet distinguish between *geste* and *estoire*: "Longue est la geste des Normanz . . . / Se l'on demande qui ço dist, / Qui ceste estoire en romanz mist."¹⁶ Ancestry, deeds,

history, and narrative are allied as Wace makes clear from the very beginning of the *Roman de Rou*. Such an association is even the defining goal of poetic performance:

Por remembrer des *ancesurs*
les feiz e les diz e les mors . . .
deit l'um les livres e les *gestes*
e les *estoires* lire a festes.¹⁷

To remember our *ancestors* of days gone by
One must read at holiday time
What the book and the *geste* and the *history* say
About their *deeds* and their sayings and their ways.

Wace's investment of the synonyms *geste* and *estoire* with the double meaning of *narratio* and family is hardly unique. The Turin manuscript of *Richard li biaus* ("Dist la dame: je ne puis croire / Que chilz ne soit de haute estoire"), *Aye d'Avignon* ("Ganor li Arrabi fu de moult grant estoire"), *Les Loherains* ("Doz li venerez fu molt de bone estoire"), and the *Life of Saint Margaret* ("D'aveir sor icels la victoire / qui sont de la diable estoire") all underscore—and this is essential—the imbrication of history, narrative, and lineage.¹⁸ Just as the epic cycle seems to breed—to proliferate—genealogically, even primogenitally, the individual *chanson de geste* is generated according to a discursive pattern in which dynastic and textual order are combined.

And yet, there is still another and even more compelling sense in which the associative proximity—even the identity—of a lineal definition of family and epic discourse is manifest. It can be found in the final resonance of the term *geste*, which also refers to "action," "deed," or "event," and whose tenor of "factuality" functions, again, to link kinship to grammatical theory and to the manifestation of theory in poetic practice. What I am suggesting is that France's earliest heroic poetry can be situated precisely at the point of convergence between a model of the noble family, whose legitimacy is rooted in the soil and is perceived to be part of an immutable social order, and a model of representation implicit to early medieval grammar and according to which language is assumed to be grounded in an original order of things. Here lies the crux of the matter: the *chanson de geste* is a genre which, despite the exaggeration that is its hallmark, maintains at least the illusion of its own powers of reference. The epic pretends to reproduce in language something outside of language that is taken, in keeping with the Classical definition of historical narrative, for an "exposition of actual fact" ("in qua est gestae rei expositio" [Quintilian]). As in the medieval "science of the straight," where verbal signs lead through etymological (and genealogical) ascent toward a primal moment of meaning to the essence of things, the "genre of the

straight" both presents events in their natural (chronological) order and maintains always an assumed continuity between words and their referent—or between language and the possibility of representation. It is, in fact, this epistemological integrity that simultaneously legitimates a strategy of origins and permits narration. For not only is the epic filled with relics, but its characteristic discourse functions according to a "reliquary" presence of things in signs that works to join genealogy to overall narrative design.

Recent studies of the technique of epic composition tend to substantiate the implicit thrust toward congruity of the poetic sign and its meaning. M. Parry, J. Rychner, A. Lord, S. Nichols, and J. Duggan have demonstrated with considerable rigor the extent to which the Old French *chanson de geste* consists of a discrete set of narrative formulas, the formula here defined as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given, essential idea."¹⁹ A. Parry and E. Vance, inspired possibly by E. Auerbach's essay on *Roland*, have used the work of their predecessors (though J. Duggan's book is chronologically later) to explore the very special world view which such a mode of elaboration implies.²⁰ What they show is that texts constructed out of a limited number of linguistic formulas are based upon the assumptions that language is an epistemologically adequate vehicle, that a finite set of word groups is sufficient to describe reality as all men commonly perceive it, and that words, in fact, are linked in some rigid—even participatory—way to that which they represent. The early *chanson de geste* in particular implies a great communality of experience and social interest subtended by the pervading presence of an essentially uncontested linguistic field. Even one-word formulas like the Christian and pagan battle cries (e.g., "Muntjoie" and "Precieuse") affirm not only the unity of the group but the integrity of all linguistic expression. In a poem like the *Chanson de Roland*, as in Homer, there is little effort to look beyond appearances, to explore the gap between illusion and reality, to quibble about the meaning of words, much less about the limits of language as a referential system. On the contrary, the *chanson de geste* pretends to reproduce the subsistent world beyond the text and to reproduce it accurately. Within this universe of the collective and the integral, words are assumed to mean what they say and the world to be as it seems.

This referential integrity also accounts for the fragmented quality of a poem like the *Chanson de Roland*. For not only is *Roland* divided into autonomous units of narration, or strophes, but, as Auerbach observes, an "assonant strophic pattern gives every line the appearance of an independent unit, . . . as though sticks or spears of equal length and with similar points were bundled together."²¹ Within the individual line we

also find a notable independence of formulaic units joined, as Auerbach insists, primarily by the conjunction *et*. One consequence of such a "paratactic" style is, as J. Rychner has shown and as I have also maintained elsewhere, the low expressivity of logical causality at the level of syntax.²² In a poem like *Roland*, juxtaposition functions in the absence of subordination to preserve the autonomy of the basic narrative units that are only weakly conjoined. When added to the considerable mass of utterances, which, like war cries, have no syntactic context, or whose context is, like the catalogues of proper names, battle ranks, or insults, severely attenuated, the overall effect is one of extreme discreteness, even atomism. What this means is that the representational universe of *Roland* is one in which the independent relation of autonomous elements to their external referents is stressed above the interrelation of conjoined parts. Again like the lexically defined grammar of the early Middle Ages, the importance of signification—meaning determined by the fixed relation between words or stock phrases and their extralinguistic attribute—overshadows the contextually defined production of meaning through the surface play of self-signifying terms. For the *Roland* poet, mannerism is not an operative principle. Ambiguity, where present, appears unintentional, ascribable to the conditions of oral performance, scribal error, or manuscript corruption. The only exception occurs at the very end of the poem where the issue of multiple meaning—whether the word "vengeance" or "treason" is proper to describe Ganelon's misdeed—is debated in the course of trial.²³ And here, the poet's solution seems to be the collective expulsion of those who contest the power of words to signify univocally that which—beyond language—is experienced as a single event. Even metaphor within this "vertically" pitched world of isolated presences is reduced to the barest minimum. There are only two in its entire 4,002 verses. The epic is, then, more than merely a genre of origins, a historical narrative of "events (*gesta res*) removed from our time" (Cicero). It is the literary form of the proper—of individual ("special" in the etymological sense of pertaining only to one) and appropriate relation between things and their signs.

This is not to suggest that the improper use of linguistic signs is not an important characteristic of the Old French *chanson de geste*. On the contrary, verbal impropriety abounds and seems often to spark dramatic interest. Sacriligious oaths (e.g., Isembart's apostasy), exaggeration (e.g., Aalais's curse of Raoul), blasphemy (e.g., Raoul's boast that even God could not save him), broken promises (e.g., Charles Martel's grant of an *alod* to Girart de Roussillon), impossible situations (e.g., Louis's bestowal of the Vermandois fief upon Raoul, the expiatory ordeal which Charlemagne imposes upon Huon de Bordeaux), lies (e.g., Ganelon's

report of the Algalife's departure, his false interpretation of Roland's horn), and jokes (e.g., the *gabs* of the *Pèlerinage*) all serve as catalysts to thematic development. The "straight" narratives generated by such dislocations of the proper constitute, in fact, potent dramas of language. Yet despite the detachment of words from meaning through blasphemy, boasts, lies, and jokes, the inherent contradiction of representing such linguistic transgression is never really explored. Impropriety is expressed at the level of theme, but it is not experienced as a crisis of representation itself. And though the epic poet may periodically assert his superiority to other composers or jongleurs, he does not question the premises or the limits either of narration or of reference. Where language seems to break down we find instead a strong desire for recuperation, a certain quantitative stretching of prescribed poetic bounds, and an uneasiness about the future which can, as we shall see, be understood in specifically linguistic terms.

Recounted from the unassailable, supposedly objective perspective of a detached third party, the implicit discursive mode of the epic is one of linguistic integrity. That failing (and again such failures are only manifest upon the level of theme) the dominant strategy is essentially recuperative—an attempt to recover that which has been lost, or to translate improper words into proper deeds and thus to restore their propriety (e.g., Isembart's punishment, Girart's and Raoul's struggles to regain their lands, Charlemagne's vengeance, his voyage to the Middle East, Huon's exaggerated quest). In this respect, the epic stands midway between the genealogical chronicle, where such varied possibilities of disjunction are not explored at all, and the romance, where they become a defining principle. Transgression of the proper is, within the assumed universe of epic discourse, an abundant source of dramatic tension; but it does not produce—as in both the novel and the lyric—true dialectical structure.

In the absence of formal transgression—a transcendence of limits generative of form, we do find a tendency toward the quantitative stretching of poetic boundaries, which, again, is best understood by comparison with the family chronicle or "literary" genealogy. In the genealogical history, family and story line coincide to such a degree that the uninterrupted sequence of ancestors compels the uninterrupted transcription of the tale.²⁴ K. Schmid even suggests that the essential formula of paternal succession (e.g., "Fredericus genuit Fredericum de Buren, Fredericus de Buren genuit ducem Fredericum, qui Stophen condidit") prescribes through its progressive nature a consciousness both of race and of historical process.²⁵ Then too, there is in the chronicles discussed by Duby a definite sense that an order of consanguineal relations—a primogenital

series—determines the order of narrative sequence, which is another way of saying that a linear and continuous model of inheritance serves to define a linear textual mode. In the epic, however, the straight narrative economy that is equivalent to, and even synonymous with, lineage is problematized; and this primarily through repetition. The repetition of geographic and climatic formulas, catalogues of families, arms and armies, rhetorical questions, and even whole *laissez* serves to slow the pace of narration and thus to threaten the progression both of the text and of lineal family. Yet, such a quantitative fetishizing of language is never completely disruptive of poetic sequence, genealogy, or, ultimately, of representation. Here the central issue is really that of continuity: narrative continuity that, despite repetition, still preserves what is conceived to be the natural order of events; and representational continuity that, despite the thematization of rupture, fails to transform the problem of referentiality into form.

The most tangible sign of an underlying tension in the narratively sequential and representationally integral universe of the epic is to be found in a certain closure to its own posterity. Indeed, so wholly fixated upon the past is the Old French *chanson de geste* as to produce a blindness to (repression of?) any possibility of the future. The hint of such an exclusion is present from the very beginning. It is significant, for example, that the incident in the *Chanson de Roland* which most threatens to interrupt the narrative—that is to say, Roland's initial refusal to blow his horn and thus to engender the second half of the poem—is also the moment that precludes any future for his lineage: "Par ceste meie barbe, / Se puis veoir ma gente sorur Alde, / Ne jerreiez ja mais entra sa brace!" says Olivier to his ex-future-brother-in-law.²⁶ And it is a meditation upon Roland's only legacy, his sword, that serves to articulate explicitly the problem of succession:

Rollant ferit en une perre bise
 Plus en abat que jo ne vos sai dire.
 L'espee cruist, ne fruiset ne se brise,
 Cuntre ciel amunt est resortie.
 Quant veit li quens que ne la freindrat mie,
 Mult dulcement la pleinst a sei meisme:
 "E Durendal, cum es bele e seintissime!
 En l'oriet punt asez i ad reliques,
 La dent seint Perre e del sanc seint Basilie
 E des chevels mun seignor seint Denise;
 Del vestement i ad seinte Marie:
 Il n'en est dreiz que paiens te baillissent;
 De chrestiens devez estre servie.
 Ne vos ait hume ki facet cuardie!
 Mult larges teres de vus avrai cunquises,

Que Carles tent, ki la barbe ad flurie,
Et li empereres en est ber e riches."

[*Roland*, v. 2338]

Roland struck a dark stone,
He whacks off more than I can say.
The sword grates, but neither shatters nor breaks,
It rebounds upward toward heaven.
The Count, seeing that he cannot smash it,
Laments over it softly to himself:
"O Durendal, how beautiful you are and how very holy!
Your golden pommel is full of relics,
Saint Peter's tooth, some of Saint Basil's blood,
Some of my lord Saint Denis's hair,
Some of Saint Mary's clothing.
It is not right for the pagans to own you,
You must be served by Christians.
May no coward ever possess you!
With you I conquered many vast lands
Over which white-bearded Charlemagne rules,
And the Emperor is powerful and mighty as a consequence."²²

The above passage, perhaps better than any other contained in the early epic, demonstrates how early medieval sign theory is translated into poetic practice—more precisely, how a mode of symbolizing, a way of representing, becomes more important than the symbols themselves or that which is represented.

Saint Peter's tooth, Saint Basil's blood, Saint Denis's hair, and Saint Mary's robe all bear a vestigial relation to the sacred history which is subsumed in Roland, who is, by extension, also a vestige, relic—or heir—of those whose body parts and clothing are imbedded in his sword. Roland's thought is, in fact, *about* such continuities, about the ways in which Biblical history prefigures the present within a Christian economy of salvation, and about the way in which the New Testament legacy contained in his sword might constitute a proper succession. The relic, vestigially linked to an origin that authorizes because it is original, stands at the source of a doubly constituted lineage of objects and of men; and the anxiety that Roland expresses concerning the interruption of this line is also an anxiety about human genealogy. The sword, whose inwrought parts link it to sacred history and whose only past parallels that of the hero, rhetorically fuses his own ancestry with that of Roland. It represents the hero's only legacy, and its future is his only bequest.

Roland's sword thus functions metonymically in the legitimation of Christian history and of the hero's own relation to the metonymized past. Each relic maintains a contiguous relation not only to the saint whose body part it contains but to the weapon in its entirety; it represents part of a preexisting corporeal whole and is contained in the existing total object.

Durendal, in turn, maintains a rapport of propriety with respect to Roland. As the sign which here expresses his essence, it functions as a totemic projection of his soul. It is, in fact, this proper relation to the hero which prevents it from belonging to anyone else. Such a transfer, as Roland's fear of loss betrays, would constitute precisely what we have defined linguistically as a lack of appropriateness—an inadequation between a word and the property of the thing it alone signifies. Moreover, both the hero and his sword are bound through the fetishized object to a point of origin at which reified body parts become the real men whose participation in the founding events of Christian history was, through prefiguration, both a repetition of all that had preceded (Old Testament history) and a legitimation of that which was to follow. Roland's spiritual genealogy stretches, then, not only back to Christ, whose martyrdom he repeats analogically and metonymically, but to Mary, and, according to the lineage of Jesus through Jesse, back to David and Adam. No matter how distant and precarious the tie, Roland represents a vestige of all who have gone before, just as his sword is the vestigial reminder of its illustrious (because original) ancestry.

The richness of Roland's heritage, of the heritage of his property, and of the propriety of his relation to it, should not, however, blind us to the fact that he remains a terminal figure. Childless, a hero so thoroughly defined by the past that both he and his sword are excluded from the future, Roland embodies the fear that haunted France's feudal aristocracy—that is to say, the prospect of interruption. Ironically, the consequences of such a genealogical break are not evident until the very end of the poem. There the emergence of Thierry, a man not only delicate, even graceful, in build, but refined in his handling of the emperor's legal defense, drives home the point that Roland's champion and spiritual heir is as unlike him as Ganelon himself. Further, the poem concludes with two subtle but significant linguistic events which bear directly upon the termination of Roland's family line. The first, the baptism of Marsilie's wife Bramimonde, takes as its emblem the change of a name: "As banz ad Ais mult sunt granz les c. . . / La baptizent le reine d'Espaigne: / Truve li unt le num de Juliane."²³ The imposition of a name, as opposed to its inheritance, not only raises the specter of a voluntary change in family status but carries the possibility of a certain linguistic mobility as well.

More important, Bramimonde's conversion and the loosening of the proper attached to her name and to her status as queen are eclipsed by the final strophe in which the limits of the linguistic universe of *Roland* are in some definitive sense transgressed:

Quant l'emperere ad faite sa justice
E esclargiez est la sue grant ire,
En Bramidonie ad chrestientet mise,

Passet li jurz, la nuit est aserie.
 Culcez s'est li reis en sa cambre voltice.
 Seint Gabriel de part Deu li vint dire:
 "Carles, sumun les oz de tun emperie!
 Par force iras en la tere de Bire,
 Reis Vivien si succuras en Imphe,
 A la citet que paien unt asise:
 Li chrestien te recleiment e crient."
 Li emperere n'i volsist aler mie:
 "Deus", dist li reis, "si penuse est ma vie!"
 Pluret des oilz, sa barbe blanche tiret:
 Ci falt la geste que Tuoldus declinet.

[*Roland*, v. 3988]

When the Emperor has dispensed his justice,
 And his great wrath has been appeased,
 He has Bramimonde christened.
 The daylight fades away, night has fallen,
 The King has gone to bed in his vaulted room.
 Saint Gabriel came from God to tell him:
 Charles, summon the armies of your Empire!
 You shall invade the land of Bire,
 You shall aid King Vivien at Imphe,
 The city the pagans have besieged,
 The Christians implore and cry out for you."
 The Emperor would rather not go there:
 "God!" said the King, "my life is so full of suffering!"
 His eyes are brimming with tears, he tugs his white beard.
 Here ends the story that Tuoldus tells.²⁹

As we saw above (pp. 100–102), the language of the epic—its vocabulary, metrical form, and texture—serves to affirm the shared values of the community of warrior knights, and even to crystallize the aspirations of an entire class. The formulaic discourse of the early *chanson de geste* in particular was ideally suited to express the unity of the group. With the possible exception of Ganelon's clever use of words to betray and the certain exception of Charlemagne's final complaint, there is, in a work like *Roland*, no genuine discourse of interiority to legitimize, or even to render public, the experience of the individual. Two notable moments of iconographic individuation are not accompanied by a corresponding linguistic individuation: (1) Roland, alone before death, addresses the field of dead knights as if they were still alive; he eulogizes Durendal as if his sword were an animate and interested listener. The language of Roland's solitary last stand thus retains an essentially communicative function. (2) The Charlemagne of the four previous dreams attains iconographic individuation through sleep, but he remains incapable of responding to Gabriel's earlier prophecy of future battles. The visual isolation of the sleeping dreamer produces no verbal response comparable to that of the final strophe.

The Charlemagne of *laisse* 291 uses language not as a communicative or ritualistic tool—to affirm the unity of the community—but to express a profound disharmony between the individual and the external forces brought to bear upon him. Stated simply, he pronounces what remains the only wholly private verbal utterance within the poem. He inaugurates a discourse intended for no one but himself. In the meeting with Gabriel, Charles initiates a seemingly personal dialogue with the self, the subtle start of an inner monologue, which violates the premises of the universe of which he seems—alone at the end—to be the sole survivor. And though the outcome of this inner struggle is apparent, the emperor is henceforth a divided being, aware, like Ganelon of the first part of the poem, of conflicting commitments to himself and to an imperative outside of the self.

Charlemagne's removal of language from its public status is tantamount to the isolation of the individual from the group. The conclusion of *Roland* thus constitutes a relation between terms unlike any that has preceded: the keenly felt tension between war-weariness and the prospect of further crusade sets in opposition a sensing consciousness perceived as inner and personal, on the one hand, and an external order perceived as objective and distinct, on the other. Moreover, the suggestion of a loss of the proper, symptomized by the appropriation of a language of the self (self-contained and self-directed), and by the struggle of individual and community, signals an interruption analogous to Roland's lack of progeny. Both preclude any future for the linguistically and socially integral world of the *chanson de geste*. Put another way, the early epic possesses no discourse by which to assimilate the meaning either of Charles's verbally determined experience of isolation or of the termination of Roland's family line.³⁰

The foregoing discussion changes somewhat our original designation of the epic as the literary form of linguistic and genealogical continuity. More precisely, the *chanson de geste* represents from its inception the disruption of an essentially continuous past. Just as Roland, deprived of offspring, can only meditate upon his heritage, the earliest heroic poems are so completely turned toward the past that their sequels can only reverse historical chronology, engendering ancestry and moving backward through time. Even the oldest text begins with the extinction of a family line and of a linguistic order. Nor is *La Chanson de Roland* unique in the impossibility of its own future. The *chanson de geste* is a virtual home for the aged childless, just as the novel will become a school for orphans. Charlemagne loses not only his spiritual son at Roncevaux, but his sons Bertolai and Lohier are killed in *Renaut de Montauban*, his son Charlot in *Huon de Bordeaux*. Ogier's son Baudoinet is murdered in *La Chevalerie Ogier*, as are Girart's two sons in *Girart de Roussillon*. The childless William witnesses his nephew Vivien's death in *La Chanson de Guillaume*; and

Raoul de Taillefer's direct line is ended with the death of his son, Raoul de Cambrai. The Old French epic is the genre of the continuous but only in the sense of a negative progression. Genealogically sterile because of an almost universal lack of progeny, it proliferates continuously in the direction of ancestry; linguistically sterile because of the formal impossibility of assimilating the loss of the proper, it mobilizes none of the playful potential of such a loss.³¹ On the contrary, it remains obsessively obedient to the recuperation—through narrative and representational continuity—of verbal *proprietas*.

Thus, we are faced with a significant conjunction of narrative poetry, early medieval linguistics, and the economics of the lineal family. It is difficult, if not impossible, to separate literary discourse from grammatical theory and from the biopolitics of lineage. These three areas of symbolic activity and social practice all imply a special relation to the idea of property, an investment in the principle of continuity, and a deep ideological attachment to origins. Early medieval grammar, founded upon the notion of a proper relation between words and the properties of things, also assumes a continuous evolution of signs which permits the etymological recovery of an original order of language and being. Similarly, the noble family is predicated upon a sacred attachment to property which is transmitted by uninterrupted primogenital succession; like the metadiscourse of language theory, lineage derives its own legitimacy from an abiding connection to origins. In the epic an assumed (though violable) linguistic propriety combines with a realized narrative coherence to produce the somewhat unidimensional universe which proliferates, according to a genealogical model, in the direction of ancestry. There can be no distinction between the narrative and referential continuity of the epic, the biological continuity of lineage, or the economic continuity of noble family property. The "science of the literal" (straight), the linear family, and the literary genre of the continuous are, furthermore, united by a common conservative streak. Implicit to an etymological grammar is the assumption that linguistic change can only represent corruption, a further distancing from the proper. Latent in the (unconscious?) political strategy of nobility is the presupposition that only ancestry legitimates and that social change transgresses this natural law of antiquity. And, finally, underlying the epic exclusion of the future is the premise that no present can rival the past.

The Poetics of Disruption

If the association of early medieval grammar, lineage, and epic verse seems too neat, too globally comprehensive and contained, it is because up until now we have focused somewhat narrowly upon a much broader cultural whole. As we have defined them, these three fields of discursive

practice represent but one dimension of a more complicated nexus of symbolic and social relations, the other dimensions of which can no longer be ignored. We have thus reached the midpoint of our investigation, a watershed that permits—even solicits—what may seem like a curious reversal of the logic of presentation, henceforth the opposite of our beginning. Since, in addition, it is no longer necessary to justify the connection between language theory, kinship, and poetry, we will move from literary form to family structure and linguistics with the understanding that the difficulty of distinguishing internal from external causality renders the primacy of poetic discourse increasingly apparent.

The Love Lyric

Among the lyric poets of the twelfth century none is more concerned with lineage and language than the troubadour Marcabru, who is obsessed by family trees of a particular sort:

Cossiros suy d'un gran vergier
Ont a de belhs plansos mans lucs;
Gent sont l'empeut e'l frugs bacucs,
Selh qu'esser degran sordegier
Fuelhs e flors paron de pomier,
Son al fruchar sautz' e saucs,
E pus lo caps es ba[da]lucs,
Dolen(s) son li membr' estremier.

Mort(z) son li bon arbre primier,
E-l(s) viu(s) son ramils e festucs, . . .
Doncx no pairejon li derrier;
En totz bos sens ab los faducs. . . .

[Marcabru, p. 9]

I dream of an orchard where there are beautiful shrubby trees in many places; the graftings are large and the pulpy fruit smells sweet to those of low degree. One expects apple leaves and flowers; but when the fruit comes it is only willow and elder. And given that the head is empty, the members are sorrowful at their extremities.

Dead are the good old trees, and those that live are only branches and sticks. . . . Thus the most recent (living trees) do not resemble their fathers in all the good ways.

As we have seen from the beginning, the tree was a potent symbol or structuring vehicle of genealogy in the High Middle Ages. What is special about Marcabru's presentation, however, is that the family tree, never whole, is always grafted. The "good old trees," or the "good old days," which he associates elsewhere with the positive values of *valor*, *pretz*, *joven*, and *joia*, have been supplanted at their upper extremities by sorrow: "Dolen(s) son li membr' estremier." What has been broken, in fact, is a paternal series; and the apple tree which yields willow and elder

refers to a world in which sons no longer resemble fathers: "Non cuich que ·l segles dar gaire / Segon qu'escritura di / Qu'eras fail lo fills al paire / E ·l pair' al fill atressi'" (Marcabru, p. 71).³²

There can be no doubt concerning the cause of grafted trees and broken genealogies:

Moillerat, ab sen cabri
Atal paratz lo coissi
Don lo cons esdeven laire;
Que tals ditz: "Mos fills me ri"
Que anc ren no ·i ac a faire:
Gardatz sen ben bedoi
[Marcabru, p. 73]

Car el n'a la clau segonda
Per qe ·l segner, so ·us afin,
Porta capel cornut conin,
C'ab sol un empeu[t] *redonda*
Si donz, lo ditz Marcabrus.
[Marcabru, p. 50]

Married people, in the lascivious sense of goats, you prepare the cushion in such a way that the cunt becomes a rascal. And such a one says: "My son laughs at me," who never had anything to do with his birth.

There is a second key; that is why the lord (husband), I assure you, wears a horned hat coming from the cunt [lit. "of rabbit fur"]. For it is only through a grafting that his wife becomes round (pregnant), according to Marcabru.

Lineage is disrupted by the deleterious effects of adulterous desire, which reaches epidemic proportions; and this in two ways. First, husbands participate in their own cuckoldry through a generalized exchange of wives, "for he who rubs the cunt belonging to another sends his own to market, and he who wants to feel one that does not belong to him makes others covetous of the one that does and he places it in the public domain."³³ And, alongside of the "wife-swapping," the "common folly" that Marcabru equates with widespread civil chaos, stands the cuckoldry of great lords "from below" by those who are supposed to serve them:

D'otra manieira cogossos,
Hi a rics homes e baros
Qui las enserron dinz maios
Qu'estrains non i posca intrar
E tenon guirbautz als tisos
Cui las comandon a gardar.
E segon que ditz Salamos,
Non podon cill pejors lairos
Acuillir d'aquels compaignos

Qui fant la noirim cogular,
Et aplanon los guirbaudos
E cujon lor fills piadar.
[Marcabru, p. 135; see also pp. 147–148]

There are some powerful and great barons who imprison their wives in houses so that no stranger can enter, and who at the same time entertain the rogues to whom they give the orders to guard them.

But according to the wisdom of Solomon these lords could not offer hospitality to worse thieves than this bunch that bastardizes the race; and the husbands caress little rogues thinking they are covering their sons with affection.

If the "horizontal" exchange of wives within the ranks of nobility obscures genealogy and makes fathers say of their sons, "I think he is mine," the "vertical" disappropriation of paternity produces a bastardization of the race indissociable from a general decline in courtly values—the withering of great family trees at their upper extremities.

What remains significant in Marcabru's obsession is not so much the poet's awareness of the biological consequences of extramarital intercourse as the fact that adultery, whose effects involve a hiding of lineage, cannot be separated from the deceptive effects of poetic language. First of all, the lies that adultery entails seem to produce misconceptions leading directly to conception: "Ladies for their part are deceptive, and they know how to trick and lie; this is why they provide for and nourish the children of others."³⁴ Furthermore, the bastardization of the race that Marcabru laments repeatedly and in varying modes remains virtually indistinguishable from the poet's role as a defiler of language.

Much has been written about Marcabru's status as a troubadour of the "closed," "dark," "difficult," or "obscure" style, and the debate concerning the roots of the medieval hermetic tradition is of special interest to the literary historian. Here, however, sources are of less importance than the fact that for Marcabru poetry implies the obfuscation of meaning. "My fief," he claims, "is so well protected that no one except I have access to it. . . I am gifted and filled with an infinity of artifices, with a hundred means of achieving my goal (or harming). On the one side, I carry fire, and on the other, I carry the water to put it out."³⁵ The poet, like the adulterer, is a deceiver, a disrupter of linguistic lines alongside the usurpers of noble family lines:

Per savi ·l tenc ses doptanssa
Cel qui de mon chant devina
So que chascus motz declina,
Si cum la razos despleia,
Qu'ieu mezeis sui en erranssa
D'esclarzir paraul' escura.

Trobador, ab sen d'enfansa,
 Movon als pros atahina,
 E tornon en disciplina
 So que veritatz autreia,
 E fant los motz, per esmanssa,
 Entrebeschatz de fraichura.

[Marcabru, p. 178]

I consider to be wise the one who can decipher what each word in my song means, how its theme develops, because I myself am subject to error when it comes to explaining an obscure word.

Troubadours with childish minds cause trouble for those of great worth, turn into difficulty what truth grants, and purposefully make words full of breaks.

The poet is a "mixer of words," of meanings, and, by implication, an obscurer of etymologies through the dislocation of linguistic property. Similarly, the adulterer is a mixer of races, of noble fortunes, an obscurer of genealogy through the dislocation of family property. Semantic and genealogical discontinuity go hand in hand. And the disruption of meaning that the love lyric occasions, a "making of words full of breaks," is, ultimately, the same as the disruption of lineage inherent to adulterous desire.

Marcabru's love lyrics contain the most conscious and sustained treatment of the relation between erotic and poetic deception. He is not, however, alone in the association of poetry, adultery, and bastardy. Raimbaut d'Aurenga, for instance, claims to be capable of "making a little poem easy to sing," but he prefers "to make it so it hides its meaning, . . . since love must be hidden."³⁶ Elsewhere he brags of "intertwining rare, dark, and obscure words" ("Cars, bruns et tenhz motz entrebesc"), and, like Marcabru, he links such lies to genealogical disruption.³⁷ Raimbaut offers, further, what stands as an emblematic recognition of the affinity between paternal and poetic dislocation:

Tal cug'esser cortes entiers
 Qu'es vilans dels quatre ladriers,
 Et a·l cor dins mal ensenhat;
 Plus que feutres sembla sendat
 Ni cuers de bou escarlata
 Non sabon mais que n'an trobat—
 E quecx quo's pot calafata.³⁸

One thinks he is a perfect gentleman who is baseborn on all four sides (of his family) and who has a churlish heart within him; no more than felt resembles taffeta or ox-hide good scarlet woolen cloth do they (the scandal mongers) know anything except what they have invented about it, and each one caulks (fills in) as best he can.

In a false perception of filiation lies the beginning of fiction. The *losengiers* or spreaders of scandal misperceive true genealogy; and this mispercep-

tion—an invention synonymous with the troubadour's art ("Non sabon mais que n'an trobat")—creates the conditions of the possibility of poetry itself. The love lyric or *canço* is a "caulking" of an unbridgeable gap in "true" paternity, a "filling-in" of an irrecoverable distance between language and meaning.

The troubadour Bernart Marti also boasts of "breaking lines" and of "mixing words" ("C'aisi vauc entrebescant / Los motz e·l so afinant"); and he equates the confusion of tongues—linguistic and lingual—with the interpenetration of a kiss ("Lengu'entrebescada / Es en la baizada"). Inspired possibly by Marcabru, he too underscores the link between verbal obfuscation and the bastardization of noble family lines.³⁹ Bernart Marti equates, in fact, the lies of the slanderers with the disinheritance of rightful heirs:

Mas fezautat fan carzir,
 Quar no volon lo ver dir
 Tant si fizon en l'auzir
 De caitius desheretar. . . .
 Lengua forquat traversan,
 Si·l metetz deniers denan,
 Far vos a de gossa can
 E d'eyssa guiza levar
 Lo dia tro l'endeman,
 Tan son savi del mesclar.⁴⁰

But they (the slanderers) raise the price of faithfulness with their lies. They are so confident in their reputation that they even dare to disinherit the unfortunate. . . .

A forked lying tongue, if you offer it money, will transform a bitch into a sire and in the same way will raise today until tomorrow (?), so crafty are they in the art of mixing things.

Bernart's "art of mixing things" (*mesclar*) is the equivalent of Raimbaut's "motz entrebesc" and Marcabru's "motz entrebeschatz de fraichura." All three phrases are, within the semantic field of the early *vers*, used in opposition to *lassar* (to link). Each assumes, moreover, that the intertwining of words, their isolation from fixed, received categories of meaning, occasions a jumbling of reality—"a world upside down,"⁴¹ in Bernart's phrase, in which the natural difference between genders (bitch and sire) as well as the natural law of time (today and tomorrow) are reversed. This linguistic rupture and loss of discreteness is associated with a break in an uninterrupted sequence of paternity: bastardy, or the dislocation of a genealogical line, combined with disinheritance, or the dislocation of property.

Thus we find among lyric poets of the difficult style, like Marcabru, Bernart Marti, or Raimbaut d'Aurenga, a discourse which seems not only to refuse any representational function but to revel in such a refusal. The

assumed linguistic universe of the early *trobar clus* is, as its name implies, closed upon itself, self-referential, disruptive of linguistic integrity—a world which, to cite Zumthor, “is its own subject without object.”⁴² Raimbaut is characterized by his biographer as a poet gifted in making rich and closed rhymes (“caras rimas e clusas”). Peire d’Alvernia claims to enjoy singing “tight and closed words” (“motz alqus serratz e clus”). The troubadour Marcoat brags of creating a poem out of “los motz cluz” and of being able to insert into his contradictory verses (“vers contradizentz”) “three words of different meanings” (“tres motz de divers sens”).⁴³ Nor is the phenomenon of linguistic closure restricted to those poets traditionally characterized as *trobar clus*. When William IX, the first troubadour, proposes “to compose a poem about nothing,” he is, in effect, denying the purchase of language upon the world.⁴⁴ From the beginning the *vers* represents a symbolic closure of language upon itself, its substitution for action and constitution as event.

Though William IX is not among the poets who, like Marcabru, pretend continually to expose the generalization of adultery, along with the loss of linguistic integrity, he establishes the framework for such an association. In the poem “Campanho, faray un vers . . . covinen” William sets as his announced goal the mixing of meanings: “I will put in it (my *vers*) more folly than wisdom, and one will find there mixed pêle-mêle love, joy, and youth” (“Et er totz mesclatz d’amor e de joy e de joven” [William IX, p. 1]). William’s intentional jumbling of words expresses implicitly a certain arbitrariness of verbal signs. The interpretative possibilities of such a doctrine lead, moreover, not only to his oft-remarked social exclusivity but to sexual confusion as well: “E tengutz lo per vilan qui no l’enten / O dins son cor voluntiers [qui] non l’apren; / Greu partir si fa d’amor qui la trob’a son talen” (ibid.).⁴⁵ The loss of directness in speech, of linguistic property, is the result of poetic “mixing”; and it becomes the equivalent of sexual indiscretion. The refusal of univocal meaning is tantamount to a condemnation of monogamy:

Dos cavalhs ai a ma selha ben e gen;
Bon son e adreg per armas e valen;
Mas no-Is puese amdos tener que l’us l’autre non cossen.

[ibid.]

I have for my saddle two horses, and this is well and good; both are good, well trained for combat, and valiant; but I cannot have them both together, because one cannot stand the other.

Even the thinly veiled equestrian metaphor captures the movement of William’s doctrine of language and love. A plurality of meanings, irreconcilable with each other except within the confines of the *vers*, are identified with the balance of mutually exclusive erotic preferences. Linguistic

infidelity, the failure to choose words whose meaning is plain and distinct, cannot be divorced from sexual infidelity, as the coterminous presence of “folly and sense” which marks the poem’s beginning is echoed in the closing inability “to choose between Agnes and Arsen”: “Ges non sai ab qual mi tengua de N’Agnes o de N’Arsen” (ibid., p. 2).⁴⁶

A similar expression of the relation between language and sexuality can be found in William’s problematic “Poem of the Red Cat,” which opens with a comparable linguistic gratuity: “I will make a *vers* since I am asleep, and walking, and standing in the sun” (“Farai un vers, pos mi sonelh, / E m vauc e m’estauc al solelh” [William IX, p. 8]). The initial affirmation of a logical impossibility is in this instance, however, accompanied by the degeneration of language beyond the point of recognition; for when the wives of Sir Garin and Sir Bernard try to get the poet to speak, he responds with nonsense syllables: “I didn’t say but or bat to them, didn’t mention a stick or a tool, but only this: ‘Babariol, babariol, babarian.’”⁴⁷ In William’s babble (“Babariol”), sound is detached entirely from meaning (except for the homophonic resonance with barbarism), which is precisely what, in this drama of refused language, permits fornication:

So diz n’Agnes a n’Ermessen:
“Trobat avem que anam queren.
Sor, per amor Deu, l’alberguem,
Que ben es mutz.
E ja per lui nostre conselh
Non er saubutz.”

[William IX, p. 10]

Then Agnes said to Ermessen: “We’ve found what we are looking for. Sister, for the love of God let us take him in, he is really mute; with this one our conduct will never be known.

Thus, it is not only—as in Marcabru, Bernart, and Raimbaut—the “mixing of words,” the concealment of meaning, that fosters adultery, but silence, the abolition of both terms of the semiological equation: “I fucked them, as you shall hear, one hundred and eighty-eight times” (“Tant las fotei com auzirets: / Cen e quatre vint e ueit vetz” [ibid., p. 12]).

Metaphor and the “Closed” Style

William is, of course, excessive in his transgression both of semantic and sexual bounds. But this exaggerated parable of secrecy and seduction points to a more general resistance on the part of the *trobar clus* not so much to speech as to the idea of linguistic property. Alongside of a concealed—because socially inappropriate—polygamous desire stands a polysemous play with words, a fornicating with language that stretches meaning to its limits, and sometimes beyond. Whether such a testing of

poetic discourse is expressed as a "mixing of words," a "making of words full of breaks," or silence, it represents, for the poet of the "difficult style," a refusal of the proper.

Here lies an important difference between the *chanson de geste* and the love lyric. For while the discourse of the epic serves either to affirm or to recuperate linguistic property, that of the "closed" *canso* radically denies property, functioning instead according to a more contextually defined poetic model. Where one is originary, historical, governed by a temporal law of contiguity, combination, and sequence, the other is disruptive of sequence, ahistorical, and governed by a more spatially organized law of juxtaposition, similarity and dissimilarity, and supplementarity. If the first depends upon a metonymic grounding of language in things (words in the proper), the second is ruled by a freer game of metaphoric substitutions. This polarity is crucial, since the opposite of a proper signification was, throughout the period in question, a metaphoric one.

Late Classical and early medieval rhetoricians distinguished between: simple linguistic abuse, unintentional errors of diction, vices (*vitiis*) like barbarism and solecism; metaplasm, or changes in a word for the sake of ornament; schemes, figures of diction or thought; catachresis, "the inexact use of a like and kindred word in the place of a precise and proper one" (Cicero); and tropes, an expression intentionally altered from its usual signification. The author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* claims, for example, that "metaphor" occurs when a word applying to one thing is transferred to another, because the similarity seems to justify this transference." Quintilian specifies that "a trope means the artistic alteration of a word or phrase from its proper meaning to another." The notion of deviation from the norm of conventional meaning is assimilated by Augustine, who equates metaphor with verbal usurpation: "Translata sunt (signa), cum et ipsae res quas propriis verbis significamus, ad aliud aliquid significandum usurpantur. . . ." ⁴⁸ Isidore concurs in the standard definition of a trope ("Fiunt autem a propria significatione ad non propriam similitudinem" *Etym.*, I:xxxvii, i), which is passed on to the rhetoricians and poets of the High Middle Ages.

The idea of metaphor connotes alienation, denaturalization, translocation, or usurpation of linguistic property. But it also serves as a principle of stylistic elaboration. And the opposition between the proper and the metaphoric is doubled by that between the proper and the ornate. The late Classical grammarian Diomedes, for example, distinguishes—under the rubric of *virtutes orationis generales*—between "property, which is a straight kind of speech" associated with proportion and brevity, and "ornate speech," which includes tropes.⁴⁹ The Carolingian grammarian Notker Labeo discriminates between plain or simple discourse (*plane dicere, locutio simplex*), which "accords the proper words to things" (*pro-*

pria verba rebus dare), and ornate or figurative discourse (*locutio figurata*), which, as for Diomedes, consists of word figures (*compositio artificiosa*) as well as figures of thought and tropes (*significatio aliena*).⁵⁰ The anonymous author of a rhetoric written sometime prior to the year 1000 adopts the Classical theory of three styles (Cicero, Horace) according to the degree of elaboration. Thus the humble mode of speech "uses the word itself" ("proprio nomine nominavit"), the middle "casts light upon its subject," and the heavy style casts its subject in a "golden light" ("aureos lychnos").⁵¹ In the second half of the eleventh century, Albert of Monte Cassino distinguishes between *stilus simplex* and *stilus mixtus*, and he extends the concept of property beyond the use of the individual word to cover the correctness of the *copulatio verborum*.⁵² It is, however, only among the rhetoricians of the thirteenth century that the opposition between simple and difficult style receives systematic treatment.⁵³

Simple style implies, as Geoffrey of Vinsauf specifies in the *Poetria Nova*, use of colors of rhetoric: either "figures of words" involving a play on the morphological structure of a single verbal term (e.g., *repetitio, anominatio, conversio, exclamatio*), or "figures of thought," which seem to involve both logical and lexical alteration (e.g., *diminutio* [litote], *accumulatio* [heaping of praise or blame], *demonstratio* [vivid description]). *Ornatus difficilis*, on the other hand, implies the use of tropes, which, as we have seen, means the transfer (*translatio, transsumptio*) of a proper meaning toward a figurative; but nonetheless recognizable, one.⁵⁴ Mathew of Vendome, John of Garland, and Evrard the German all follow roughly the same line of thought with regard to the question of stylistic elaboration.

There are difficulties attached to the equation of the so-called dark, obscure, or covered style of the *trobar clus* and the rhetorical category of *ornatus difficilis*. Moreover, the association of poetic practice and rhetorical theory is by no means intended to imply logical (or even chronological) priority. But even so brief an excursion into medieval manuals of poetry offers as contemporaneous as possible a framework for the understanding of the "difficult" lyric. And before we move on to a consideration of the "easy" or "light" *canso* and to the social implications of both "open" and "closed" verse, it might prove worthwhile to summarize and to situate the question of poetic closure within the context of the issues that have concerned us up until now. For not only does the *ornatus difficilis*, or poetry characterized by the extensive use of tropes, serve to negate linguistic property, but it throws radically into question many of the fundamental principles of early medieval grammar; and this in the following terms:

1. *Spatial*. The *loci* or proper places of speech associated with a grounding of words in the physical properties of things are, in metaphoric discourse, geographically displaced toward a foreign or alien *locus*. Geof-

frey of Vinsauf even associates such a shift with a change of residence: "Noli semper concedere verbo / In proprio residere loco: residentia talis / Dedecus est ipsi verbo; loca propria vitet / Et peregrinetur alibi sedemque placentem / Fundet in alterius fundo: sit ibi novus hospes."⁵⁵ Thus the trope implies a verbal dislocation (displacement of locus) conceived still in spatial terms.

2. *Temporal*. The place to which speech is displaced—a figure of speech—can itself constitute a proper *locus* as long as the similitude of the elements conjoined is preserved. At a secondary level there are, then, proper figures—those, as Peter Helias states, "where the transfer of a word from a proper signification to an alien one is appropriate"—and improper ones in which the place to which meaning is transferred is inappropriate ("Vitiosa est locutio ubi est translatio inconueniens").⁵⁶ In neither case, however, is the metaphoric expression an original one in the first instance. "Words," as Quintilian states, "are proper when they bear their original meaning, metaphorical when they are used in a sense different from their natural meaning."⁵⁷ It is the pristine quality of first words that endows them with the qualities of naturalness and wholeness; and metaphor represents always a less than, newer than, original instance of meaning. This is a point of paramount importance since through tropes language is cut loose from an overweening dependence upon the propriety of origins.⁵⁸ Unlike the futureless discourse of the proper as typified by the *Chanson de Roland*, the metaphoric discourse of the *trobar clus* both severs (through novel use) and affirms (through similitude) its attachment to the past.

3. *Linear*. Early medieval grammar is, as we have seen, the "science of the literal"—of straight and correct locution. The use of tropes, however, is synonymous with "circular speech" or circumlocution. We have already seen that John of Salisbury associates grammar with a highway or straight path and that errors of speech are the equivalent of "forsaking the proper thoroughfare" (see above, pp. 52–53). Among the rhetoricians and grammarians of the thirteenth century, it is impossible to separate the *ornatus difficilis* from the general technique of amplification by periphrase, which Geoffrey characterizes as follows: "In order to make a work longer, do not use the name of things; but use other signifiers. Do not show a thing openly, but indicate it by small details. Do not let your discourse go directly to the thing, but circumscribe with long circling phrases that which you could say briefly. . . ." "Elaborate poetic ornament is thus equated not with "straight writing" (orthography) but with "circular writing" (circumscription). Alexander of Villedieu is even more explicitly geometrical in his definition of metaphor, which, he claims, combines the rectilinearity (rectitude) of proper speech with the curvature of a dislocated meaning:

Item dicitur quod figura sumitur hic ad similitudinem figure semicircularis super dyametrallem lineam vel rectam determinate disposite tali modo, quoniam, sicut in tali figura est aliquid rectum, sicut est dyametralis linea. . . . et aliquid est ibi oblicum, sicut est circumferentia cum semicirculo . . . sic est in omni sermone figurativo aliquid rectum, et hoc est intrinsecus respiciendo ad intellectum, et aliud oblicum, et hoc est extrinsecus respiciendo ad vocem vel ad primum contextum dictionum vel ad primam significationem. [*Notices*, p. 460]

Likewise a figure is said to have a dual likeness here, that of a semicircular figure over a diagonal or straight line, arranged in such a way since, as in this figure, the diagonal line corresponds to the straight part, and the circumference with the semicircle corresponds to the curved part there . . . so in all figurative speech there is a straight part which is seen to lie within when one looks toward the basic meaning, and there is a curved part which is seen to lie outside when one looks toward the sound or the primary context of the words or their initial signification.

Alexander's highly geometric comparison assumes the mind's ability to judge independently (intrinsically) a straight or literal meaning, and it takes for granted the deviation (extrinsic) of the voiced expression from its original sense (*primam significationem*). But, more important, it accounts for figural speech as a semicircle superimposed upon a diagonal straight line. The Janus-faced trope seems both to respect and to transgress the linearity of its own origin. As Albert of Monte Cassino specifies, metaphor is a means of speech turned away from property in such a way as to innovate: ". . . est metaphora modum locutionis a proprietate sui quasi detorquere, detorquendo quadammodo innovare. . . ." ⁵⁹

"Easy Verse"

The *trobar clus* offers the most striking example of a radical break with all that we associate with early medieval grammar, and, in particular, with the notion of linguistic property. Such a departure is achieved through a spatially conceived translocation, a temporally conceived denial of origins, and a distortion of the geometrically conceived linear attachment of words to things. In this, however, the "difficult" Provençal lyric represents only one aspect of a broader pattern of disruption that is also evident in poetry of the "open" or "light" style. And if the *trobar clus* produces an obfuscation of sense through the interruption of intelligibility, the poet of "easy verse" achieves a similar effect through an insistence upon contradictory clear meanings. What the *trobar leu* repeatedly presents, in fact, are spatially organized paradigms of feeling between which the poet oscillates because of the impossibility of progression. The "easy" love song exists as a static map of conflicting images, emotions, and states held in constant tension with each other, but without the prospect of resolution. The numerous individual poems that often seem

indistinguishable because of the homogeneity of self-canceling opposites function according to a rhetoric of contradiction: joy/pain, good/evil, life/death, laughter/tears, sweetness/bitterness, consolation/anguish, hope/despair, rest/movement, sanity/insanity, wisdom/folly, gain/loss, sleep/waking, courage/timidity (cowardice), strength/weakness, freedom/enslavement, intelligence/stupidity, sight/blindness, silence/speech, right/wrong, abundance/dearth, wealth/poverty, etc.

It would, of course, be impossible within the confines of the present study to analyze adequately each of the above contradictory clusters. I am not even sure that such an analysis would prove useful, consisting as it would of little more than a catalogue of polarities. Nor does it seem more feasible to attempt to treat a large number of individual texts each of which participates only partially in the poetics of opposition; such an endeavor poses the prospect of mere summary next to the already unsatisfactory possibility of concordance. What I propose instead is a close look at one lyric by the master of contradiction, Bernard de Ventadorn, for whom the type of vacillation of which we are speaking is so persistent as to render the choice of *canço* almost arbitrary (see Appendix A for translation):

I
En cossirer et en esmai
sui d'un' amor que · m lass' e · m te,
que tan no vau ni sai ni lai
qu'ilh ades no · m tenh' en so fre,
c'aras m'a dat cor e talen
qu'eu enqueses si podia
tal que se · l reis l'enqueria
auria faih gran ardimen.

II
Ai las, chaitius, e que · m farai
ni cal cosselh penrai de me?
Qu'ela no sap lo mal qu'eu trai
ni eu no · lh aus clamar merce.
Fol nesci, ben as pauc de sen,
qu'ela nonca t'amaría
per nom que per drudaria
c'ans no · t laisses levar al ven.

III
E doncs pois atressi · m morrai
dirai li l'afan que m'en ve?
Vers es c'ades lo li dirai—
no farai a la mia fe
si sabia c'a un tenen
en fos tot' Espanha mia;
mais volh morir de feunia
car anc me venc en pessamen.

IV
Ja per me no sabra qu'eu m'ai
ni autre no l'en dira re.
Amic no volh ad aquest plai,
ans perda Deu qui pro m'en te,
qu'eu no · n volh cozi ni paren;
que mout m'es grans cortezia
c'amors per midons m'aucia,
mais a leis non estara gen.

V
E doncs ela cal tort m'i fai
qu'ilh no sap, per que s'esdeve?
Deus devinar degra oimai
qu'eu mor per s'amor, et a que?
Al meu nesci chaptenemen
et a la gran vilania
per que · lh lenga m'entrelia
can eu denan leis me prezen.

VI
Negus jois al meu no s'eschai
can ma donna · m garda ni · m ve,
que · l seus bels douz semblans me vai
al cor, que m'adous' e · m reve.
E si · m durava lonjamen
sobre sainhz li juraria
qu'el mon mais nulhs jois no sia.
Mais al partir art et encen.

VII
Pois messatger no · lh trametrai
ni a me dire no · s covc,
negu cosselh de me no sai.
Mais d'una re me conort be:
ela sap letras et enten
et agrada · m qu'eu escria
los motz, e s'a leis plazia
legis los al meu sauvamen.

VIII
E s'a leis autre dols no · n pren,
per Deu e per merce · lh sia
que · l bel solatz que m'avía
no · m tolha ni · l seu parlar gen.⁶¹

Like many of Bernart's *cançons*, "En cossirer et en esmai" takes as its central axis the polarity of pain (II) and joy (VI).⁶² Within the confines of the negative and positive sensations, which frame the poem at beginning and end, stand a series of secondary oppositional pairs between which the poet oscillates freely and seemingly without end: for example, invisibility, "she does not know" (II) versus visibility, "No joy matches mine

when my lady looks at me or sees me" (VI); fear, "I dare not" (II), "great cowardice" (V) versus courage, "Yes, I shall tell her at once" (III); hesitation, "Yes, I shall . . . No, I shall not" (III) versus resolve, "She will never learn [it] from me" (IV) (and which is broken by the contradictory resolution of the end of VII); hope, "heart and desire to court" (I), "And if she stayed with me a long time" (VI) versus despair, "I take fire and burn" (VI), "I see no help for myself" (VII), "She will never love you" (II); despair versus consolation, "she knows and understands letters" (VII); communication, "It pleases me to write the words" (VII) versus silence or confusion, "foolish behavior and a great cowardice which binds my tongue" (V); kindness of the lady (VIII) versus her cruelty, "she does not know what wrong she does me" (V); and, finally, death, "I could die of chagrin" (III), "I am dying for her love" (V) versus resurrection, "her fair sweet image . . . refreshes me" (VI).⁶¹

The impact of such an accumulation of self-negating polarities is reinforced by the overall weakness of the *canço's* verbal system. Bernart draws heavily upon a series of verbs designating: mental or emotional state (perplex, confuse, burn, console, dare, love); perception or cognition (understand, realize, learn, look, see); communication (read, tell, request, swear, speak, write); possession (have, want). "En cossirer et en esmai" contains, however, no verbs expressive of strong action; and those that do signify events are as mildly actantial as possible (help, please, befall; the clusters bind, allow, confine, hold; give, take, send; enter, depart). The most operative verb by far is the copulative "to be," which only reinforces the static general effect. When added to the high density of passive constructions of which the poet is an object and the numerous reflexive forms, the overall impression is one of extreme stillness and fixity—a heightened awareness of the present ("now," "at once") on the part of a mind in dialogue with itself. Here lies the key to Bernart's *canço*, which presents the wholly internal struggle of a psyche so in conflict that all possibility of action is denied. The sole hint of resolution is, in fact, the poem itself ("It pleases me to write the words" [VII]), which, ironically, also stands both as a vehicle of seduction ("let her read them for my deliverance" [VII]) and as a sign of poetic closure.

The syntax of "En cossirer et en esmai" again confirms what its verbal system suggests. For not only does Bernart punctuate this drama of immobility with numerous questions, but the internal logic of his affirmative phrases adds to the pervasive atmosphere of passivity. Despite the presence of many logical terms (of hypothesis and condition), these remain wholly nominal, more descriptive than deductive. Sentences like "if she stayed with me a long time, I would swear . . ." (VI); "Since I will not send a messenger to her, and since for me to speak is not fitting, I see

no help for myself. But I console myself . . ." (VII); "if it pleases her, let her read them [my words] for my deliverance" (VII) all give the impression of logical coordination which, in fact, represents more a juxtaposition of surface phenomena than the reflection of logical process.⁶² The "sinces" and "but" are constative rather than causal; the "if" is symptomatic of temporal sequence and not of hypothesis.

Even more revealing than Bernart's pliant syntax, which again works to transform the poet into the object of an on-going course of mental events beyond his control, is the poem's strophic disposition. The order of strophes of "En cossirer et en esmai"—and this is essential—remains wholly arbitrary. The macrometric units of the *canço* are interchangeable. Just as there can be no resolution of permanently conflictual states, there is, with the exception of the poet's parting decision to commit himself to the words that we have just read, no progression. The final strophe only solicits a return to the beginning whose message has to do precisely with confinement and the impossibility of movement: "I am perplexed and confused about a love which binds me and confines me so that there is no place I can go . . ." (I).

Thus a poem of the *trobar leu* style like "En cossirer et en esmai" is in its own way as hermetically sealed as any of the so-called closed love lyrics. It is, however, shut off from that which is assumed to exist outside the text not by the disruption of signification, of intelligibility, but by the creation of a system of meaning that is purely contextual. Bernart's *canço* refers only indeterminately to the lady who is never named, to the ill-defined *amor* which tortures him, or to the vague fiascos of meeting and parting. We cannot say that the meaning of the poem depends upon the strength of such external references. Rather, it lies, if anywhere, in the interplay of the polarities discussed above and in the copresence of oppositional elements whose juxtaposition generates meaning. "En cossirer" can be said to signify only insofar as its key constituent terms—joy/pain, hope/despair, resolve/hesitation, courage/fear, etc.—consignify each other. The *trobar leu* does not effect a dislocation of the "vertical" bonds of language and meaning. It does not disrupt the proper but works instead to strip poetry of meaning by a "horizontal" textualizing of its traditional terms. The "easy" style takes as its point of departure not the "making of new words full of breaks" but the overconventionalizing of a familiar and limited vocabulary—words like *amor*, *cor*, *talen*, *merce*, *cortezia*, *jois*, *solatz* which, within the individual *canço*, are self-referential and serve, at their outer semantic limits, only to situate the poem within a broader intertextual spectrum of similar terms.

What this means is that the love lyric's self-contained system for the production of sense is, in effect, its deepest meaning. Poetic closure and

psychic closure work hand in hand to create a pervasive atmosphere of entrapment, which Bernart expresses so succinctly elsewhere: "The better off I am, the worse I feel" ("On melhs m'estai, et eu peihz trai").⁶⁵ The psychological "double bind" of "En cossirer" depends, finally, upon a series of contradictions whose most radical consequence is the freeing of language from reference. And the end point of such a detachment is an interpretative license—as Bernart says, "One can put the wrong interpretation on anything"—that breeds paranoia.⁶⁶

Garit m'agra si m'aucizes,
c'adoncs n'agra faih son voler;
mas eu no cre qu'ela fezes
re c'a me tornes a plazer.
Agra ·n esglai e penedera s'en?
ja no creirai no m'am cubertamen
mas cela s'en vas me per plan essai.⁶⁷

She would have cured me if she had killed me, for then she would have accomplished her will. But I do not believe that she would do anything that would bring me pleasure. Would she be afraid and would she repent of it? I shall never believe that she does not secretly love me, but she hides it from me simply to test me.

The passivity of the poetic personality is the logical outcome of a language suspended by contradiction. Trapped by its own inability ever to achieve unpolarized—proper—meaning, the singing voice remains incapable of knowing, and hence of acting within a universe in which song is the only form of action and even time is denied:

Lo tems vai e ven e vire
per jorns, per mes e per ans,
et eu, las, no ·n sai que dire,
c'ades es us mos talans.
Ades es us e no ·s muda,
c'una ·n volh e ·n ai volguda
don anc non aic jauzimen.⁶⁸

Time comes and goes returning through days, through months, and through years, and I, alas, know not what to say, for my longing is ever one. It is ever one and does not change, for I want and have wanted one woman, from whom I have never had joy.

Just as the order of strophes is irrelevant to the meaning of the *canço*, the succession of days, months, and years does nothing to change the poet's desire, which is coterminous with the regularity of his singing. Without origin or terminus, the love lyric begins and ends at random points along a uniform chronological—but only vaguely biographical—scale. Thus, the scrambling of time among the *trobar clus*—for example, Bernart Mar-

ti's "raising today until tomorrow"—finds its analogue in the homogenization of time on the part of the *trobar leu*.

If our analysis of the lyric has focused upon the South, it is because the appearance of Provençal verse roughly coincided with that of the earliest epics and because it demonstrates so explicitly the contrast between contemporaneous literary discourses. Such a choice is not intended to suggest that the problematics of language and love developed among the troubadours is geographically limited to the region of Languedoc and Poitou. On the contrary, practically all of the elements that we have traced with respect to the *canço* are also to be found in the *chansons* of the trouvères.⁶⁹ There is little need, in fact, to belabor the relation of the southern and northern lyric, which, when posed in general terms, tends to short-circuit history through poetics, and, when posed in terms of specific influence, tends to ignore poetics in favor of historical anecdote. More interesting are the questions of how they differ, of how their resemblance relates to the epic, and of how such a juxtaposition of concurrent poetic forms ties in to the broader issues of linguistics, poetics, and the family.

Where the love lyric of the troubadours and that of the trouvères resemble each other the least is in the consciousness among the southern poets of the process of verse-making itself. The explicitness with which the *trobar clus* in particular speculates about the relation between language and poetry seems lacking in the North. Where they are most similar, however, is in a common opposition to all that we have associated with the Old French *chanson de geste*. Both the "open" and "closed" styles, both the troubadours and the trouvères are united in their subversion of the representational, narrative, historical, originary, genealogical—and essentially aristocratic—discourse of the epic.

The radicalness of the *trobar clus* lies in a refusal of linguistic property which also posits the possibility of an alienation of the real property specific to nobility. Here there is no more telling document than the debate between Raimbaut d'Aurenga and Girart de Bornelh over the relative merits of "closed" and "open" verse:

Giraut, sol que ·l miels appareil
E ·l dig'ades e ·l trag'enan.
Mi non cal sitot non s'espan,
C'anc granz viutaz
Non fon denhtatz;
Per so prez'om mais aur que sal,
E de tot chant es atretal.

Lingnaura, fort de bon conseil
Es fis amans contrarian!

E pero si·m val mais d'affan
 Mos sos levatz,
 C'us enraumatz
 Lo·m deissazec e·l diga mal!
 Que no·l deing ad home sesal.⁷⁰

Giraut, only provided that I prepare what's best, express it there and then, and bring it forth, I'm not concerned if it's not spread far and wide, for a thing of great cheapness was never a dainty morsel; that's why one prizes gold more than salt, and with any song it's just the same.

Lignaura, of right good advice is the argumentative noble lover! And yet if my piping tune costs me any more effort, then let some croaker garble and sing it badly! for I deem it not fit for a man of property.

In this *tenso* dominated by the parallel closed economies of price and poetic expression, Girart uses the word "sesal" to designate property. Moreover, he grasps the bivalent significance of such a term and the consequences of its transgression. The interruption of meaning through "garbling" and the interruption of real property (and, by extension, of lineage) are equated. As Girart affirms, the difficult lyric associated elsewhere with bastardy and disinheritance is, in its disruptive disregard for linguistic property, ill-suited for men of noble birth.

We will have occasion later to return to the relationship in this period between real property and the advent of an economy of exchange (see below, pp. 161–170). Let it suffice for the present merely to signal the close connection between the nominalizing lyric based upon a never-ending series of metaphoric substitutions and the type of conversion implicit to money, or metaphoric property. The word *translatio*, as M. Shell has pointed out, can be applied both linguistically to the act of translation or economically to that of exchange.⁷¹ Geoffrey of Vinsauf sums up the metaphoric potential of words by the term *convertibilitas*, their potential for semantic conversion. And Albert of Monte Cassino, in a passage already quoted in part (see above, p. 119), adds to the resonances of dislocation and innovation attached to metaphor those of price and sale:

Suum autem est metaphorae modum locutionis a proprietate sui quasi detorquere, detorquando quadammodo innovare, innovando quasi nuptiali amictu tegere, tegendo quasi praecio dignitatis vendere.⁷²

However, it is the function of metaphor to twist, so to speak, its mode of speech from its property; by twisting, to make some innovation; by innovating, to clothe, as it were, in nuptial garb; and by clothing, to sell, apparently, at a decent price.

There can be little doubt that the love lyric, "the making of words full of breaks," represents a disjunction of the linguistic property that we have associated both with the epic and with early medieval grammar. Nor can

such a disengagement of words from their conventional and proper meaning be separated from the disruption that the reintroduction of money within the circuit of human affairs represented for the great lineages, the "men of property," of twelfth-century France. The social, economic, linguistic, philosophical, and theological dimensions of that disruption, which thus far we have read only through poetry, constitute the subject of the chapters which follow.

the facility), to follow our wont of imitating the concern of the Stoics about the etymologies of words as a key to easier understanding of their meanings" (*Metalogicon*, p. 22).

94. E. Faral, *Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1971), p. 136.

95. Interestingly enough, Augustine finds the letter "V" to be consonant with harshness and violence, offering the examples *violenta*, *vomis*, *vincere* (*De Origine Verbi*, PL, 32: col. 1413). Though Migne attributes this text to Augustine, its authorship has been contested. The arbitrariness of conflicting certainties makes it clear that etymology as an intellectual strategy is more important than specific etymologies.

96. Hildebert, PL, 171: col. 1274; Marbod writes:

"Nomen commendat res nomine significata.
Ergo debemus naturam quaerere rerum,
Ex quo possimus de nomine cernere verum."

"The thing marked by the name prescribes the name.
Therefore we should seek out the nature of things,
For as a result we may discern the truth about the name."

[Ibid., col. 1671]

97. See Curtius, *European Literature*, p. 498.

98. *Leys D'Amors*, 2:29.

99. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, p. 23.

100. "Quid ultra provehar? Quidquid aliud annumerari potest, aut similitudine rerum et sonorum, aut similitudine rerum ipsarum, aut vicinitate, aut contrario, contineri videbis originem verbi, quam prosequi non quidem ultra soni similitudinem possumus. . . ." ["Of what use continuing? All that one can add would show in the principles of resemblance, proximity, or contrariety of things that origin of words which we cannot pursue beyond the resemblance of the sound to things. . . ."] (Augustine, *De Origine Verbi*, in PL 32: col. 1413).

101. Augustine, *De Doctrina*, p. 244.

102. Ibid., p. 258.

103. Jerome, *Hebraicae Quaestiones*, p. 1.

104. The most interesting contemporary treatment of the relationship between language and paternity is to be found in the work of J. Derrida; see especially *De la Grammatologie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967) and "La Pharmacie de Platon," *Tel Quel* 32 (1968): 3–48; and 33 (1968): 18–59. See also J. Pépin, "L'herméneutique ancienne: Les mots et les idées," *Poétique* 23 (1975): 291–300.

105. Cited in Pépin, "L'herméneutique ancienne," p. 298.

106. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. E. Capps and T. E. Page (London: Heinemann, 1926), 2:22.

107. *Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam*, PL, 112: col. 1083.

108. "Quia ergo nihil creari posset siue ante tempora, quod quidem non est creatori coaeternum, siue ab exordio temporum siue in aliquo tempore, cuius creandi ratio, si tamen ratio recte dicitur, non in Dei uerbo patri coaeterno coaeterna uita uiueret, propterea scriptura, priusquam insinuet unamquamque creaturam, ex ordine, quo conditam dicit, respicit ad Dei uerbum. . . ." ["Nothing then could be created which, if before time is not coeternal with the Creator, or if at the beginning of time or at some time, does not base the reason for its creation—if the term 'reason' is not used improperly—in the partaking of a life coeternal in the Word of God coeternal to the Father. This is why Scripture, before enumerating each creature in the order of its creation, refers to the Word of God. . . ."] (Augustine, *De Genesi*, 1:164).

109. See Colish, *Mirror of Language*, p. 52.

110. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, p. 456.

111. "Appetunt tamen omnes quamdam similitudinem in significando, ut ipsa signa, in quantum possunt, rebus quae significantur similia sint" (Augustine, *De Doctrina*, p. 300).

Chapter Two

1. G. Duby, *La Société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâconnaise* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1953), p. 137; and "Structures de parenté et noblesse dans la France du Nord aux XIe et XIIe siècles," in *Hommes et structures du moyen âge* (Paris: Mouton, 1973), p. 274. If, as the reader will note, I rely heavily upon Duby, it is because his studies of the medieval family are the most systematic and sustained to date.

2. Duby, *La Société*, p. 283.

3. G. Duby, "Lignage, noblesse et chevalerie au XIIe siècle dans la région mâconnaise: Une révision," in *Hommes et structures*, p. 416.

4. For Duby, see articles and books cited; P. Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe à la fin du XIe siècle* (Toulouse: Publications de l'Université de Toulouse, 1975); R. Fossier, *La Terre et les hommes en Picardie jusqu'à la fin du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Beatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1968); L. Génicot, *L'Economie namuroise au bas moyen âge* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1960); R. Hajdu, "Family and Feudal Ties in Poitou, 1110–1300," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 8 (1977): 117–139; D. Herlihy, "The Agrarian Revolution in Southern France and Italy, 801–1150," *Speculum* 33 (1958): 23–41; and "Land, Family, and Women in Continental Europe, 701–1200," *Traditio* 18 (1962): 89–120; L. Musset, "L'Aristocratie normande au XIe siècle," in *La Noblesse au moyen âge, Xe–XIe siècles: Essais à la mémoire de Robert Boutruche*, ed. P. Contamine (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1976), pp. 71–104.

5. I have developed elsewhere the thesis that the literary motif of the Wasteland is indeed related to such demographic dispersion. See "Wasteland and Round Table: The Historical Significance of Myths of Dearth and Plenty in Old French Romance," *New Literary History* 11 (1979–1980): 253–276.

6. See M. Bloch, *Feudal Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964): 2:194–197; Contamine, *La Noblesse*, p. 21; Duby, *Mâcon*, pp. 187, 243, 267, 436; Fossier, *Picardie*, pp. 518–551; P. Ourliac and J. de Malafosse, *Droit romain et ancien droit: les biens* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), p. 140.

7. The best discussion of such impediments is still that of A. Esmein, *Le Mariage en droit canonique* (Paris: Sirey, 1929), 1:236–348.

8. "Il souloit estre que l'en se venjoit par droit de guerre dusques ou setisme degré de lignage et ce n'estoit pas merueille ou tans de lors, car devant le setisme degré ne se pouoit feré mariages. Mes aussi comme il est raprochié que mariages se puet feré puis que li quars degré de lignage soit passés, aussi ne se doit on pas prendre pour guerre a persone qui soit plus loingtiene du lignage que ou quart degré. . . ." ["It used to be that one could resort rightfully to vengeance beyond the seventh degree of kinship, and this was not surprising in those days since one could not marry within the seventh degree. But since it now has been ruled that marriage can occur beyond the fourth degree, one should not take on the wars of those more distantly related than the fourth degree. . . ."] (*Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, ed. A. Salmon [Paris: J. Picard, 1970], 2: 1686: 362).

9. See Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, p. 281; Duby, "Structures de parenté," p. 278; Fossier, *Picardie*, p. 535; Hajdu, "Poitou," p. 127.

10. Duby, "Structures de parenté," p. 283.

11. See Duby, *Mâcon*, p. 418; *Medieval Marriage* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 10–12; and “Les ‘Jeunes’ dans la société aristocratique dans la France du Nord-Ouest au XIII^e siècle,” in *Hommes et structures*, pp. 213–224.

12. Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, p. 281; Hajdu, “Poitou,” p. 123.

13. *The Grand Coutumier de Normandie*, for example, stipulates: “Sorores autem in hereditate patris nullam portionem debent reclamare versus fratres vel eorum heredes, sed maritagium possunt requirere” [“Sisters, however, can claim no part of their father’s inheritance against their brothers or their heirs; but they can claim the maritagium”] (ed. E.-J. Tardif [Rouen: Lestrigant, 1896], p. 83).

14. See Duby, *Medieval Marriage*, chap. 1; and *Mâcon*, p. 436; C. Donahue, “The Policy of Alexander the Third’s Consent Theory of Marriage,” *Proceedings from the Fourth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law* (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1976), pp. 256, 257; M. Sheehan, “Choice of Marriage Partner in the Middle Ages: Development and Application of a Theory of Marriage,” *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 1 (1978): 1–33; J. Turlan, “Recherches sur le mariage dans la pratique coutumière (XII^e-XIV^e siècles),” *Revue Historique du Droit Français et Etranger* 35 (1957): 477–528. Where the right of wardship was concerned, the *Grand Coutumier* reads as follows: “Si autem femina in custodia fuerit, cum ad annos nubiles venerit, per consilium et licenciam domini sui ad consilium et consensum amicorum suorum et consanguineorum et propinquorum, prout generis nobilitas et feodorum valor requisierint, debet maritari, et in contractu matrimonii debet ejus feodum a custodia liberari” [“But if the woman were in the custody of a guardian when she arrived at a marriageable age, the counsel and freedom of power of her guardian should be wedded to the advice and consent of her friends, blood relatives, and kin, as the nobility of her race and the strength of alliances demanded, and in the marriage contract her alliance should be freed from the guardianship”] (*Grand Coutumier*, p. 105).

15. See Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, pp. 268 ff.; Duby, *Mâcon*, p. 481; Fossier, *Picardie*, pp. 263 ff.; P. Ourliac and J. Malafosse, *Histoire du droit privé*, vol. 3, *Le Droit familial* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968).

16. [“Neither a fief of hauberk, nor fief of sergeantry which belongs to the seigneurie of the duke, nor barony shall be divided”] *Très Ancien Coutumier de Normandie*, ed. E.-J. Tardif (Rouen: Cagniard, 1881), p. 7.

17. *Les Etablissements de Saint Louis*, ed. P. Viollet (Paris: Renouard, 1881), 2: 36.

18. See Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, p. 281; Duby, *Mâcon*, pp. 268 ff.; and “Lignage, noblesse, et chevalerie,” p. 408; Ourliac and Malafosse, *Le Droit familial*, pp. 9, 25.

19. Beaumanoir, *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, 1: 494: 235.

20. See E. Le Roy Ladurie, “Family Structures and Inheritance Customs in Sixteenth Century France,” in *Family and Inheritance, Rural Society in Western Europe 1200–1800*, ed. J. Goody, J. Thiesk, and E. P. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 56; Ourliac and Malafosse, *Les Biens*, p. 26; *Le Droit familial*, pp. 37, 46.

21. See R. Aubenas, “La Famille dans l’ancienne Provence,” *Les Annales* 8 (1936): 523–541; Duby, *Mâcon*, p. 280; “Structures de parenté,” p. 270; and “Situation de la noblesse au début du XIII^e siècle,” in *Hommes et Structures*, p. 344; Hajdu, *Poitou*, p. 127; Herlihy, “The Agrarian Revolution,” p. 26.

22. [“The oldest knight shall have the fief of hauberk in its entirety”] *Très Ancien Coutumier*, 2:6; *Grand Coutumier*, p. 73.

23. Beaumanoir, *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, 1:464, 465: 223; [“A noble can only give

to his children, other than the first, a third of his inheritance”] (*Etablissements*, 2:19).

24. Ladurie, “Family Structures,” p. 56. Further evidence of this principle is contained in the fact that in the regions where lineage is strongest, Normandy in particular, property passes to the children whose father predeceases them before he inherits, a procedure known as “infinite representation.”

25. “Immobile autem dicimus possessionem que de loco in locum transvereri non potest, ut ager, pratium et omnes possessiones fundo terre inherentes” (*Grand Coutumier*, p. 209). See also Ourliac and Malafosse, *Les Biens*, p. 19.

26. Beaumanoir, *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, 1: 672, 678: 311.

27. See Ourliac and Malafosse, *Les Biens*, pp. 16, 413.

28. Beaumanoir, for example, specifies that one succession is sufficient to create a *propre*: “Chascuns doit savoir que quiconques acquiert eritages, si tost comme l’aqueste vient a ses oirs, ce devient leur propres eritages puis que l’aqueste descent un seul degré” [“Everyone should know that whoever acquires an inheritance, as soon as the acquisition comes to his heirs, that it becomes a proper of inheritance since it descends a single degree”] (*Coutumes de Beauvaisis*, 1: 505: 243). Beaumanoir’s prescription is also echoed in the adage “L’aquêt du père est le propre de l’enfant.”

29. *Etablissements*, 2:173, 129.

30. This paragraph is based primarily on Guerevič’s article “Représentations et attitudes à l’égard de la propriété pendant le haut moyen âge,” *Annales* 27 (1972): 523–547.

31. Cited in Guerevič, “Représentations,” p. 526.

32. For a discussion of the possible role of climate in demographic change, see G. Duby, *Guerriers et paysans. VII-XII^e siècle: Premier essor de l’économie européenne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), chap. 1.

33. See N. Denholm-Young, *History and Heraldry 1254 to 1310* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965); W. H. St. John Hope, *A Grammar of English Heraldry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953); C. Kephart, *Origins of Heraldry in Europe* (Washington, D. C.: National Genealogical Society, 1953); R. Mathieu, *Le Système héraldique français* (Paris: J. B. Janin, 1946).

34. “Au XII^e siècle, la conception familiale était résolument dynastique: on remontait vers ses ancêtres par les mâles, et lorsque, à la fin du siècle, l’usage des armoiries commença de se répandre, la symbolique héraldique s’organisa de manière à conserver le souvenir de l’origine agnatique commune dans les branches latérales dès que celles-ci se constituèrent en lignages indépendants” (G. Duby, “La Noblesse dans la France médiévale: Une enquête à poursuivre,” in *Hommes et structures*, p. 152).

35. G. Brault has written an excellent study of the blazon from a linguistic point of view: *Early Blazon: Heraldic Terminology in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries with Special Reference to Arthurian Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

36. Carolingian onomastics indicate dynastic and tribal preferences for certain names according to thematic variables (e.g., Sigfrid, son of Sigmund; Waldbert and Wolfbert, sons of Hrumbert; Amalafriidus, son of Hermanafriidus and Amalaberga); alliterative resonance (e.g., the Burgundian Kings Gibica, Godomarus, Gislaharius, Gundaharius, Gundevechus, Gundobadus); or the integral transfer of the name of a grandparent, uncle, or father. See K. Michaëlsson, *Études sur les noms de personne français* (Uppsala: Almqvist, 1927), p. 184.

37. D. Herlihy, for example, has demonstrated the relatively high percentage

of matronymics in use in southern France in the tenth through twelfth centuries (see "Land, Family and Women," pp. 93–95).

38. A. Giry, *Manuel de diplomatique* (Paris: Hachette, 1894), p. 360.
39. See Duby, "Structures de parenté," p. 273; A. Dauzat, *Les Noms de personne* (Paris: Delagrave, 1950), p. 37; Michaëlsson, *Etudes*, pp. 166, 174.
40. K. Schmid, "Heirat, Familienfolge, Geschlechterbewusstsein," in *Il Matrimonio nella società altomedievale* (Spoleto: Presso del Centro, 1977), pp. 103–137; and "De regia Stirpe Waiblingensium" Remarques sur la conscience de soi des Staufens," in *Famille et parenté dans l'occident médiéval* (Paris: Boccard, 1977), pp. 49–56; K. F. Werner, "Liens de parenté et noms de personne: un problème historique et méthodologique," in *Famille et parenté*, pp. 13–18, 25–34.
41. Musset, "L'Aristocratie normande," p. 95; Bonnassie, *Catalogne*, p. 285; Duby, *Mâcon*, p. 418; Fossier, *Picardie*, p. 545.
42. G. Duby, "Remarques sur la littérature généalogique en France aux XIe et XIIe siècles," in *Hommes et structures*, pp. 287–298; and "Structures de parenté," *ibid.*, pp. 266–285. Recent findings point to the fact that such genealogies were not as restricted to the North and West as Duby's work implies. See L. Génicot, *Les Généalogies* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975); B. Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Aubier, 1980), pp. 31–72.
43. Duby, "Structures de parenté," p. 283.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 281.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
46. We will have occasion later to return to the close connection between genealogical and narrative sequence (see below, pp. 96–108).
47. See R. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 92–120.
48. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia regum Britanniae*, ed. San-Marte (Halle: Eduard Anton, 1854), p. 18.
49. Wace, *Le Roman de Rou*, ed. A. J. Holden (Paris: A. and J. Picard, 1970), v, 304.
50. Benoît de Sainte Maure, *Chroniques des ducs de Normandie*, ed. C. Fahlin (Uppsala: Almqvist, 1967), v, 499.
51. *Ibid.*, v, 531.
52. See G. Duby, *Les Trois Ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).
53. See J. Corblet, "Etude iconographique sur l'arbre de Jesse," *Revue de l'Art Chrétien* 4 (1860): 49–61, 113–125; G. Ladner, "Medieval and Modern Understanding of Symbolism: A Comparison," *Speculum* 54 (1979): 223–256; E. Mâle, *L'Art Religieux en France* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1925), 4: 135–173; A. Watson, *The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934).
54. "Et egredietur uirga de radice Iesse, et flos de radice eius ascendet. Et requiescet super eum spiritus Domini. . . ." (Isa. 11:1–3).
55. Cited in Watson, *Early Iconography*, p. 69.
56. *Ibid.*
57. A. K. Porter, "Spain or Toulouse? and Other Questions," *Art Bulletin* 7 (1924): 15.

Chapter Three

1. *Girart de Vienne*, ed. W. Van Emden (Paris: A. and J. Picard, 1977), v, 8.
2. For a discussion of the term "geste," see K. Keuck, *Historia, Geschichte des Wortes und seiner Bedeutungen in der Antike und in den romanischen Sprachen* (Emsdetten: Heinrich and J. Lechte, 1934), pp. 47–55; W. Van Emden, "Contribution à

l'étude de l'évolution du mot 'geste' en ancien français," *Romania* 96 (1975): 105–122.

3. *Girart de Vienne*, v, 41.
4. See J. Frappier, *Les Chansons de geste du cycle de Guillaume d'Orange* (Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1955), 1:67.
5. MS B2, for example, contains the following indication: "ci apres comence li sieges de barbastre"; MS 24370, "Ici comence la bataille des Sagytaires et la mort d'Aymeri" (cited in Frappier, *ibid.*, p. 50). The only modern parallel to the *geste* of Monglane is the cycle of the Rougon-Macquart, but here the conceptual framework and mode of technical elaboration are so different as to render the comparison gratuitous.
6. See R. Bezzola, "De Roland à Raoul de Cambrai," in *Mélanges Hoepffner* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1949), pp. 195–213; W. C. Calin, *The Old French Epic of Revolt* (Geneva: Droz, 1961); P. Matarasso, *Recherches historiques et littéraires sur "Raoul de Cambrai"* (Paris: Nizet, 1962); and *Medieval French Literature and Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 70–104.
7. No survey of the connection between families of heroes and of poems would be complete without mention of two *minigestes* that function according to the same pattern as the larger cycles. The *Geste de Nanteuil*, e.g., includes the story of *Aye d'Avignon*, wife of Garnier de Nanteuil; *Gui de Nanteuil*, son of Aye and Garnier; *Parise la Duchesse*, Guy's sister. It also contained at one time the tale of the deeds of Doon de Nanteuil, another of the sons of Aye; but this work survives only in fragments. Finally, I mention in passing a group of epics known as the *Geste des Lorrains*, which chronicles the long series of wars between the families of Lorrain and Bordelais (*La Mort de Garin le Loherenc*, *Guibert de Mes*, *Hervois de Mes*, *Anséis de Mes*, *Yon*).
8. Cicero, *De Inventione*, ed. H. M. Hubbel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 54; see also the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. H. Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 24; H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (Munich: Max Hueber, 1960), 1:165–167.
9. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, ed. H. E. Butler (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 2.224.
10. Priscian, *De Praeexercitamentis Rhetoricis*, ed. H. Keil (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1961), p. 431.
11. Cited in E. Faral, *Les Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1971), p. 56.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
15. P. Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), p. 348.
16. Wace, *Le Roman de Rou*, ed. A. J. Holden (Paris: A. and J. Picard, 1970), vv. 43 ff.
17. *Ibid.*, v, 1.
18. ["The lady said: I cannot believe that they are not of high lineage"] Cited in Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Français*, 3: col. 618c; ["Ganor the Arab was of very high lineage"] *Aye d'Avignon*, ed. S. J. Borg (Geneva: Droz, 1967), v, 3279; ["Doz the venerable was of very great lineage"] cited in Godefroy, *Dictionnaire*, 3: col. 618c; ["In order to be victorious over those who are of the Devil's lineage"] cited in Tobler-Lommatsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, 3: col. 1404.
19. M. Parry, "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making, I: Homer and Homeric Style," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 41 (1930): 80. See also J. Rychner, *La Chanson de geste: essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs* (Geneva: Droz, 1955);

A. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (New York: Atheneum, 1965); S. Nichols, *Formulaic Diction and Thematic Composition in the Chanson de Roland*, *University of North Carolina Studies in Romance Languages and Literatures* 36 (1961); J. Duggan, *The Song of Roland: Formulaic Style and Poetic Craft* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

20. E. Vance, *Reading the Song of Roland* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 32; A. Parry, "The Language of Achilles," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 87 (1956): 3; E. Auerbach, "Roland against Ganelon," in *Mimesis*, trans. W. Trask (New York: Doubleday, 1957), pp. 83–107.

21. Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 92.

22. See J. Rychner, *L'Articulation des phrases narratives dans "La Mort Artu"* (Geneva: Droz, 1970); R. H. Bloch, "The Text as Inquest: Form and Function in the Pseudo-Map Cycle," *Mosaic* 8 (1975): 107–119.

23. See in particular Vance, *Reading Roland*, chap. 8; J. Halverson, "Ganelon's Trial," *Speculum* 42 (1967): 661–669.

24. This is not to imply that the family line remains free from deviation by marriage, the introduction of new members, or even illegitimacy, but that it stands, despite such obliquities, as a connected series.

25. K. Schmid, "Heirat, Familienfolge, Geschlechterbewusstsein," in *Il Matrimonio nella società altomedievale* (Spoleto: Presso del Centro, 1977), p. 128.

26. ["By my beard, if I ever see my noble sister Aude again, you will never lie in her arms"] *Roland*, v. 1719.

27. Trans. G. Brault.

28. ["At the baths at Aix the c . . . (?) are very large. There they baptized the Queen of Spain: They found for her the name Juliane"] *Roland*, v. 3984.

29. Trans. G. Brault; see n. 30 for interpretation of this last line.

30. Herein lies, I think, yet another meaning of the highly ambiguous last line of the poem ("Ci falt la geste que Tuoldus declinet"): "Here ends the poem because Tuoldus declines [is fatigued]"; "Here ends the cycle that Tuoldus declines [narrates]"; "Here ends the chronicle that Tuoldus portrays"; "Here breaks the narrative [geste] that Tuoldus recounts"; but also, "Here ends the family [geste] that Tuoldus delineates."

31. Two possible exceptions to this sweeping generalization are *Le Charroi de Nîmes* and *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*.

32. ["I think that the world will not last long according to what Scripture says, since now the son fails the father and the father the son in turn."]

33. "Car qui l'autrui con capusa
Lo sieu tramet al mazel,
E qui l'estraing vol sentir,
Lo sieu fai enleconir
E-l met en la comunaila."

[Marcabru, p. 205]

The following verses are also relevant:

"Moillerat, per saint Ylaire,
Son d'una foldat confraire,
Qu'entre'els es guerra moguda
Tals que cornutz fa cornuda,
E cogotz copatz copada,
Puois eis la coa de braire."

[Ibid., p. 20]

"Husbands by Saint Hilary share a common folly, for among them there has irrupted a war such that the one who wears horns makes his wife wear them; the cuckold cuckolded his wife, and then ends by braying."

"Maritz qui l'autrui con grata
Ben pot saber que-l sieu pescha
E mostra com hom li mescha,
Qu'ab eis lo sieu fust lo bata,
Et aura-n tort si s'en clama,
Car drech e raços deviza
Que qui car compra car ven,
Ar, segon la lei de Piza."

[Ibid., p. 45; see also p. 32]

"The husband who scratches the cunt of another should know that his own sins on her side and prepares an evil brew and a beating with her own stick. He would be wrong to complain because right and reason judge this way: that he who buys dearly must sell dearly, according to the law of Pisa."

34. "Eyssamens son domnas trichans
E sabon trichar e mentir
Per que fan los autrus enfans
Als maritz tener e noyrir";

[Ibid., p. 166]

35. "Mos alos es
En tal deves
Res mas ieu non s'en pot jauzir
De pluzors sens
Sui ples e prens
De cent colors per mieills chazuir,
Fog porti sai
Et aigua lai,
Ab que sai la flam' escantir."

[Ibid., p. 67]

36. *The Life and Works of the Troubadour Raimbaut d'Orange*, ed. W. T. Pattison (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1952), p. 75.

37. Ibid., p. 65.

38. Ibid., p. 191.

39. ["I mix words and I refine the melody, as the tongue is intertwined in a kiss"] *Les Poésies de Bernart Marti*, ed. E. Hoepffner (Paris: Champion, 1929), p. 11.

"Maritz que marit fai sufren
Deu tastar d'atretal sabor,
Que car deu comprar qui car ven;
E-l gelos met li guardador,
Pueys li laissa sa mólher pren
D'un girbaudo, filh de girbau."

[Ibid., p. 34]

"A husband who tricks a husband must taste the same sauce, for he who buys dearly must sell dearly; and the jealous one provides a guardian who later leaves his wife pregnant with a rogue, son of a rogue."

40. Ibid., p. 5.

41. "Lo dreyt torna daus l'envers" (ibid., p. 4).

42. Zumthor, *Essai*, p. 218.

43. J. Boutière and A.-H. Schutz, *Biographies des troubadours* (Paris: Nizet, 1964), p. 264; cited in U. Mölk, *Trobar Clus Trobar Leu* (Munich: Fink, 1968), p. 104; *Jongleurs et troubadours gascons*, ed. A. Jeanroy (Paris: Champion, 1957), p. 13.

44.
"Farai un vers de dreyt rien:
Non er de mi ni d'autra gen,
Non er d'amor ni de joven,
Ni de ren au,
Qu'enans fo trobatz en durmen
Sobre cheveu."

[William IX, p. 6]

"I will write a poem about nothing: It is not about me nor anyone else. It is not about love or youth, nor anything. It was composed while asleep upon my horse."

45. "He is held to be low-born who does not understand it [my verse] or who does not willingly learn it by heart; such a one who finds it to his taste will separate himself from love only with difficulty."

46. Peire d'Alvernha links such linguistic ambiguity directly to confusion or "puzzlement" in the household:

"C'a un tenen, ses mot borrel,
Deu de dir esser avinens;
Quar qui trassail de Mauri en Miro
Entre-l mieg fail—si no-s pren als ladriers!
Com del trebaill quecs motz fa-s messatgiers,
Qu'en devinail met l'auzir, de maiso."

"For in a straightforward fashion, without fill-up phrases, one should be pleasant in one's speech, since he who wavers between Mauri and Miro slips down in-between—unless he hangs on to the sides! As each word acts as a herald of the labor [behind it], so he turns listening into a puzzle for the whole household." [*Anthology of Troubadour Lyric Poetry*, ed. and trans. A. R. Press (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), p. 90]

47.
"Anc no li diz ni bat ni but,
Ni fer ni fust no ai mentaugut,
Mas sol aitan:
'Babariol, babariol,
Babarian.'"

[William IX, p. 10]

48. "Translatio est cum verbum in quendam rem transferetur ex alia re, quod propter similitudinem recte videbitur posse transferri" (*Ad Herennium*, p. 342); "Tropus est verbi vel sermonis a propria significatione in aliam cum virtute mutatio" (*Institutio Oratoria*, 3:300); Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. G. Combès and M. Farges (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1949), p. 258. See Lausberg, *Handbuch*, 1:285–291; J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 33.

49. H. Keil, *Grammatici Latini* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1961), 1:456.

50. Notker Labeo, *Ars Rhetorica*, ed. P. Piper (Freiburg, Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1882), p. 671.

51. Faral, *Arts poétiques*, p. 86.

52. D. M. Inguanez and H. M. Willard, *Alberici Casinensis Flores rhetorici*, in *Miscellanea Cassinese* 14 (1938): 38, 42; see also Mölk, *Trobar clus*, pp. 194–196.

53. See Mölk, *Trobar clus*, pp. 177–194; E. Köhler, *Trobadoryrik und höfischer Roman* (Berlin: Rütter and Loening, 1962), pp. 133–150.

54. Faral, *Arts poétiques*, pp. 221–245.

55. ["Do not always allow a word to reside in its proper place: for such a residence is a source of shame for the word in question; it should avoid its proper places and after travelling establish elsewhere a pleasing site on another's property; there it should be a new guest"] *Ibid.*, p. 220.

56. "Propria est quando voces in illo sensu proferuntur in quo prius sunt reperte, ut homines rident. Figurativa locutio est ubi voces de propria significatione ad aliam significationem transferuntur convenienter, ut pratar rident. Vitiosa est locutio ubi est translatio inconueniens, ut Neptunias lacunas" (*Notices*, p. 234; see also p. 83).

57. "Propria sunt verba, cum id significant, in quod primo denominata sunt; translata, cum alium natura intellectum alium loco praebent" (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 1:110).

58. This is not to deny that metaphor stands as a powerful tool for the recuperation of a higher truth as it is used especially in Biblical exegesis.

59. "Longius ut sit opus, ne ponas nomina rerum:
Pone notas alias; nec plane detege, sed rem
Innuce per notulas; nec sermo perambulet in re,
Sed rem circuiens longis ambagibus ambi
Quod breviter dicturus eras, et tempora tardes, . . ."

[Faral, *Arts poétiques*, p. 204]

What Geoffrey suggests as a principle of poetic elaboration is what Raimbaut d'Aurenga intends by "caulking" with words (see above, p. 112), and Peire d'Alvernha by "filling up of phrases" (see n. 46, p. 54).

60. Albert of Monte Cassino, *Flores rhetorici*, p. 45.

61. *The Songs of Bernart de Ventadorn*, ed. S. G. Nichols (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), p. 87.

62. See P. Bec, "La Douleur et son univers poétique chez Bernard de Ventadorn," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 9 (1968): 545–571; 12 (1969): 25–33; G. Lavis, *L'Expression de l'affectivité dans la poésie lyrique française du moyen âge (XIIe–XIIIe s.): étude sémantique et stylistique du réseau lexical joie-douleur* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1972).

63. Elsewhere Bernart affirms, ["a hundred times a day I die of sorrow, and I revive another hundred"] "cen vetz mor lo jorn de dolor/e reviu de joi autras cen" (*ibid.*, p. 132).

64. See Zumthor, *Essai*, p. 216.

65. Bernart de Ventadorn, *Songs*, p. 60.

66. "Mas totas res pot om en mal escrire" (*ibid.*, p. 72).

67. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

69. The Chatelain de Coucy, for example, speaks of a "tresdous mals," of "loial folie ou sage traison," of walking "mort vivant." He is torn by paradoxes of joy and suffering that would have been familiar to Bernart:

"Par mainte fois m'effroie
Amors et foit pensant,

Et sovent me rapaie
Et done cuer ioiant:
Ensi me fait vivre mesleement
D'ire et de ioie."

[*Die Lieder des Castellans von Coucy*, ed. F. Fath
(Heidelberg: Theodor Groos, 1888), p. 53]

"Many times love scares me and makes me pensive, and often repays me
and makes me joyful: Thus he makes me live ambiguously on pain and
joy"

Again, like Bernart, the poet is suspended between conflicting emotions:

"E ie sui, las, de che en tel balanche,
K'a mains iointes aor
Ma bele mort ou ma haute richor,
Ne sai lekel, s'en ai ioie et paor,
Si ke sovent cant la ou de cuer plor."

[*Ibid.*, p. 60]

"I am trapped in such a bind that, hands joined, I worship my sweet death
or my good fortune. I do not know which, since I have such joy and fear
that often I sing when my heart is full of tears."

The Chatelain de Coucy submits to a drama of uncertainty ("Ne ne sai, se vif ou
non, / Ou se i'ai tort ou raison, / ou se i'aim ou ch'est noiens" [*Ibid.*, p. 45]) that
breeds paranoia and passivity: "Je ne m'en sai vengier fors au plorer"; "Tant com
li plaist, me puet faire languir"; "Et quant mi mal li sont bel e plaisans, / Por ceu me
hac et sui mes mal vueillans" ["I can only venge myself through tears"; "As long
as it pleases her, she can make me languish"; "And to the degree that my hurt is
sweet and pleasant to her, she hates me for it and I am more conscious of my
wounds"'] (*ibid.*, pp. 55, 70, 59). The most thorough treatment of the "semiotics of
interruption" in the verse of a northern poet is to be found in P. Haidu's "Text and
History: The Semiosis of Twelfth-Century Lyric as Sociohistorical Phenomenon,"
Semiotica 33 (1981): 1–62.

70. Press, *Anthology*, p. 116 (editor's translation).

71. M. Shell, "Money and the Mind: The Economics of Translation in Goethe's *Faust*," *Modern Language Notes* 95 (1980): 515–562.

72. Albert of Monte Cassino, *Flores rhetorici*, p. 45.

Chapter Four

1. E. Köhler, "Zur Diskussion der Adelsfrage bei den Trobadors," in *Trobador-
lyrik und höfischer Roman* (Berlin: Rütter and Loening, 1962), pp. 115–132.

2. Andreas Capellanus, *De Amore*, ed. S. Battaglia (Rome: Perrella, 1947),
pp. 22, 42; see also Jean de Meun, *Rose*, vv. 18619, 18811, 18855.

3. Andreas, *De Amore*, pp. 24–176.

4. "Paubres e rics fai amdos d'un paratge"; "bel' e conhd", ab cors covinen, /
m'a faih ric ome de nien" (*The Songs of Bernart de Ventadorn*, ed. S. Nichols [Chapel
Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962], pp. 163, 81).

5. ["One doesn't love a lady for her lineage, but because she is beautiful and
courtly and wise. In time you will learn this truth"] *Chansons de Conon de Béthune*,
ed. A. Wallensköld (Helsingfors: Imprimerie Centrale de Helsingfors, 1891),
p. 243.

6. "Lo plus fi, ab qu'aya meyns proder: / Qu'on meyns er rix, mais vos o
graziria" (cited in U. Mölk, *Trobar clus Trobar leu* [Munich: Fink, 1968], p. 22).

7. *Sämtliche Lieder des Trobadors Giraut de Bornelh*, ed. A. Kolsen (Halle:
Niemeyer, 1910), 1:380.

8. "Virtute decet, non sanguine, niti: / Nobilitas animi sola est atque unica
virtus" (Falar, *Arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle* [Paris: Champion, 1971],
p. 116).

9. *Las Leys D'Amors*, ed. M. Gatién Arnoult (Toulouse: Bon et Privat, 1841),
3:20.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

12. We spoke earlier of a distinction between a mode of possession appropriate
to males (*l'immeuble, propre, real estate*) and to females (*les meubles, personal
property, chattel*) (see above, pp. 71–73). Here it seems that we also affirm an
affinity between the mobility of feminine property and the mobility of the dis-
course of the lyric. The quintessential form of mobile wealth is, of course, money,
which we associated at the end of the preceding chapter with metaphor. The
corresponding quintessential form of mobile literary language is the *canço* or
chanson. It is, moreover, in this sense that we ought to conceive of the courtly lyric
as feminine poetry and not because it is addressed to, speaks about, or idealizes
women.

13. I am indebted to A. Leupin's "Écriture naturelle et écriture hermaphrodite"
for the initial introduction of Alain to the present discussion (*Digraphe* 9 [1976]:
119–141); see also E. Vance, "Désir, rhétorique et texte," *Poétique* 42 (1980):
137–155; M.-R. Jung, *Études sur le poème allégorique en France au moyen âge* (Berne:
Francke, 1971), pp. 64–88; G. Raynaud de Lage, *Alain de Lille, poète du XIIe siècle*
(Montreal: Institut d'Études Médiévales, 1951).

14. "... Venerem ... collocavi, ut ipsa ... humani generis seriem indefessa
continuacione contexeret, ne Parcarum manibus intercisa discidii injurias sus-
tineret" (*De Planctu*, 2:470).

15. "Praeterea Cypridi mea indixit praeceptio, ut ipsa in suis constructionibus,
suppositiones appositionesque ordinarias observando, rem feminini sexus char-
actere praesignitam suppositionis destinaret officio; rem vero specificatam mas-
culini generis intersignis sede collocaret appositi. . . ." ["Furthermore, my com-
mand enjoined Cypris that, in her constructions, she have regard to the ordinary
rules for nouns and adjectives, and that she appoint that organ which is especially
marked with the peculiarity of the feminine sex to the office of noun, and that she
should put that organ characterized by the signs of the masculine sex in the seat of
the adjective"] (*ibid.*, p. 476).

16. "Dionae igitur duo dati sunt filii, discrepantia generis disparati, nascendi
leges dissimiles. . . . Hymenaeus namque uterinae fraternitatis mihi affinis con-
finio, . . . ex Venere sibi Cupidinem propagavit in filium. Antigamus vero,
scurrilis, ignobilitatis genere derivatus, adulterando cum Venere adulterinum
filium jocum sibi joculariorie parentavit" ["To Dione, then, were given two sons,
divided by difference in kind, unlike by law of their birth. . . . For Hymen, who is
related to me by the bond of brotherhood from the same mother, . . . sired from
Venus his son Cupid. But Antigamus, scurrilous and descended from a race of
ignobility, by his adultery with Venus has lightly become the father of an illegiti-
mate son Mirth"] (*ibid.*, p. 481). It is to be noted that linguistic theory and ethics
were implicated in each other throughout the period in question, grammar and
rhetoric being organized in terms of *virtutes* and *vitia*.

17. "... sed potius se grammaticis constructionibus destruens, dialecticis
conversionibus se invertens, rhetoricis coloribus decoloratis, suam artem in
figuram, figuramque in vitium transferebat" (*ibid.*, p. 480).