HENRI DE VALENCIENNES

THE LAY OF ARISTOTE

Edited and translated with introduction and notes
by

Leslie C. Brook

and

Glyn S. Burgess

Liverpool Online Series
Critical Editions of French Texts

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Critical Editions of French Texts

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Preface

If the number of surviving manuscripts of a medieval work is seen as crucial to its popularity, the lay of *Aristote*, with six manuscripts, appears to have been one of the most successful Old French lays. Of the thirty-five or so extant lays, including the twelve normally attributed to Marie de France, only the *Lai de l'Ombre*, with seven, has survived in more manuscripts than *Aristote* (the lays of *Mantel* and *Oiselet* are close rivals with five each).[1] In the modern era *Aristote* has also, with the exception of those attributed to Marie, been edited, adapted and translated more than any other lay. Another distinctive feature of *Aristote* is that the surviving versions differ considerably, both in content and in length: A has 473 lines, B 470 lines, D 518 lines, E 651 lines, F 661 lines and S 412 lines. Although based on D, the critical editions by Maurice Delbouille (1951) and Alain Corbellari (2003) provide a text of 579 lines and 581 lines respectively, as other manuscripts have been drawn upon where necessary (for full details of works cited, see the Bibliography). The present edition is based on S (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. fr. 1104). This version is by far the shortest of the six, but as yet, in spite of its interest, it has not been edited. This manuscript is of fundamental importance for a study of the Old French narrative lay as it contains twenty-four lays, considerably more than any other surviving manuscript. Our edition of *Aristote* forms part of a project to edit and translate a number of lays found in this manuscript, in order to contribute to the study of the content and the structure of the manuscript.[2]

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[1] We have not included here the nineteen manuscripts of the *Ovide moralisé* in which the lay of *Piramus et Tisbé* is part of a much more substantial work (this lay also survives in three manuscripts as an independent poem).

[2] See, in the Liverpool Online Series, Leslie C. Brook and Glyn S. Burgess, *Three Old French Narrative Lays: Trot, Lecheor, Nabaret* (1999) and *Doon and Tyolet: Two Old French Narrative Lays* (2005); see also Brook and Burgess, *French Arthurian Literature IV: Eleven Old French Narrative Lays* (2007) and *The Old French Lays of Ignaure, Oiselet and Amours* (2010).

Introduction

Manuscripts, editions, translations

The six surviving manuscripts of the lay of *Aristote* are: (i) A: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (hereafter BNF), fr. 837, f. 80v, co1. 1 – 83r, col. 1 (Francien, end of the thirteenth century; also contains four other lays, *Conseil*, *Mantel*, *Oiselet* and *Ombre*; facsimile in Henri Omont, *Fabliaux, dits et contes*, pp. 160–65); (ii) B: Paris, BNF, fr. 1593, f. 154r, col. 1 – 156v, col. 2 (Francien with some Lorraine characteristics, end of the thirteenth century; also contains *Oiselet* and *Ombre*); (iii) D: Paris, BNF, fr. 19152, f. 71v, col. 3 – 73v, col. 3 (Francien, beginning of the fourteenth century; also contains *Ombre*; facsimile in Edmond Faral, *Le Manuscrit 19152*); (iv) E: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 3516, f. 345r, col. 3 – 347r, col. 1 (Picard, second half of the thirteeenth century; also contains *Melion* and *Trot*); (v) F: Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque Municipale, 68, f. 341v, col. 1 – B^2v, col. 2 (fourteenth century); (vi) S: Paris, BNF, nouv. acq. fr. 1104, f. 69v, col. 1 – 72r, col. 2 (Francien with some Picard forms, end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century; also referred to by some scholars, e.g. Delbouille and Corbellari, as C). The six manuscripts can be divided into two groups: ABS and DEF (for further details concerning these manuscripts, see Delbouille, pp. 6–13, and Corbellari, ed., pp. 12–16, 35–40).

Aristote was first edited in 1756 by Étienne Barbazan in his *Fabliaux et contes des poëtes françois des XII, XIII, XIV et XX*^{es} *siécles* (I, pp. 155–78; edition based on AB). In the revised edition of this work, published in 1808 with the collaboration of Dominique-Martin Méon, *Aristote* is found in vol. 3, pp. 96–114. Until recently the authorship of *Aristote* was attributed to Henri d'Andeli and in 1880 it was edited by Alexandre Héron in his *Œuvres de Henri d'Andeli* (pp. 1–22; edition based on ABS). In 1883 Héron's edition was reprinted with minor modifications by Anatole de Montaiglon and Gaston Raynaud in vol. 5 of their *Recueil général et complet des fabliaux* (pp. 243–62, notes and variants, pp. 392–409). Héron also published *Aristote* alone in 1901, on this occasion basing his edition on E. There is a text of *Aristote*, interspersed with Modern French translations, in Jean Gillequin's *Choix de fabliaux* (1910, pp. 177–91). In 1951 Delbouille published a major critical edition, with a substantial introduction, which immediately became the standard edition of this lay. This edition is based on D, but after v. 490 it uses E and for the last six lines AB. In the following year Albert Pauphilet included in his *Poètes et romanciers du Moyen Age* a reprint of the Montaiglon and Raynaud edition (pp. 487–95).

In subsequent years a number of editors have included *Aristote* in their anthologies of fabliaux or lays: T.B.W. Reid (1958, pp. 70–82, notes pp. 115–19; an edition of D), Robert Harrison (1974, pp. 256–89; a reprint of Reid's edition), Raymond Eichmann and John DuVal (1984, pp. 94–117; edition based on A), Fernando Carmona (1986, pp. 78–109; a reprint of Delbouille's edition) and Geneviève and

René Métais (1994, pp. 194–202; a reprint of Montaiglon and Raynaud's text). In his unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Hull, 1979), David P. Smith followed in the footsteps of Héron and edited the complete works of Henri d'Andeli (*Aristote*, edited principally from E, is found on pp. 74–97). In the 1977 issue of *Romania* Smith had already published the interpolations made to this lay by the scribe of F (pp. 550–59). In 2003 Corbellari also edited what he calls the *dits* of Henri d'Andeli; his edition of *Aristote* (pp. 73–90, notes pp. 118–29) is based on D as far as v. 492, then on E until v. 575, with the final six lines (vv. 576–81) based on AB. Corbellari includes in this volume diplomatic editions of all six manuscripts (pp. 133–201). In 2005 Corbellari's edition was reprinted with minor modifications by Marco Infurna in the Biblioteca Medievale series.

The earliest of the numerous translations or adaptations of *Aristote* dates from 1774, when a verse adaptation under the title 'La Philosophie en défaut' was included by Barthélemy Imbert in his *Historiettes ou nouvelles en vers* (pp. 89–101); this adaptation was reprinted in 1785 in *Choix de fabliaux*, *mis en vers* (I, pp. 157–20). In 1779 Legrand d'Aussy provided a French prose adaptation in his *Fabliaux ou contes du XII^e^ et du XIII^e^ siècle* (I, pp. 197–204, notes pp. 204–11). This was reprinted in the second edition of this work published in 1781 (I, pp. 214–22, notes pp. 222–31) and also in the third edition of 1829 (I, pp. 273–79, notes pp. 279–86). Gregory Lewis Way's *Fabliaux or Tales*, published in 1800 and based on Legrand's collection, contains an English adaptation of *Aristote* (II, pp. 49–59, notes pp. 193–97). Way's adaptation was reprinted in the second edition of his work in 1815 (II, pp. 155–70, notes pp. 259–65). In more recent times, several scholars have included a translation of *Aristote* along with the edition of the text: Carmona (in Spanish prose, pp. 79–109), Eichmann and DuVal (a line-by-line translation into English, pp. 95–117), Harrison (a line-by-line translation into English, pp. 257–89), Infurna (a line-by-line translation into Italian) and Geneviève and René Métais (Modern French translation based on Montaiglon and Raynaud's text, pp. 194–202). In addition, translations without an accompanying text have been published in a number of languages, including Czech (Arne Novákovi, 1936, pp. 7–19), English (Robert Hellman and Richard O'Gorman, 1965, pp. 167–77, notes pp. 177–79; Stephen Nichols Jr, 1963, pp. 333–40), French (Robert Guiette, 1960, pp. 117–33; Pauphilet, *Contes du jongleur*, 1931, pp. 31–39; Gilbert Rouger, 1978, pp. 212–17, notes pp. 217–18), German (Wilhelm Hertz, 1886, with pagination varying according to edition; Ernst Tegethoff, 1925, pp. 161–64), Modern Occitan (Antonin Perbòsc, pp. 9–29) and Spanish (Ceferino Palencia Tubau, 1927, pp. 56–75).

Author, date

Aristote is one of the few lays, other than those by Marie de France, that have traditionally been attributed to a named author. When in 1746 the Comte de Caylus, who had discovered the lay in what is now known as MS D, presented it to the public in his 'Mémoire sur les fabliaux' (pp. 362–64), he did not name the author. Barbazan's edition of the poem ten years later also lacks an author's name. But when Legrand d'Aussy published his prose adaptation in 1779, he attributed the lay to Henri

d'Andeli.[1] This Henri is thought to have been a native of Andelys in Normandy and to have studied in Paris, where he composed several other works: the *Bataille des vins* (*c.* 1225), the *Dit du chancelier Philippe* (a funeral eulogy for the chancellor of Notre-Dame in Paris, who died in 1236) and the *Bataille des sept arts*, which deals with university disputes during the 1230s.

The version of *Aristote* found in S does not include an author's name. This is by no means surprising, as the only one given in the twenty-four lays in this manuscript is Jehan Renart, author of the *Lai de l'Ombre* (v. 953); even the nine lays normally attributed to Marie de France remain anonymous.[2] However, four of the remaining five manuscripts of *Aristote* (the exception is E) provide us with the name Henri. In Delbouille's edition the relevant passage reads: 'Henris ceste aventure fine, / Si dit et demonstre en la fin / C'on ne puet dessevrer cuer fin…' ('Henri concludes this tale, saying and demonstrating that one cannot separate a pure heart…', vv. 543–45).[3]

But how certain is it that the name Henri refers to Henri d'Andeli? Delbouille thought that there was scarcely any room for doubt (p. 30) and entitled his edition *Le Lai d'Aristote de Henri d'Andeli*. A mild query concerning the authorship is found in Alfred's Foulet's review of Delbouille's edition, but he seems to have been mainly concerned with the paucity of corroborating evidence provided by Delbouille for the traditional identification and merely required a little more detail in order to be convinced (p. 212). When Corbellari published his edition of *Aristote*, over fifty years after that of Delbouille, he included it in a volume entitled *Les Dits d'Henri d'Andeli*. But when editing *Aristote* he had started to nurture some doubts concerning the attribution of this lay to Henri d'Andeli, albeit stating that he would stick with the attribution to Henri d'Andeli 'faute d'arguments vraiment solides à lui opposer' (p. 10). He points out that *Aristote* not only lacks a Parisian setting and any references to specific places and contemporary events, a defining feature of Henri d'Andeli's work,

[1] Corbellari suggests that the first person to associate *Aristote* with the works of Henri d'Andeli could have been Lacurne de Saint-Palaye, or possibly the Marquis de Paulmy ('Un problème de paternité: le cas d'Henri d'Andeli', p. 54). In volume 3 of his *Essais historiques sur les bardes*, published in 1834, the Abbé Gervais de la Rue presents *Aristote*, which he calls a 'joli conte' (p. 33), as part of a section on the works of Henri d'Andeli (pp. 33–40).

[2] Marie's lays are also presented in S without the General Prologue and in an order that differs from that in H (London, British Library, Harley 978). Of the surviving narrative lays not found in S, *Cor* was composed by Robert Biket and *Ignaure* by an author named Renaut (probably Renaut de Bâgé); the remaining lays are anonymous.

[3] In Reid's edition of D these lines are vv. 512–14 and they constitute the final three lines of the text. But in his CFMA edition Corbellari uses D as his base manuscript, but only as far as v. 492, at which point he turns to E. As E does not name the author, he borrows the author's name from D and prints the passage beginning with the name Henri as his vv. 545–47.

but also that the style and spirit of the poem differ from those of Henri d'Andeli's other poems (pp. 20–22).[4]

Corbellari's doubts about the attribution to Henri d'Andeli led him to collaborate with François Zufferey. In the resulting joint article, entitled 'Un problème de paternité: le cas d'Henri d'Andeli', published in 2004, Corbellari expands his comments on the literary differences between *Aristote* and Henri d'Andeli's three undisputed *dits* (for example the author of *Aristote*'s 'prolixité verbale qui frôle la verbosité', p. 51), and Zufferey examines linguistic issues. Zufferey shows that *Aristote* was written in the Picard dialect, which is not the case with the three *dits* composed by Henri d'Andeli, who was a Norman. Zufferey's conclusion is that 'l'auteur du *Lai d'Aristote* qui se désigne lui-même comme Henri ne saurait se confondre avec l'Henri d'Andeli des *dits*' (p. 75). Although he wonders whether it might be best to regard the author of *Aristote* as unknown, Zufferey proposes a new name as a 'pure hypothèse': that of Henri de Valenciennes (pp. 76–78). This Henri is seemingly the author not only of two religious poems, the *Vie de saint Jean l'Évangéliste* and an unedited poem known as the *Jugement de Notre Seigneur* (surviving in four manuscripts and treating a number of religious themes), but also of a work entitled *Histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople*, which is considered to be a continuation of Geoffroi de Villehardouin's *Conquête de Constantinople*.[5] Zufferey pursues this matter in his article 'Henri de Valenciennes, auteur du *Lai d'Aristote* et de la *Vie de saint Jean l'Évangéliste*'.[6] He analyses the language, style and rhymes of the two texts and the conclusions he reaches confirm in his view the attribution of *Aristote* to Henri de Valenciennes. An 'hypothèse fragile', he states, has now become a 'certitude' (p. 348). For the purposes of the present edition we have accepted this attribution, but clearly further work needs to be done on this issue, a particular requirement being an edition of the *Jugement de Notre Seigneur*.

Henri de Valenciennes was born around the year 1170 and died about 1230. He seems to have been a clerk or a professional writer attached to the court of Count Baldwin IX of Flanders and VI of Hainaut. In 1202 Henri accompanied Baldwin on the Fourth Crusade, reaching Constantinople in 1204 and being present in May of that year at the coronation of Baldwin as the first emperor of the Latin empire of

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[4] In his French translation of the *dits* of Henri d'Andeli, published in the same year as the CFMA edition (2003), Corbellari also mentions his 'fugitifs doutes' concerning this attribution (p. 20). Only two years later, in his book entitled *La Voix des clercs*, he unequivocally attributes *Aristote* to Henri de Valenciennes (p. 35, p. 77, etc.).

[5]The *Histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople* was composed between 1210 and 1216. Originally an epic poem written in alexandrines, it survives in an unfinished prose version composed as a more or less immediate continuation to Villehardouin's chronicle. See Gaston Paris, 'Henri de Valenciennes', the introduction to Jean Longnon's edition of this work and also Longnon's articles, 'Le Chroniqueur Henri de Valenciennes' and 'Sur l'histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople'.

[6] See this article for the attribution of the *Vie de saint Jean l'Évangéliste* to Henri de Valenciennes (pp. 335–36) and for comments on the *Jugement de Nostre Seigneur* that are aimed at stimulating work on a new edition of this poem (pp. 351–53).

Constantinople. When Baldwin died in 1205, Henri de Valenciennes served his brother Henry (1177–1216), who became the second emperor. Zufferey considers it likely that Henri de Valenciennes returned home in 1209 in the company of Pierre de Douai and that shortly afterwards his *Histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople* was distributed within the courts of Flanders and Hainaut.[7]

The new attribution of the *Lai d'Aristote* to Henri de Valenciennes affects the dating of the poem. For Delbouille the lyric insertions help to date the poem to the period 'avant 1230 … et peut-être même avant 1225' (p. 30). This would place it after *Guillaume de Dole* (*c.* 1210) and around the same time as the *Roman de la Violette* (*c.* 1227–29), two texts containing similar lyric insertions to those found in *Aristote*. Corbellari, however, rejects Delbouille's reasoning and dates the poem to around 1235 (ed., p. 22). Zufferey, on the other hand, considering the lay to be by Henri de Valenciennes, places *Aristote* a good deal earlier. He sees the poem as having been composed around 1215, and for the same courts of Flanders and Hainaut as the *Histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople*. The *Vie de saint Jean l'Évangéliste* would have been written about ten years later, i.e. around 1225 (pp. 349–50; see also Westberg, ed., p. 71). The author of *Aristote* would thus be the first imitator of the 'farciture lyrique' initiated by Jehan Renart in *Guillaume de Dole* (Zufferey, p. 350; see below, pp. 30–33). We can note that Zufferey's dating for *Aristote* does not contradict Delbouille's suggestion of 'avant 1225', but his conclusion that *Aristote* grew out of Henri's memory of a tale he had heard in the East is mere speculation (pp. 349, 355–56). Therefore, the intriguing question remains: who, or what, would have prompted Henri de Valenciennes to compose this poem, with its humour and humiliation of such a well-known and well-respected figure as Aristotle, given the tenor of the other works attributed to him?[8] But we can say with confidence that Henri de Valenciennes was fully aware of contemporary literary genres. 'His literary style', writes Peter

[7] The *Vie de saint Jean l'Évangéliste* was edited in 1943 by Erik Westberg.

[8] The possibility of a link between Henri de Valenciennes and Jehan Renart is of interest. There can be no doubt that they were contemporaries. Nothing is known about Jehan's life, but it is agreed that his first romance, *L'Escoufle*, dates from around 1200 to 1202. It was dedicated to Baldwin VI, Count of Hainaut, before the latter set out on the Fourth Crusade in 1202. Baldwin was roughly the same age as Henri de Valenciennes (Henri was born *c.* 1170 and Baldwin was born in Valenciennes in 1171). As we have seen, Zufferey considers it likely that Henri was a clerk attached to Baldwin's court and that he followed him on the crusade (p. 348). If Zufferey is right in dating Jehan Renart's *Guillaume de Dole* to around 1210 (p. 349), this would be roughly the time when Henri was returning from the East after the crusade. It seems inconceivable that Henri would not have been aware of both of Jehan's romances, and they may well have known each other personally. Corbellari states that 'Jean Renart appartenait au même milieu littéraire hennuyer qu'Henri de Valenciennes' (*La Voix des clercs*, p. 98 n. 25). If it was composed around 1215, Henri's lay of *Aristote* could have inspired Jehan to write his own *Lai de l'Ombre*, which is normally dated to the period between 1217 and 1222, or the influence could have been the reverse if Jehan's lay was composed between 1202 and 1204, as has been suggested (see Adrian Tudor in the Alan Hindley and Brian J. Levy edition of the *Lai de l'Ombre,* pp. 8–9).

Noble, 'shows the influence of both courtly literature and romance' ('Henri de Valenciennes').[9]

Outline of the story

Alexander, King of Greece and Egypt, has recently conquered Greater India and taken up residence there. In spite of the military and political power he wields, he has succumbed to the power of love and encountered a maiden with whom he has become smitten. He spends so much time by her side that the members of his court grumble about it behind his back. Alexander's tutor Aristotle hears of their discontent and attempts to make him alter his behaviour. Aristotle argues that it is wrong to abandon all one's people for the sake of a single, foreign woman. In reply Alexander asks Aristotle how many women he should love and goes on to praise the concept of devotion to just one woman and to blame those who chide him for this, claiming that they lack love within themselves.

Aristotle's response is that it is shameful for him to spend his entire week in the company of his mistress and not to take his ease with his own men. He suggests to Alexander that he has gone blind and that his wits have become deranged, adding that he is acting like any beast in a meadow and therefore could be put out to pasture. He urges Alexander to mend his ways, as he is paying too high a price for his behaviour. Alexander heeds his advice and manages to keep away from his mistress for some time. But separation merely increases his desire, and even such feelings as shame and consternation cannot prevent him from returning to her. She expresses her surprise that a 'fin'amant' could refrain from seeing his beloved, so he tells her about the disquiet felt by his knights and barons because he was not spending more time with them. Crucially, he blames Aristotle for his temporary desertion of her. The maiden responds that she will turn the tables on Aristotle and bring it about that Alexander will be able to reprimand him for a worse affair. She tells Alexander to rise early the next day and to position himself at the window of his tower. Alexander replies with the first of the five lyric songs contained in the narrative.

The next morning, scantily clad and making the best use of her appearance, in particular her hair, the maiden frolics around the garden, raising her *chemise* and singing a love song. All this pleases the watching king and entices Aristotle away from his books. Aristotle realises that, in spite of his learning, if she draws near to him he will be powerless to resist his desire for her, as love has taken hold of him. The maiden continues her antics, making a garland of flowers for her hair and singing another song. Finally, singing a weaving song as she does so, she approaches Aristotle's window, and as she passes near to him he grabs her by the tunic. The maiden pretends not to know who has seized her and expresses disingenuous surprise when she discovers that it is Aristotle. When the latter declares his love for her, she claims that she will never blame him. She also pretends not to know who has embroiled her with the king. In order to enhance his attraction as a potential lover,

[9] Noble has also shown that the *Histoire de l'empereur Henri de Constantinople* was influenced by epic techniques ('L'Influence de l'épopée').

he offers to put things right for her with Alexander and begs her to come inside and allow him to satisfy his desire with her. With the aim of inflicting maximum humiliation on Aristotle, the maiden announces deceitfully that, before she indulges in any wanton behaviour with him, he must allow her to put a saddle on him and ride around the garden on his back, as she has conceived a strong wish for this. He accepts this willingly, and as she rides on him she sings a triumphant song in which she claims she is being carried by 'Master Fool'.

Alexander, who has seen the whole performance, comes to Aristotle and asks him if he has gone out of his mind. He reminds Aristotle of the criticism he had recently levelled at his own behaviour. Cleverly, Aristotle presents what has happened as proof that if he, as an old man, can be overcome by desire in this way, then it is no surprise that Alexander, in the prime of his youth, should be similarly afflicted. Aristotle admits to having performed an act of folly with the maiden and concludes that Alexander cannot escape from love without suffering the consequences or being blamed by his people. The narrative concludes with the comment that Aristotle has extricated himself very skilfully from his misdeed and that the maiden, for her part, has succeeded in her aims.

Structure

The text may be divided into the following episodes:

1–54	Prologue
55–139	Alexander is besotted by his Indian mistress; he is reprimanded by Aristotle
140–97	Alexander stays away from his mistress but soon returns to her; they discuss the situation
198–339	The maiden's strategies; Aristotle begs for her love
340–402	Aristotle rides on the maiden's back; discussion with Alexander
403–12	Epilogue

Apart from the Prologue and Epilogue (see below), each of the four sections identified consists of an account of a situation followed by a discussion between different pairs of protagonists: Alexander and Aristotle, Alexander and his mistress, Aristotle and the maiden, Alexander and Aristotle. There is thus an element of circularity in the narrative.

Prologue

In the S version of *Aristote* the prologue occupies 54 lines. As such, it is the longest prologue of the twenty-four lays preserved in this manuscript; the closest to it in length is the 52-line prologue to the *Lai de l'Ombre* and the 36-line prologue to

Tyolet.[10] The shortest of the six prologues is that found in E (37 lines), but the versions in D (59 lines) and in F (61 lines) are even longer than that in S.

The opening of the prologue is very conventional. Nothing, we are told, should prevent an author from using fine words ('biaus moz'); these words should be listened to as they are a source of both wisdom and courtliness. Clearly the author expects members of his audience to be interested in, even committed to, improving their understanding of the world in general and the courtly world in particular. Whether the author was a clerk or a *jongleur*, he was evidently making traditional statements to a traditional audience. It is right, he goes on to say, that good men should be happy to hear good things ('biens'). Whereas good men praise and repeat good things, such things make wicked men bad-tempered. Those who are so obsessed by envy, which lodges deep in their hearts, cannot bear to hear a good word said about anyone. The author calls such people evil, uncourtly and sinful ('Gent felenessee et pou cortoise', v. 20; 'Vos pechiez .II. foiz mortement', v. 24). In other words, such people reject all that society, the court and the Christian life stand for. So disturbed is the author by the slander that comes out of the mouths of these offenders that he makes his argument directly to them, asking them why they take their displeasure out on others and transfer to them their own wickedness. He calls these slanderers Ganelons and categorises their behaviour as cruel villainy ('crueus vilenie', v. 28).[11]

The author now turns his attention to his own aim of recounting an 'aventure' (v. 35). When he heard the subject-matter of this tale ('Quant j'en oi la reson oïe', v. 37), he was convinced that it deserved to be put into rhyme. So concerned, even obsessed, is the author with the concept of 'vilenie', which has presumably distressed him whenever he found it in the works of others, that he stresses that there will be no sign of it in his own tale. His version, he announces, will be 'sanz vilenie' (v. 40). In a passage of eleven lines (vv. 41–51) there are three further occurrences of the term 'vilenie' (vv. 41, 44, 47) and one of 'vilain' (v. 51). In courtly literature the term 'vilenie' usually refers to behaviour that is uncourtly, peasant-like, boorish or wicked. This may well be the case with the occurrence in v. 28 of *Aristote* ('Certes, c'est crueus vilenie'), but in general the emphasis in this prologue is more on the use of the term to convey uncourtly or obscene words. In v. 51 these 'vilains moz', which the author intends to shun, recall and contrast with the 'biaus moz' of the opening lines (vv. 1, 4), thereby emphasising that the author is mindful of his social responsibilities as a writer. At court, he states, only a courtly tale should be recounted: 'Car oevre ou vilenie cort / Ne doit estre contee a cort', vv. 41–42). In a courtly tale there should be no crudeness or bad taste.[12] Thus we see that there will be a strong social

[10] The 56-line General Prologue to the *Lais* of Marie de France is not found in S.

[11] On Ganelon, see the note to v. 30. The author's remarks on slander recall those of Marie de France, who asserts in the prologue to *Guigemar* that such people utter wicked words ('dïent vilenie') and act like vicious dogs (vv. 9–14).

[12] In the prologue to his *Lai de l'Ombre* Jehan Renart makes a similar comment: 'Quant ma cortoisie s'aoevre / A dire aucune plesant oevre / Ou il n'a rampone ne lait' ('When my courtliness strives to compose some pleasing work in which there is nothing coarse or offensive', vv. 9–11).

and didactic element in the forthcoming tale. Or is this prohibition against *vilenie* intended to be ironic, given that it is a prelude to a tale in which Aristotle would readily have had intercourse with his master's mistress, a pleasure for which he was entirely happy to sacrifice his dignity and even, since he becomes a beast of burden, his humanity?

Epilogue

In S the epilogue occupies thirteen lines. The opening lines are perhaps more of a conclusion than an epilogue, as they refer to the recent action, confirming that the maiden has had the upper hand in her endeavour to defeat and humiliate Aristotle (vv. 405–06). But Aristotle had not been totally cowed by the experience, as his final remarks to Alexander demonstrate. In fact, in the author's view he has emerged from events very commendably ('bel et gent', v. 403); at the end of the narrative, honours, if not quite even, have certainly been shared. The last six lines of the poem consist of two proverbs, separated by the confirmation that the poem is a lay ('Par cest lai vos di en la fin', v. 409) and a general comment on human behaviour. The first of the proverbs, neither of which is found in any of the other manuscripts, conveys the specific misogynistic message that 'to have no companion at all is better than to have a female companion'. This seems to be a modified version of the proverb found in Thomas's *Tristan*: 'It is better to have no companion than to have envy as a companion' ('Milz valt estre senz compainie / Que aveir compainun a envie', ed. Bartina Wind, Sneyd Fragment, vv. 761–62; see also vv. 769–70).[13] Henri's version of this proverb seems to be rather loosely attached to the narrative, which, even if it does castigate ill-advised relationships, undoubtedly intends more specifically to exalt the power of love and desire.

The second proverb, which begins with the common proverbial opening 'tel cuide…',[14] is of a more general nature, being one of many proverbs that suggest that human beings fail to understand themselves, or consider themselves to be morally superior; what people think is the case, states the proverb, turns out not to be so when a real test comes along. In *Aristote* the specific observation is that people who have a 'very pure heart' ('cuer molt fin', v. 410) and who think they know enough to be able to cope with every circumstance can get caught out by reality, which reveals their inadequacy. Targeted here no doubt is Aristotle, who, before events unfolded, would certainly have had every confidence that he could maintain control over his emotions, no matter what happened, and that his powers of reasoning would be sufficient to cope with any eventuality.

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[13] Proverb no. 1791 in Joseph Morawski's collection reads 'Qui a fame s'acompagne si a assez tançon' ('He who has a woman as his companion will quarrel a lot').

[14] Morawski lists sixty-six proverbs beginning with 'tel' (or variants), sixteen of which begin 'tel cuide …', and Elisabeth Schulze-Busacker has twenty-seven proverbs beginning with 'tel', two of which begin 'tel cuide …' (*Proverbes et expressions proverbiales',* pp. 309–17). Note also the use in v. 362 of the term *proverbe* and of the expression *prendre essemple de*.

If the reader of the version of the epilogue found in our edition turns to that printed in the editions by Delbouille and Corbellari, something of a surprise is in store. After v. 406 in S there are only six lines, but Delbouille (vv. 507–79) and Corbellari (vv. 509–81) print a further seventy-three lines of text. After their v. 490 and v. 492 respectively, they make extensive use of E and, for the last six lines, of AB. As is the case with S, part of these final lines could be said to be a conclusion rather than an epilogue, but the epilogue certainly occupies at least thirty-seven lines (Delbouille, vv. 543–79; Corbellari, vv. 545–81). The opening line of this epilogue provides the name of the author, Henri, and this line is followed by a general comment that one cannot sever a pure heart or deprive it of its will. The remaining lines in Delbouille and Corbellari consist of a lengthy diatribe on the nature of love, which has no equivalent in S.

Comparison between MS S and the other manuscripts of the lay

As we have seen, MS S, with 412 lines, has the shortest version of the six manuscripts that variously transmit the lay. Editions of the lay also vary in length, both because of the length of their base manuscript and because editors have tended to incorporate lines from other manuscripts, particularly for the ending.[15] The only readily accessible edition to concentrate on a single manuscript is that of Reid (1958), who edited D, a manuscript described by Corbellari as 'le moins mauvais' (ed., p. 37).[16] As far as v. 490 in Delbouille and v. 492 in Corbellari, the editions correspond reasonably closely to the text of D, with the occasional insertion of a reading from another manuscript. At this point D has reached v. 484, but S is still only at v. 397. It is therefore easy to spot from these editions the portions of text not found in S, whether it be the result of inadvertent omission or of deliberate pruning.

Comparing S mainly with the Reid edition, and leaving aside the odd couplet not found in S, we discover that the principal missing sections are: (i) fourteen lines following v. 65, developing the theme of largesse, praising Alexander and comparing him favourably with other princes, including those in the author's own times; (ii) sixteen lines following v. 101, expanding on the power exerted by love over both lovers; (iii) six lines following v. 139, in which Alexander promises to do what Aristotle wants; (iv) ten lines following v. 185, further emphasising Aristotle's intended discomfiture (see the note to v. 185); (v) four lines following v. 268, extending Aristotle's musing on the effects of love and desire; (vi) four lines following v. 357, continuing to describe the putting on of the saddle.[17] None of these extra lines add

[15] In MS S there are only 412 lines, as against 473 in MS A, 470 in MS B, 514 in MS D, 651 MS E and 611 in MS F. Among the principal modern editions of the poem, Delbouille prints a text of 579 lines and Corbellari one of 581 lines (Infurna's text is basically that of Corbellari).

[16] A was edited by Eichmann-DuVal (1984), but with a number of lines taken from other manuscripts. E was edited by Héron in 1901.

[17] On the other hand, what appears to be an omission of probably four lines in S after v. 28 rather makes nonsense of the lines that follow; see the note to v. 28.

anything of real significance to the narrative. In fact, it could be argued that S presents a tighter and less discursive narration than that of the D tradition. One intriguing line in S is v. 150 ('L'en fet tenir tant qu'a celi'), which appears to be a combination or telescoping of two lines from D: v. 189 ('L'en font estre son gré tenir') and v. 213 ('Puis s'en torna veoir celi', ed. Reid). Between these two lines are twenty-three lines containing a traditional, brief physical description of the beloved in Alexander's mind, coupled with a lament and some self-pity. Again, these lines arguably do not enhance the narration.

Looking at the differences between S and D from a different angle, vv. 192–97 in S consist of a song concerning Bele Erembours, sung by Alexander. In other manuscripts there is no mention of Bele Erembours and the words are not a song but simply an address by Alexander to his mistress. In vv. 221–28 the song is not identical to that in D (vv. 301–06), and the songs beginning at vv. 276 and 370 have one line less than their counterparts in D (for discussion of the lyric insertions in *Aristote*, see below, pp. 20–32). On the other hand, there are some lines in S that are absent from D: vv. 110–11, 255–56, 309–12, 374–75, 397–99.[18]

The real divergence between DS and the editions by Delbouille and Corbellari occurs in the closing lines. In place of vv. 485–514 in D, vv. 507–79 in Delbouille and vv. 508–81 in Corbellari, S has precisely six lines of conclusion. One result of this reduction is to deprive the text of S of the name of the supposed author, Henri, so that the compiler of S has effectively made the lay anonymous. This does not imply, however, that he was unaware of the tradition that attributed it to someone named Henri.[19] More importantly, however, there is a difference in the reaction in S to the events of the story compared with that in D and in the Delbouille and Corbellari editions. In D and these two editions, following the humiliation of Aristotle, Alexander laughingly forgives his tutor for his admonishing attitude, while Aristotle leaves him to act henceforth as he wishes. The author then quotes Cato's warning not to reprove others for something of which one is guilty oneself. However, he is also at some pains to excuse Aristotle for being in the irresistible grip of love. The argument is then widened in Delbouille and Corbellari, but not in D, to excuse all lovers, when even Aristotle, 'Ki fu maistre en tote scïence' ('Who was master of all knowledge', Corbellari, v. 572) was so afflicted. The poem ends with a statement adapted from Virgil: 'Veritez est, et je lo di, / Qu'Amors vaint tout et tot vaincra, / Tant com li siecles durera' ('It is true, and I say so, that love conquers

[18] Comparison between S and the other manuscripts is readily made thanks to the diplomatic editions of the six manuscripts in the Corbellari edition (pp. 133–201). Thus it is possible to trace where Corbellari has either borrowed lines from other manuscripts or deleted lines from D. Likewise the occurrence of portions of text in D, which are absent from S but found in other manuscripts, particularly in E and F, may also be seen. E and F both have lengthy additions, while the unique brevity of the conclusion of S, in comparison with the longer ones in the other manuscripts, is also apparent.

[19] One might also speculate whether the compiler was aware that nine of the poems in his manuscript were by the author who is now called Marie de France, even though he does not name her.

everything and will conquer everything, as long as the world lasts', Corbellari, ed., vv. 579–81).

Sources and analogues

All six manuscripts that transmit the lay of *Aristote* date from the late thirteenth or the early fourteenth century and this concentration in itself provides some indication of the popularity of the tale at that time. Exhaustive work on versions of the story beyond the lay was carried out by Delbouille for the introduction to his edition (pp. 35–61).[20] He identified five *exempla*[21] from the thirteenth century onwards that relate the story in Latin, together with two accounts in Middle High German (one by Ulrich von Eschenbach and an anonymous tale known as *Aristoteles und Fillis/Phyllis*) and a Flemish prose version.[22] In the *exempla* the girl is presented as Alexander's wife and she tells him the time and place of the promised ride on Aristotle's back before it is carried out; unlike the maiden in the lay she rides without a saddle (Delbouille, p. 39). In the German versions the girl is also Alexander's wife. In Ulrich von Eschenbach's account she is known as Candace and in the anonymous version as Fillis or Phyllis (MSS EF of *Aristote* call her Blancheflor).

The *exemplum* that has attracted most critical attention is that by Jacques de Vitry. It is thought to have been composed between 1229 and 1240 and was incorporated into his *Sermones feriales et communes*.[23] His account is introduced by two Biblical quotations that are intended to apply to Aristotle: (i) 'Qui se jungit fornicariis, erit nequam' ('The man who consorts with harlots is very reckless', Ecclesiasticus, 19.2); (ii) 'Modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpit' ('A little

[20] The Introduction to Infurna's recent edition also contains a discussion of sources, including some references to iconographic representations (pp. 11–15).

[21] An *exemplum* (Old French *essemple*, *essemplaire*) is a short cautionary tale or anecdote with a moral aimed at helping the reader/listener to have a better understanding of human behaviour or to lead a more Christian life. See Claude Bremond et al., *L'exemplum* (the second part is entitled 'Structure de l'*exemplum* chez Jacques de Vitry', pp. 109–43), Jean-Charles Payen, 'Lai, fabliau, *exemplum*, roman court', and Susan L. Smith, *The Power of Women*, pp. 66–67.

[22] Ulrich von Eschenbach's version occurs in book 10 of his *Alexandreis* (vv. 23415–528). On *Aristoteles und Fillis,* see George Sarton, 'Aristotle and Phyllis', and Sibylle Jeffries, 'The fabliau or Maere *Aristoteles und Phyllis*'. The Flemish prose version, printed by A. Borgeld (*Aristoteles en Phyllis*, pp. 24–25), is found in a biography of Alexander (see Delbouille, pp. 37–38).

[23] See Delbouille, pp. 39–40, for the relevant passage in Jacques de Vitry, which is quoted from J. Greven, *Die exempla aus den Sermones feriales et communes des Jakob von Vitry*, p. 15. The text of this passage is also cited with an English translation in Leigh A. Arrathoon, 'Jacques de Vitry', pp. 293–96, and by Infurna with an Italian translation (ed., pp. 104–07).

yeast leavens the batch of dough', I Corinthians, 5.6).[24] Jacques then relates that Aristotle advised Alexander not to spend so much time with his wife. Whereas in the lay there is no direct reference to Alexander's age before Aristote's final address to him (vv. 391–92), he is here described from the outset as a young man ('adhuc adolescentem'). Nor is there any reference in the *exemplum* to Alexander's conquests, or even to the fact that the story takes place in the East. The wife is referred to as 'regina' by reason of her marriage to Alexander (who is referred to as 'rex'), but there is no indication that she was of Indian nobility. When she learns that Aristotle was the cause of Alexander's change in behaviour, she resolves on revenge, parades herself in the garden in front of Aristotle's window in a lascivious manner ('lascivie'), with enticing eyes and words ('oculis ridentibus et verbis'), and raises her dress to display her legs ('vestes elevans atque tibias denudans'). When the besotted Aristotle begs for her love, she insists that on the following day, when her husband is asleep, he prove his affection by agreeing to let her ride on his back in the garden. Her husband is meanwhile alerted and told to watch. The ride takes place, with no mention of a saddle, whereupon an angry Alexander initially threatens to put Aristotle to death. The latter, however, makes the shrewd observation that, if a wise and learned old man like himself can be so ensnared in this manner, how much easier it is for a young man such as Alexander to be so. Alexander is then placated by these wise, cautionary words and he spares his tutor.[25]

Delbouille was of the opinion that Jacques de Vitry's tale was based on Henri's lay (pp. 52–53). Corbellari, on the other hand, has suggested that Jacques's text may have been the inspiration for the lay (ed., p. 30). If this is the case, Jacques's tale could have been the one mentioned by Henri, which he considered worthy of being retold in rhyme (our text vv. 34–39).[26] But if the author of the lay was Henri de Valenciennes, the dates of composition make it unlikely that he could have known Jacques's work when writing *Aristote*. In any event it appears likely that the tale of a woman riding on the back of a humiliated man (whether it be a sage, a minister or a sovereign) has Eastern, particularly Arabic, parallels (Delbouille, pp. 35, 53–54) and

[24] St Paul was seemingly indicating in this remark that the Corinthians should excommunicate any fornicators, in order to avoid being infected by them.

[25] For a detailed discussion of Jacques de Vitry's *exemplum*, see Smith, *The Power of Women*, pp. 75–81. As a preacher, Jacques uses the Aristotle story as a means of persuading listeners that women are a danger to men's souls, thus inducing them to regulate their conduct to that effect (Smith, p. 102). Barbara Nolan considers Jacques's *exemplum* as containing an 'unassailable scriptural teaching about unprincipled women' ('Promiscuous Fictions', p. 90). See also Arrathoon, 'Jacques de Vitry', pp. 296–301.

[26] In his Introduction Infurna points out that the legend was in any case already widely circulating in Europe from the early thirteenth century and that Jacques de Vitry's *exemplum* and Henri's could therefore have been formulated independently (p. 16).

also that the transfer of such a tale to the ridiculing of Aristotle was a purely thirteenth-century phenomenon.[27]

Aristotle first appears in French literature as one of Alexander's tutors in the twelfth-century *Roman d'Alexandre*, but there is no reference in the various versions of that work to the defaming story concerning him.[28] Aristotle's popularity and increasing influence in the schools of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have often been regarded as the inspiration for the story found in Henri's lay, as it could have grown out of the religious and political quarrels of the University of Paris in the first half of the thirteenth century (Delbouille, p. 58).[29] As we have seen, it became commonplace for those critics who considered Henri d'Andeli to be the author of the lay to associate the tale with Henri's links with the University of Paris (Delbouille, p. 38, Corbellari, ed., pp. 7–12, Infurna, p. 32). A direct influence is much less likely if the author was Henri de Valenciennes, but even authors not directly connected with the University of Paris would have known of the hostility to Aristotle's views that had been expressed by certain traditionalists, in spite of the admiration in which Aristotle was held by many philosophers of the time. As Delbouille points out (p. 20), the humbling and mocking of the great logician could have been inspired by this hostility.[30] If this is so, the intention behind this satirical portrayal of Aristotle and its

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[27] Joseph Bédier analysed a couple of Indian versions of the basic tale, both of which he found inferior to the lay of *Aristote*. He doubted whether they influenced the writing of the French tale (*Les Fabliaux*, pp. 170–77, 6th edn, pp. 204–12). For George Sarton too there is no literary link between Eastern tales and the thirteenth-century versions ('Aristotle and Phyllis'). The Oriental tales have also been studied by Borgeld, *Aristoteles en Phyllis*, and Joachim Storost, 'Zur Aristoteles-Sage', and '"Femme chevalchat Aristotte"'.

[28] Aristotle is first mentioned in Branche I. Alexander's father Philip summons 'devins et sages clers' to educate his son and the first to arrive is Aristotle ('Primes i est venus Aristotes d'Athaine', v. 273). Aristotle is also mentioned in other Old French romances (see Louis-Fernand Flutre, *Table des noms propres*, p. 20). For references in other texts (French, Italian, etc.) to the legend of Aristotle being ridden by Alexander's mistress, see, for example, Raffaele de Cesare, 'Di nuova sulla leggenda di Aristotele cavalcato', Cornelia Hermann, *Der 'gerittene Aristoteles'*, and Héron, 'La Légende d'Alexandre et d'Aristote'.

[29] It is interesting that Jean de Meun, who in the discourse of Faux Semblant mentions Guillaume de Saint-Amour and writes extensively, and with some passion, about his troubles with the University authorities and the influence of the mendicant orders in the University (*Roman de la Rose,* v. 11453ff.), does not allude to the humiliating story concerning Aristotle, although he doubtless knew of it (and he does quote from Aristotle on more than one occasion).

[30] Sarton takes a slightly different view of the transfer of the story to the personage of Aristotle. Pointing out that Aristotle was a 'pagan', he adds: 'His shameful failure illustrated not only the malicious power of women and the triumph of love, but the vanity of philosophy, especially of that philosophy which was as yet unredeemed by Christian grace' (p. 11).

effect are lost on the modern reader, who is more likely to feel some embarrassment on Aristotle's behalf. On the other hand, whoever was the author, we may more easily recognise fabliau-type anti-feminism implicit in the girl's scheming and the way she deploys her wiles. The warning against women is even more prominent in the *exempla*. In an anonymous text quoted by Delbouille (p. 41) the tale is introduced as an 'exemplum de caliditatibus mulierum' ('*exemplum* on the wantonness of women'), and it ends with a quotation from Ecclesiasticus, 9.2: 'Ne des mulieri potestatem anime tue, ne ingrediatur in virtute tua et confundaris' ('Do not give yourself to a woman so that she gains mastery over your strength').

The considerable popularity of the story later went beyond literature and the sermon, finding its way into iconography in some church sculptures, the carvings on ivory caskets, drawings and engravings, and even woodcuts (see below, n. 47).

Characters

In spite of its evident comic elements, the principal theme of *Aristote* is the conflict between the concepts of love or lust, on the one hand, and those of power and authority on the other. The story shows that through their attraction to a beautiful woman both a great king and a great scholar can be made to commit acts of folly.

The narrative is dominated by three personages: (i) King Alexander, (ii) his tutor Aristotle, (iii) the king's unnamed Indian mistress. At the outset Alexander has created a social and political crisis by neglecting his people in favour of a prolonged period of dalliance with his beloved ('he never left her side', v. 100). Hearing of the men's disquiet at this situation, which was expressed behind Alexander's back ('en derrere', v. 103), Aristotle steps in and ostensibly puts an end to the crisis by convincing Alexander that he has been behaving foolishly and persuading him to stay away from his mistress (vv. 140–44). But Alexander's resolve soon weakens and he returns to her arms (vv. 150–51), thus re-creating the crisis and demonstrating that the problem will be harder to resolve than Aristotle had envisaged.

At this point the narrative needs to be re-launched, but we still anticipate that Aristotle will sort out the problem and come up with the initiative that will bring Alexander to his senses and resolve the issue once and for all. But what if our expectations are thwarted and Aristotle's authority as a man of learning is undermined? And what if it is not Aristotle who hits on the decisive ploy? For we soon discover that, as in many fabliaux, it is a woman's ingenuity, in this case that of Alexander's mistress, that comes into play and provides the conclusion. The stratagem she employs involves two closely-linked elements: her powers of seduction, and the ability of love to turn a wise man into a fool.

(i) Alexander

Alexander is King of Greece and Egypt (vv. 55, 66). Drawing on the traditional image of this great king, the author describes him as a lordly figure ('qui tant fu sire',

v. 56) and a successful conqueror.[31] At the outset, he has fulfilled one of a king's fundamental duties by subjecting new territory, in this case Greater India (v. 67), to his will. As a military leader, he had been galvanised into action by his anger ('ire', v. 57), as a result of which he has debased and humiliated his enemy.[32] A reasonable assumption would be that he would now stop to reap the political and material rewards of this conquest and rejoice with his men. But, instead, he chooses a somewhat different form of reward: the opportunity to devote himself unrestrainedly to satisfying his sexual desire. Having conquered his military opponents, he in his turn has been conquered, by his new-found mistress. This leads him to spend the whole week ('tote entiere la semainne', v. 125) in her company, without any thought for the disconcerting effect this is having on both his followers and his reputation.

The paucity of details relating to Alexander in his role as king and conqueror and to the way in which he first encountered his beloved indicates that he is little

[31] By the time the lay of *Aristote* was composed, the figure of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) was already part of a complex romance tradition in French. This was based on the fourth-century Latin translation by Julius Valerius of the second-century Greek biography by Pseudo-Callisthenes. The oldest Old French poem, dating from *c.* 1130, was written in the Franco-Provençal dialect by Albéric de Pisançon, but only fifteen monorhymed laisses survive. An anonymous decasyllabic poem, dating from *c.* 1160, provides an account of Alexander's youth (*enfances*), and two further works, one by Lambert le Tort from Châteaudun and one anonymous, deal respectively with Alexander's adventures in the East and his death. A few years later Alexandre de Paris, from Bernay in Normandy, rewrote the earlier material in what came to be known as alexandrines. He included a work known as the *Fuerre de Gadres* that treats a raid on Gaza (this was originally written around 1155 by an author named Eustace). The complexity of the Alexander tradition is clearly visible in the six-volume edition by various editors, published by Princeton University Press between 1937 and 1976 (see Bibliography). The version by Alexandre de Paris has been translated into French by Laurence Harf-Lancner in the Lettres gothiques series (1994). A number of other episodic works concerning Alexander were also composed, e.g. Jehan le Nivelon, *La Venjance Alixandre*, and Gui de Cambrai, *Le Vengement Alexandre*. There is also an Anglo-Norman life of Alexander by Thomas of Kent, entitled *Le Roman de toute chevalerie* and probably composed between 1175 and 1185. For a detailed overview of the Alexander romances, see George Carey, *The Medieval Alexander*, Paul Meyer, *Alexandre le grand dans la littérature française du Moyen Age*, Martin Gosman, *La Légende d'Alexandre le grand* and Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas, *Les Romans d'Alexandre*.

[32] Gerd Althoff points out that royal anger was part of a king's 'rulership practice', and he adds that the 'ruler openly displayed anger when he decided to go to war' ('*Ira regis*: Prolegomena to a History of Royal Anger', p. 59, p. 62). Similarly, when writing about Arthur's battle with Mordred, Wace stresses the role of anger in Arthur's motivation: 'Par grant ire fud assemblee / E par grant ire fud justee; / Par grant ire fud l'ovre enprise' ('Everyone gathered together in great anger and in great anger was battle joined; in great anger was the undertaking begun', *Roman de Brut*, vv. 13255–57).

more than a convenient and famous name for a tale illustrating the havoc that can be caused by love in a man's life, even in that of a man of great fame. One might, however, have anticipated that the author would be critical of Alexander's failure to act in accordance with his responsibilities as king, yet he prefers to point out merely that Alexander's actions are guided by the principle of largesse, one of the fundamental feudal and courtly virtues and one for which Alexander was particularly renowned (vv. 60–65; see the note to v. 60). This unexpectedly positive view of Alexander's behaviour would seem to prefigure the author's evident pleasure when Alexander finally has things his own way and escapes condemnation for his actions. As the story unfolds, Alexander's role becomes largely that of spectator until at the end he addresses Aristotle, who has carried the maiden round the garden on his back (vv. 376–84). Although he had briefly been sensitive to the concepts of shame, calumny and consternation (*hontes*, *mesdiz, esmés*, v. 149), he clearly revels in the freedom eventually won for him by his mistress.

(ii) Aristotle

The theme of a leader's neglect of his men in favour of amorous dalliance, known as *recreantise*, entered French literature in Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide*, in which the two lovers involved are the eponymous hero and heroine. When in this narrative Erec's wife Enide lets slip that his men are unhappy that he has abandoned chivalric activity, Erec immediately reacts positively and with a determination to put matters right (vv. 2474–579). But in *Aristote* things are very different. A military leader's men, who grumble about the situation behind his back (vv. 102–03), are involved again, but this time the dalliance is with a mistress not a wife, and the news of the discontent is broken to the leader by his tutor, not by the lady involved. This turns a conflict between love and *chevalerie* (military and social duties) into one involving love, chivalry and *clergie* (erudition, learned argument; see vv. 121, 182).[33]

Aristotle is not just any tutor. The author describes him as the finest clerk in the world ('tot le meillor clerc du mont', v. 358) and as a man who knows everything appertaining to learning (vv. 120–21). In the domain of philosophy he is sharper than anyone else (vv. 260–61). He never ceases to learn (v. 264) and is fully aware of his own worth (v. 251). Well on in years (vv. 258, 391), he is grey-haired and pale-faced (vv. 176, 258). Everything would suggest, therefore, that Alexander would be no match for Aristotle in argument, but also that Aristotle himself would at no stage in the narrative take any interest in sexual matters, let alone be a rival for his master Alexander. Indeed, by way of confirmation of Aristotle's unsuitability as a sexual partner, the author informs us that he is ugly, swarthy and thin (v. 259).

[33] In this sense Henri's tale fits in with the contemporary debates in Latin and Old French between clerks and knights (see Edmond Faral, *Recherches*, pp. 191–303). One of the debates in Latin is entitled *Phillis et Flora* (Faral, pp. 192–209) and another *Blancheflour et Florence* (Faral, pp. 236–40, text, pp. 251–69). There can be no doubt that in real life knights were frequently in dispute with clerks concerning matters of love, marriage and sexuality.

When Aristotle remonstrates with the king, his initial argument is that he has got his priorities wrong; he has put the interests of society behind him (*metre ariere*, v. 107) in favour of 'une seule estrange fame' (v. 109). Alexander has no difficulty disposing of this point of view. Rather than admitting that he is in the wrong, he goes on the attack, asking Aristotle how many women he should love and questioning the ability of his detractors to understand the true nature of love (vv. 112–19). Aristotle is thus forced to think again, and ignoring this defence he opts for an argument based on a number of factors: the shameful nature of Alexander's actions, his blindness to his duties, the disturbance to his wits and the transformation of his heart (vv. 129–36). He also reprimands him, ironically as it turns out, for allowing himself to be led like a beast (vv. 131–32), adding that he is paying too high a price for his 'musage' ('idleness, time-wasting, dissipation, folly', v. 139; see the note to vv. 370–73) and urging him to restore 'mesure' ('common sense, moderation') to his life (v. 136). It would clearly have never entered Aristotle's head that he too could succumb to desire in a similar, or even more devastating, fashion. Little does he know that, thanks to the charms and ingenuity of Alexander's mistress, he will soon experience the power of love and that his heart will also suffer a radical transformation.

(iii) The maiden

At the beginning of the story Alexander has fallen in love with a maiden he had presumably encountered at some stage in his conquest of Greater India. In ABDS the maiden remains anonymous, but in E she is called Blanceflor (v. 275 in Héron's 1911 edition, and v. 283 in Corbellari, ed., p. 177) and in F Blancheflour (v. 280.1 in Corbellari).[34] We are given no details of her social standing, but it is usually assumed that she is a courtesan. No portrait of her is provided in S, but when she in the process of seducing Aristotle we are told that she is beautiful and smooth-skinned ('cor gent et poli', v. 339).[35] Her face has the look of a lily or a rose, and everything about her body is perfection (vv. 209–11). One of her special assets is her hair, which is thick, long, blonde and beautiful (vv. 216, 290) and helpful to the seduction process, as it enhances her beauty ('Si l'enbelist molt et amende', v. 214) and provides a focus of attention. As she approaches Aristotle's window the maiden, knowing all the tricks of seduction (vv. 283–84), places a chaplet on her 'biau chief' as an added attraction (v. 290; see the note to vv. 215–16). Another clever move is to take advantage of the balmy weather and use semi-nudity for erotic effect. As she frolics around the garden, she is clad in just her *chemise*, which she raises provocatively to further kindle Aristotle's interest in her (vv. 203–05, 218–19).[36] In addition, in an

[34] The girl is often called Phyllis by commentators, as this is the name she is given in the German tradition.

[35] More details of the maiden's appearance are provided in DEF (Delbouille, vv. 195–99, Corbellari, vv. 197–201).

[36] Marie de France states, presumably with the intention of enhancing the maiden's erotic appeal to him, that when Lanval first sees his future beloved she is wearing only her *chemise* ('En sa chemise senglement', v. 99). The *chemise* was an undershirt or

attempt to enchant Aristotle even more, as she disports herself she sings traditional songs in a low voice. The singing and the words of these songs combine to affect not only Aristotle but also the watching Alexander, who rejoices at what he hears and sees (vv. 220–33).

The maiden and Aristotle make an unlikely couple and this mismatch heightens the comic element in the narrative. The plot of the tale revolves around Aristotle's willingness to allow himself to suffer the ultimate indignity of acting as a beast of burden to satisfy what the maiden claims to be a sudden whim, in the hope that it will lead to the satisfaction of his lust. But by so doing, he actualises his own metaphorical criticism of Alexander for behaving like a beast. The erotic posture Aristotle is asked to assume is in reality a calculated ploy on the maiden's part to heap maximum humiliation upon him, thus resolving the crisis in favour of herself and her lover (see below, pp. 33–34). The ploy works and the poem ends as it began: even if he is now more aware of the tensions involved, Alexander will continue to love his mistress and to be blamed by his people. But it is interesting to note that the poet or scribe chose to conclude the narrative with a comment not about Alexander or Aristotle but about the maiden: she has successfully accomplished 'everything' she set out to do ('De trestot qanqu'ele empris a', v. 406).

Themes and images

The surviving narrative lays contain a number of recurring themes such as love, chivalry, war, hunting, love, marriage, religious elements, the supernatural and symbolic animals and objects (deer, boar, horses, nightingales, castles, forests, gardens, water, colours, etc.). In the case of *Aristote* there can be no doubt that the principal theme is love (unless one prefers to call it lust or desire). Love in this work can almost be considered as a fourth character, and there is certainly an element of personification present within the concept, thus raising the issue of whether to treat it as a concept (love) or as a god or goddess (Love). The emotions connected with love in the lay are also conveyed by the presence in the text of several courtly lyric poems, used here for non-courtly ends.

Aristote has no supernatural aspects and also few of the traditional objects that could be described as symbolic, an exception being the courtly garden setting with its flowers and fountain. The central image bequeathed by this narrative is the saddle (vv. 348, 355), which on this occasion is associated not with military activity but with lust and the sacrifice of a famous scholar's dignity.

(i) Love

Aristote can be viewed as a demonstration of the power of love, the maiden being the embodiment of its shameless, seductive force. Unlike either Alexander or Aristotle, she experiences no apparent conflict between her desires and other considerations.

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shift. Also in *Lanval*, as in *Aristote*, the lady's beauty is described in terms of the lily and the rose ('Flur de lis [e] rose nuvele', v. 94).

When love is mentioned for the first time, we are told that it has a victim: no less a person than King Alexander himself. Love has held him in such bondage ('en braie', v. 76; see the note to this line) that it has turned him into a 'fins amis' (v. 77), an expression presumably intended to emphasise the high quality of his passion and thus rid the reader/listener of any suspicion that he might be nothing more than a philanderer. Also at this stage in the story the poet tells us a little about love. It is said to take hold of (*prendre*) and embrace (*embracier*) its victims, and to seize (*aerdre*, Late Latin **herere*) and ensnare (*enlacier*) everything (vv. 74–75; see also vv. 264–65). Love is strong and powerful (v. 83), as illustrated by its ability to make even the most powerful man in the world humble and so obedient to its wishes that he cannot muster any strength to rebel against it (vv. 89–90, 268–70). Alexander is so brainwashed that he forgets the many in favour of the one ('s'oublie touz por autrui', v. 87), yet because of love's mastery over him he feels no guilt for what has happened ('il ne se repentoit mie', v. 78). Love is an absolute lord who exerts power over king and pauper, wherever they may be found (vv. 91–94). Later we are told that love's strength never fades (v. 179).

Initially, it takes the potency of Aristotle's learning and authority to prise Alexander away from the object of his desires, albeit temporarily (vv. 140–42). But this brief separation from his beloved serves merely to intensify Alexander's passion and he does not stay away from her for long. Then a new victim comes into the picture, no less a figure than Aristotle himself. The maiden, fortified by love (v. 180), sets out to ensure that there will be no repeat of Alexander's enforced absence, because, she claims, *fins amanz* are obliged to spend time with each other (vv. 157–58). From her perspective, there is no alternative: Aristotle, the cause of the problem, has to be targeted as an enemy and neutralised. The sight and sound of a beautiful, scantily-clad, *chanson*-singing maiden swiftly transform the learned philosopher into a fool and fill his head with amorous platitudes: love wants to become my guest, it has captured many worthy men, it is taking hold of me, it cannot be gainsaid (vv. 254–70). His only hope of defence is his honour ('honors le tient a hontage', v. 255), but even this is of no avail. Robbed of his wits (v. 253), and with a heart transformed by what he has glimpsed (v. 257), he is in no fit state to withstand what is about to happen to him.

As the maiden works her seductive magic on Aristotle, the theme of love is maintained through her songs ('Ci me tienent amoretes', vv. 276, 278; 'La vostre amor me tout solaz et ris', v. 304) and through the image of the carefully shot arrow, Love's traditional weapon of choice (vv. 285–86). The author predicts that Aristotle, intoxicated with desire ('il ert de volenté toz yvres', v. 241), will discover so much passion within himself that in due course he will want good, loyal love to be promoted rather than to be thwarted (vv. 238–41), and this comes true when he readily admits that a combination of Love and Nature has made any thoughts of separation from the object of his desire abhorrent to him (vv. 324–25). This statement opens up the way for the maiden to use his love for her ("'vos tant m'amez'", v. 327) for her own devious ends. She falsely proclaims her ignorance as to the author of her problem with the king ("'Ne sai qui m'a au roi mellee'", v. 330), to which Aristotle responds that he will sort all this out for her in return for the opportunity to satisfy his desires on her beautiful, smooth body (vv. 333–39).

Wanting his help but not his body, and realising that there is now little that Aristotle would not do for her, the maiden comes up with what she calls a very singular affair ('.i. molt divers afere', v. 342). In this way she produces the image that defines the lay: a saddled Aristotle on all fours with the maiden mounted on his back. The author confirms an observation that Aristotle had made earlier (v. 324), that the lethal combination of Love and Nature had transformed a 'sage' into a 'fol' (vv. 353–57).[37] Alexander, who has witnessed from the tower the sacrifice of Aristotle's dignity, soon rubs it in by taxing him with being out of his mind ('forsenez', v. 378) and devoid of reason (v. 383).

This is the first time that Alexander, his mistress and Aristotle have been together within the narrative. The denouement is clearly upon us. Aristotle's first reaction to Alexander's reprimand is one of shame ('Lors respondi honteusement', v. 387). He opens what Corbellari calls his attempt to 'justifier l'injustifiable' (*La Voix des clercs*, p. 96) by the clever ploy of stating that he had been right to be worried by the situation regarding Alexander and his desires. For if an old man like him cannot put up strong resistance to love (in v. 393 the expression *prendre estal* 'take a stand' is seemingly used in a military sense), then someone filled with youthful ardour such as Alexander stands no chance of doing so. Aristotle acknowledges that his love for the maiden has brought him to a sorry state (*torner a mal*, v. 393) and that Nature shares Love's ability to seize and devour its victims, stripping them of everything they have learned and inspiring acts of outright folly (vv. 395–400). His final conclusion is that Alexander cannot escape from his predicament; he will inevitably incur some form of loss or damage ('"Vos n'en pouez partir sanz perte"', v. 401) and not be able to escape blame entirely.[38]

One might expect that Alexander would respond to these remarks, but the author/scribe chose to give Aristotle the last word. The narrative concludes with the comments that Aristotle has extricated himself well from his misdeed ('meschief', v. 404) and that the maiden's efforts have been entirely successful (vv. 403–06). As we have seen, in the version contained in S only the six lines of the epilogue now separate us from the end of the text. We can infer from what Aristotle says that Alexander will continue to consort with his mistress, but not without a degree of awareness of the cost of his behaviour both to himself and his followers. There is no sign in this version of Alexander's good-humoured pardon of Aristotle ('en riant li rois li pardone', Delbouille, v. 512), or of the additional comment that, as far as his tutor is concerned, Alexander is free to pursue his desires because to hold him back would be unreasonable (Eichmann-DuVal, vv. 510–15; Reid, vv. 486–89; Delbouille, vv. 510–15; Corbellari, vv. 512–17).

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[37] In all there are five examples in this poem of the term Nature (vv. 208, 324, 353, 357, 396). On what he calls the maiden's 'connivence avec la nature', see Corbellari, *La Voix des clercs*, pp. 89–91.

[38] In the version of the denouement printed by Delbouille (vv. 493–98) and Corbellari (vv. 495–500), which is based on MS E, Aristotle adds an even more scathing remark about Nature: 'And if I wish then to strive to get you out of her [Nature's] prison, do not regard this as wrong, for I was well aware of the doubt, trouble and misery that comes from, and is set in motion by, Nature'.

(ii) Lyric insertions

The incorporation of songs into Old French texts dates from the early years of the thirteenth century. *Aristote* is, in fact, one of the earliest examples, but in all more than seventy works, in verse and in prose, containing such lyric insertions have survived (Maureen Boulton, *The Song in the Story*, p. 1). However, there is nothing similar in the other extant narrative lays. Based on what we are told about him, it can be assumed that when Aristotle sat down at his books ('sist a ses livres', v. 242), he would have considered himself to be invulnerable not only to the emotional influences that had affected his master Alexander but also to the words and music of popular songs. If so, he was underestimating the power of desire and the wiles of women. Having set her mind on vengeance, Alexander's mistress is determined to make use of all her personal assets, one of which is clearly an attractive voice. During the process of seduction and humiliation, she sings four songs (three *rondeaux* and a *chanson de toile*). Drawing on well-known lyrics, she is able to manipulate the words of the songs for her own ends, using them as weapons of deception and as a form of verbal actualisation of the various physical preparations she has made before launching her attack on her unsuspecting victim.[39]

The maiden's first song (vv. 221–28) is a dance song (*chanson de danse* or *chanson de carole*) and it is expressed throughout in the first person. It contains nine occurrences of the first-person present indicative ('Or la voi', etc.) and four examples of the first-person possessive adjective or pronoun ('m'amie … m'otroi', etc.). This lyric first-person usage (known as the lyric 'je') is clearly intended to be transferred from the maiden to her target Aristotle. As she comes into his line of vision, it is he who is invited to see the beautiful, blonde girl and to think of her as a potential 'amie', to whom he would wish to abandon himself (*otreier*, vv. 222, 228). The vision he sees before him in the garden is enhanced by the song's references to a fountain and flowers, thus transferring the garden, which Aristotle had no doubt seen many times, into a courtly *locus amœnus*, a place where liaisons can be formed and desires satisfied. The insistent 'I see her, I see her, I see her' (vv. 221–27 contain seven examples of the verb *veoir*) beckons Aristotle and urges him to move from the world of books to the world of the emotions. As Boulton remarks, this song 'announces in miniature the shape of the narrative' (p. 125).

The impact of both the song and the accompanying antics is instantaneous. It triggers in Aristotle a self-awareness, a realisation of how things could change. Corbellari terms his resulting speech (twenty-five lines in S) a 'monologue existentiel' (*La Voix des clercs*, p. 91). Having been convinced of his unparalleled scholarly distinction and his mastery over reason, Aristotle suddenly realises that he could easily become prey to folly, i.e. to irrational behaviour ('Tant de folie en mon cuer truis', v. 252), and fall headlong into the clutches of uncontrollable desire ('Puis

[39] In S, but not in the other surviving manuscripts, the scribe has left spaces between the lines of the songs, probably, as Nolan points out, intending that musical notion would be provided at some later stage ('Promiscuous Fictions', p. 88 n. 21).

qu'Amors me vait si prenant / Que je ne lui puis contredire', vv. 268–69).[40] Aristotle's clerkly language has suddenly become the language of *fin'amor*. From the perspective of Alexander's mistress, the groundwork has now been done and she is ready to pounce. Continuing to frolic, she begins to string flowers together to form a garland (the linked flowers no doubt symbolising, as Molly Lynde-Recchia points out, the chains of love that unite two lovers) and she sings another song (*Prose, Verse and Truth-Telling*, p. 102). This four-line song (D has a further line; see the note to v. 276) still has important first-person impact ('trop vos aim', v. 277; 'je tien ma main', v. 279), but this lyric is dominated by love ('amoretes', vv. 276, 278), i.e. by the maiden herself and by the hold love can exercise over its victim. The combined effect on Aristotle of the maiden's actions is tantalising in that he can see and hear her, but not touch her, as she is still too far away. At this stage, the author also devotes several lines to reminding us, somewhat unnecessarily, that she is play-acting and that her aim is deception (vv. 283–98).

Eventually the maiden approaches the window and launches into a weaving song. This time the characters in the song are ostensibly more clearly defined: a king's daughter and her lost lover, Count Gui (there is presumably a thematic link here to the maiden's current loss of Alexander). In the song the princess mourns her lover, and Aristotle, as Alexander's mistress intends, takes the lover to be a figure of himself, whereas, as Boulton states (p. 280), he is in fact closer to the jealous old man of tradition, whose role is to keep young lovers apart rather than to enjoy love himself. The garden setting of the song, with its idyllic spring, white pebbles and clear water, reinforces the garden setting of the seduction scene. Anne Ladd comments that 'for the courtesan, the song is an impersonal tool for creating her own world for her own purposes' ('Attitude towards Lyric', p. 198). Aristotle, who cannot tolerate this situation any longer, is now ready to take the all-important step, albeit an uncourtly one, of grabbing hold of the maiden as she passes by. But effectively she is now the one who has a firm grip on him. For him there is now no way out, as he is now, says the author, irredeemably captured ('pris … sanz point de rachat', v. 312). The time for barter has arrived. In return for her favours, he must put things right for her with Alexander. But meanwhile there is an extra price for him to pay; he has to play horse and let her ride him round the garden. Knowing that Alexander is watching, the malicious maiden wants a visible spectacle of Aristotle's humiliation (see the discussion of 'horse and saddle' below).

The time is now ripe for a song of triumph and celebration, and the author completes his use of lyric insertions with a further *rondeau*. As she rides him, the maiden is able to refer to him as a 'mestre musarz' ('Master Fool'). The 'me', who is being carried, refers on this occasion directly to herself, not to a traditional lyric personage (Delbouille, p. 27). The act of carrying a woman on one's back (*soutenir*, v. 371) is thus the sort of thing that happens ('ainsint vait', vv. 370, 372, 'ainsint', v. 373) when love is in control ('mainne', vv. 370, 372). For the maiden, the game is

[40] *Folie* as a metaphor for love is found elsewhere in Old French literature. See, for example, Alison Adams, 'The Metaphor of *folie* in Thomas' *Tristan*'. There are three examples of the term *folie* in *Aristote* (vv. 252, 318, 400), which can be contrasted with the three examples of the term *sens* (vv. 5, 133, 173).

over and she knows that she will get what she wants. For Aristotle, the game is up. His master Alexander has been watching what has been going on and he knows now that there will be no sexual favours, just an awkward damage-limitation exercise. He has been dazzled by the maiden, by her appearance, her antics, her singing and the lyrics of traditional songs.

Although *Aristote* is consistently classified as a fabliau, we can note that the lyric insertions are very much part of courtly tradition. In their normal usage, as an amalgam of words and melody, these songs convey genuine emotions engendered by amorous longing and the intensity of human experiences. But in *Aristote* they are drawn into a comic and cruel world, being used as weapons in what Ladd calls psychological warfare (p. 197). They serve as a means of both conveying and feigning emotions, and also of hinting at what will never be: a sexual encounter between philosopher and courtesan.[41]

These four songs have been recognised and commented on by scholars for some time. But it has not been generally noticed that there is in S a fifth song (vv. 192–97), sung by Alexander and situated before the first of the four songs discussed above.[42] In our edition Alexander's song is introduced by the words 'Si en commença [Alexander] a noter / Et ceste chançon a chanter' (vv. 190–91). These lines are lacking in MSS AB, but MSS DEF have the line 'Si li dist debonnairement' ('And he said to her graciously', Delbouille and Corbellari, v. 270), which introduces a straightforward, non-lyric address by Alexander to his mistress (vv. 271–75). Moreover, the first line of Alexander's song in our edition, 'Main se levoit bele Erembours', which is immediately suggestive of a traditional lyric song, is not found in the other manuscripts. Without this line, it is easier to interpret the lines beginning 'Mout est vaillanz, biaus cuers douz' as a compliment by Alexander to his beloved, who has agreed to do something about the meddling Aristotle. But it can just as easily be a lyric song. There is a *chanson de toile* in which 'Belle Erembors' watches her beloved, Count Renaut, from a window as he passes by with his companions. He has ignored her for some time because he thinks she has been disloyal to him. She calls to him from the window and offers to exculpate herself on oath. He then climbs the steps up the tower and their love is rekindled.[43] There are clear links here with the plot of *Aristote*, as Alexander watches what goes on from the 'fenestres' of his tower (v. 186).

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[41] Nolan calls the songs 'cynical props' ('Promiscuous Fictions', p. 86). For further discussion of these four lyric insertions, see Boulton, *The Song in the Story*, esp. pp. 124–25, pp. 131–32, Corbellari, *La Voix des clercs*, pp. 98–101, Delbouille, pp. 26–29, Ladd, 'Attitude towards Lyric in the *Lai d'Aristote*', and Lynde-Recchia, *Prose, Verse, and Truth-Telling*, pp. 100–05.

[42] Only Delbouille quotes the song in full (footnote to his edition, v. 271), though Corbellari alludes to it briefly (ed., p. 34).

[43] The text of stanza 2 reads: 'Bele Erembors a la fenestre au jor / Sor ses genolz tient paile de color, / Voit Frans de France qui repairent de cort / Et voit Raynaut devant el premier front. / En haute parole, si a dit sa raison: *E Raynaus, amis!*'. For a full text, see item 7 in *Chansons des trouvères* (pp. 92–95) and Rosenberg, '*Chanter m'estuet*', pp. 12–14.

Although the wording is different in *Aristote*, Alexander's song is also dominated by a claim to have but one true love, and when the lay comes to its conclusion an interrupted relationship will also be restored.[44]

(iii) 'Horse' and saddle

Although the background for the lay of *Aristote* is Alexander's recent crushing subjection of Greater India ('Avoit desoz ses piez sozgite / De novel Ynde la major', vv. 67–68), there are no direct references within the tale itself to fighting or to typical chivalric activity. Aristotle alludes to Alexander's men as 'barons' (v. 108), presumably referring to the more senior knights who would act, when required, as his advisors, and Alexander in his turn, in conversation with his mistress, refers to them as 'mi chevalier et mi baron' (v. 163). But the story is about what happens when the fighting is over. Alexander's knights, who grumble about his dalliance with the maiden (vv. 97, 102–03, 107–08, 163–64, 168, 331–32, 402), are frustrated because they clearly want to get back to the battlefield, or at least to enjoy to the full a brief period of relaxation.[45] So it comes as a surprise to the reader/listener that the term *chevauchier* 'ride', which occurs three times (vv. 345, 369, 377), and also the act of saddling a horse (*enseler*, v. 359; *sele*, vv. 348, 354), relate not to the activities of trained warriors but to the unlikely figure of Aristotle. The fact that they do so provides the principal emphasis, and the principal image, of the story.

For the humiliation of the victim, in this case Alexander's learned tutor, the tradition on which Henri is drawing has him participating in one of the central acts of the medieval world: horse riding. In a serious chivalric context, even for a knight to carry his own saddle was what Reid calls a 'symbol of submission' (ed., p. 118), so to become the horse itself (in this case a packhorse: *palefroi*, v. 354; *roncin*, v. 359) would have been yet more unthinkable. In the context of a story such as this, Aristotle, as he carries his beautiful seductress round the garden on his back, has swiftly been reduced to a comic, even a grotesque figure. This is certainly an excellent means of entertaining an audience, and, as we have seen, one that was also capable of conveying an attack on how Aristotle and his philosophy were regarded in learned circles at the time.

This act of equine simulation involving Aristotle's subjection and the maiden's dominance can be viewed from several perspectives. The author will have been aware of the traditional link between riding and sexual intercourse, and, in addition, of the equation between the act of mounting on the back of a beast and the concepts of power and sovereignty.[46] Also in the author's mind may have been the childish

[44] As Delbouille points out, it is not possible to know the precise extent to which the author has rewritten traditional songs for his own purpose or whether he has taken his wording more or less entirely from others (p. 27).

[45] There is one example of the term *chevalerie* in the text, referring to Alexander's body of knights (v. 128).

[46] See Smith, *The Power of Women*, pp. 112–13, pp. 119–121. In their *Dictionnaire des symboles* Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant state that in symbolic terms the horse takes on 'une valorisation sexuelle autant que spirituelle' (p. 229). Even Jacques de

playfulness of a game of piggyback, thus showing how an elderly, and somewhat rigid, scholar can swiftly be made to play an unexpected or uncharacteristic role. But perhaps more important was the sado-masochistic element associated with one adult mounted on another. Aristotle and the maiden are seemingly involved here in the age-old fetish of what in the modern world is called 'pony play'. In this activity a human pony is groomed like a real horse and controlled by a dominant rider for their mutual erotic pleasure; this activity can be traced back to the ancient Egyptians (Rebecca Wilcox, *The Human Pony*, p. 96). But what makes *Aristote* of special interest is that things do not operate normally. The maiden is not riding Aristotle for her pleasure, but to exercise a form of sadistic control over him, with the very specific aim of recapturing the happy times she had spent with her lover Alexander. As horse and rider, Aristotle and the maiden continue to form a dysfunctional couple. Metaphorically, it is Aristotle, whose aspirations of sexual fulfilment are about to be shattered, not the maiden, who is being taken for a ride. No wonder that this powerful image, whether it be interpreted misogynistically or mockingly, gained widespread portrayal in the visual arts for a considerable time to come.[47]

Vitry, in his *exemplum*, uses the verb *equitare* 'ride' in what Smith calls 'its familiar metaphorical sense as sexual intercourse' (p. 79). Whilst on Aristotle's back the maiden has assumed 'the dominant position normally reserved to men' (p. 99). Nathalie Zemon Davis identifies this scene in *Aristote* as the most popular example of what she calls 'sexual topsy-turvy' or 'sexual inversion', in which the 'unruly woman' enjoys a temporary period of dominion ('Women on Top', pp. 129–36).

[47] Pietro Marsilli provides a list of 218 images of the mounted Aristotle, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards ('Réception et diffusion iconographique du conte de *Aristote et Phillis*', pp. 246–69). As mentioned above, these visual images occur in a wide variety of places (as marginal illustrations in manuscripts, on cathedral façades, on choir stalls, as mural decorations of a town hall, in tapestries, caskets, woodcuts, etc.) and with different emphases and intentions but no fixed content. They were deployed to convey differing arguments about the power of women and also about men's inability to retain control over their inner beasts, i.e. their carnal appetites. See De Cesare, 'Di nuovo sulla leggenda di Aristotele cavalcato', pp. 235–27, Ferdinand de Guilhermy, 'Fabliaux représentés dans les églises' and 'Iconographie des fabliaux', Héron, 'La Légende d'Alexandre et d'Aristote', pp. 370–83, Cornelia Herrmann, *Der 'gerittene Aristoteles',* pp. 151–267, Nolan, 'Promiscuous Fictions', pp. 90–100, George Sarton, 'Aristotle and Phyllis', pp. 14–16, Smith, *The Power of Women*, pp. 103–36, and Storost, '"Femme chevalchat Aristotte"', pp. 192–93 (Storost includes an illustration of a nineteenth-century playing card displaying the scene of the maiden riding on Aristotle's back).

Genre

Aristote is one of the twenty-four 'lais de Bretaigne' contained in S.[48] The *incipit* in this manuscript reads 'C'est le lay d'Aristote', but the only other manuscript to designate the work as a lay in its *incipit* is A, which reads 'Le lay d'Aristote'.[49] As its *incipit* B has simply 'Aristote', D has 'D'Alixandre et d'Aristote' and F 'D'Aristotle d'Ataines' ('of Aristotle of Athens'). The *incipit* in E is defective, reading merely 'tote'. S has no *explicit*, but in v. 409 (our numbering) the author or scribe confirms that he considers his poem to be a lay: 'Par cest lai vos di en la fin'. In addition, AE have *explicits* that read respectively 'Explicit li lais d'Aristote' and 'Chi fine li lai d'Aristote', whereas B has simply 'Explicit Aristotes' and D 'Explicit d'Aristote et d'Alixandre'; F has no *explicit*. In v. 519 of AE the poem is called a 'dit' ('En cest dit et en ceste afere / afaire'), and v. 564 of these two manuscripts reads 'Si puet on par cest dit aprendre / aprandre' (Corbellari's numbering, p. 200). There is thus in DF no reference to the poem as a 'lai' and in DFS no reference to it as a 'dit'.[50]

A number of lays in S contain fabliau features, but none has been more consistently designated as a fabliau than *Aristote*.[51] Not only is this work included in the early editions and adaptations of fabliaux found in the collections of Barbazan, Legrand d'Aussy, and Montaiglon and Raynaud, but it also forms part of the corpus of texts studied in books and articles on the fabliaux by Bédier, Nykrog and many others.[52] Bédier even devotes a separate section of his work to *Aristote* (pp. 170–77 / 6th edition, pp. 204–12), calling it 'un des joyaux de notre collection' (p. 170 / p. 205). Earlier in his book he groups *Aristote* with *Espervier*, *Mantel* and *Auberee* as poems that are called lays by *jongleurs* but are in fact 'de simples contes à rire'. He

[48] For the complete list and further discussion of these twenty-four lays (nine of which are usually attributed to Marie de France), see Burgess and Brook, *Eleven Old French Narrative Lays*, pp. 3–4, or Tobin, *Les Lais anonymes des XII^e et XIII^e siècles*, p. 11.

[49] At the foot of the first column of text the scribe of S has also written 'li lays d'Aristote'.

[50] On the definition of a 'dit', see Monique Léonard, *Le 'Dit' et sa technique littéraire*, which contains a number of references to *Aristote* (see esp. p. 43, pp. 62–64, p. 215). Léonard suggests that 'une recherche systématique portant sur l'emploi du terme *lai* montrerait probablement que le mot *lai* prend assez souvent une acception voisine de celle du terme *dit*' (p. 314, n. 188). In her article 'Le Clerc et l'écriture' Jacqueline Cerquiglini also provides a study of the genre of the *dit*.

[51] Guy Oury calls it 'une sorte de fabliau, sentencieux et spirituel' (*Dictionnaire des lettres françaises*, p. 668). Delbouille writes: 'Henri d'Andeli … écrivait, sous le titre et les apparences d'un lai, un fabliau du meilleur cru' (p. 18).

[52] It is not, however, included in the *Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux*. Norris Lacy states that *Aristote* is one of the fabliaux that are 'authentically courtly' (*Reading Fabliaux*, p. 59). Mary Jane Stearns Schenck designates *Aristote* as a 'conte courtois' and places it in a category of non-typical fabliaux (*The Fabliaux*, pp. 68–69).

does, however, see these poems as superior to many other fabliaux and as reflecting their author's 'finesse', 'décence' and 'souci artistique' (p. 10 / p. 35).[53]

Although he includes *Aristote* in his corpus, Nykrog shifts the emphasis towards the courtly elements within the poem. He claims that in some fabliaux, including *Aristote*, 'tout, langage, sentiments, actions, est presque strictement conforme aux exigences courtoises' (p. 74). He points out that the author says as much in the prologue, where he insists on the absence from his work of any elements of coarseness or vulgarity (vv. 34–54). In Nykrog's view the author was reacting to the criticism that had frequently been levelled in the thirtenth century at 'propos indécents'. The author would therefore have intended to put a respectable distance between himself and the *jongleurs*, who lacked such scruples (*ibid.*). To accommodate these more sophisticated works that are often called lays, Mortimer Donovan, places *Aristote* in the same category as *Cor*, *Espine*, *Mantel* and *Nabaret*, calling them 'elevated fabliaux' (*The Breton Lay: A Guide to Varieties*, pp. 94–100). Charles Muscatine, comparing *Aristote* to the fabliaux he studies, isolates it from the others, calling it 'the most refined and elegant of all' (*The Old French Fabliaux*, p. 14).

If *Aristote* is to be regarded as more of a lay than a fabliau, the emphasis will be on such things as the remarks made by the author in the prologue (including the insistence on avoiding crude or disreputable language), the high standing of the two principal male characters, the references to barons and knights, the garden setting for the work's main action, the courtly nature of the lyric insertions and the poem's serious themes (*recreantise*, the power but also the consequences of love, the praise of largesse, the use of courtly language, vv. 4–5, 77, Alexander's love monologue in vv. 246–70, etc.). If it is to be seen as a fabliau rather than a lay, the emphasis will instead be on the ingenuity of Alexander's mistress and on the humiliation she heaps on an authority figure. The maiden, like many women in the fabliaux, employs subterfuge and play-acting to get her own way, using ingenuity and sense ('engins et sens', v. 173) to gain vengeance over her tormentor and to come out on top. The image of a love-sick philosopher crawling around with his would-be mistress on his back draws on the element of incongruity that is frequently exploited by the comic spirit and by many other fabliaux. All in all, *Aristote* could be said to belong to a small group of lays and fabliaux that fulfil the criteria for a lay, but also that for a fabliau. Indeed, as we have seen, it may be the best fabliau of all, in spite of its inclusion by the compiler of S in a collection of lays. Muscatine puts the issue nicely when he states that it would be legitimate to see the comic plot of *Aristote* as that of a fabliau, but its style and tone as those of a lay (p. 136).[54]

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[53] Bédier later states that such lays, compared to normal fabliaux, possess 'une plus noble essence'. In his view they are composed 'avec le souci de la bienséance, de la délicatesse, le sentiment de ce que la forme ajoute à la matière' (p. 322, n. 3 / p. 364, n. 3). He adds that *Aristote* was one of the 'fabliaux plus élégants destinés aux classes élevées' (p. 389).

[54] On the importance of tone as a distinguishing criterion for a lay or a fabliau, see Omer Jodogne, 'Considérations sur le fabliau', especially pp. 1054–55. Corbellari sees the author of *Aristote* as managing to accomplish 'la fusion entre deux conceptions contradictoires de l'amour, celle, idéaliste, de la lyrique courtoise et celle, 'anti-réaliste'

Conclusion

The story of how Aristotle was persuaded to play horse to a woman with whom he had become infatuated enjoyed widespread popularity in the Middle Ages, not only in literary expression and sermons, but also in visual art. The attraction of the tale lay in its vivid portrayal of the power of love or desire to distract, overcome and humble those who considered themselves either immune to, or capable of resisting, their sexual appetites. Similarly, Guigemar and Guingamor, heroes of other narrative lays, are initially indifferent to love but in due course are forced to come under its sway. In *Aristote*, however, there may have been a deliberate additional element in that a much revered philosopher-logician is made to look ridiculous. The author and subsequent redactors would thus be mocking his influence in academic circles, which in the early thirteenth century were riven by quarrels.

At the same time, the lay shows one of legend's most spectacularly successful military leaders and conquerors distracted from his responsibilities by love, to the extent that he is diminished by his dalliance. It should be noted, however, that Alexander accepts his tutor's initial admonitions and is keenly aware of the stigma of shame. The beautiful Indian mistress who turns both their heads – whether she is intended to be a royal princess or a simple courtesan – is a stereotypical damsel of misogynistic texts, and it is she who triggers the central action by confronting Alexander and seeking from him an explanation of his neglect of her. From a male perspective, she is portrayed as wanton, vengeful, cunning, ruthless and determined, while her physical description, with her blonde tresses, in no way marks her out as notably Eastern. Alexander appears to enjoy her stratagem and the ultimate outcome is left rather vague, since Aristotle, who has the last word in the version we print here, is able to warn him again, this time from personal experience. But clearly Alexander will be able to continue to see his mistress, with the acquiesence if not the blessing of Aristotle, a conclusion quite different from that of the preacher Jacques de Vitry, for whom Aristotle's fate means that lust and lechery must be avoided at all costs as women are treacherous and a threat to a man's soul.

The version of *Aristote* contained in S is the shortest by quite a margin, yet in comparison with the versions of the other manuscripts the narration of the actual story of Aristotle and Alexander in no way suffers from this relative brevity. The fifty-four-line prologue, however, may seem unnecessarily lengthy, particularly as its precise relevance to the story is questionable (especially vv. 8–33). On the other hand, the brief conclusion, once the action is complete, may be considered preferable to the somewhat otiose protraction that is reproduced from other manuscripts in the editions of Delbouille and Corbellari.

The uniqueness of the version of *Aristote* in S prompts speculation concerning the role of the scribe and his predecessors. The content of the principal 'omissions',

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… des fabliaux' ('Aristote le bétourné', p. 165). Nolan insists on the amalgam of lay and fabliau themes: 'The poet yokes aristocratic "beax moz" with bawdry, *fine amor* with unfettered lust, masculine public virtue with feminine sexual politics, oral story-telling with written composition, epic and clerkly wisdom with romance and the mischievous play of fragmentary "chançonetes"' ('Promiscuous Fictions', p. 81).

alluded to in our section on the comparison of manuscripts (pp. 18–20), would have added nothing substantial to the text as we have it, and they may have been deliberately edited out at some stage in the process of transmission. That is, of course, unless the version in S is closer to an original to which the so-called omissions were actually additions by a scribe embroidering on the text at his disposal. On the other hand, there does seem to have been an inadvertent omission following v. 28 (see the note to this line). As with the 'omissions', a parallel argument either way could be made for the Erembours lyric, which is found only in S. Was it inserted as an addition or did other manuscripts suppress it? The scribe of S, concerned with collecting and reproducing a considerable number of lays, does not appear overall to have been a radical redactor. Although it is tempting to assume that he composed the short conclusion, it is equally possible that it was already in the manuscript from which he worked. He may merely have chosen the version he thought best, or even fortuitously used the only one to hand. This is not to say that he was necessarily unaware of the other versions.

In any event, it is only in the longer conclusions that the author's name Henri appears, and the thinking now is that he was probably Henri de Valenciennes rather than Henri d'Andeli, who had until recently been credited with the authorship. The characters in the lay, apart from the maiden, may not have much depth in such a short tale, but the narrative is undoubtedly enhanced by the clever and apposite use of the lyric insertions (five in this version, but only four in the other manuscripts). *Aristote* escapes easy classification, and by its blending of aspects of the traditional lay and fabliau it presents the reader or listener with an entertaining hybrid. The neglect hitherto of the S version as one worthy of independent study is both surprising and undeserved.

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C’est le lay d’Aristote*

*Within the text and translation an asterisk indicates the presence of a note

f. 69v col. 1

De conter biaus moz et retrere
Ne se doit l'en mie retrere,
Ainz doit l'en volentiers entendre
Biaus moz, car l'en i puet apprendre
Sens et cortoisie en l'oïr.
Des biens se doivent esjoïr
Li bon, car c'est droiz et costume.
Et li mauvés en font l'enfrume*
Erraument que il dire l'oent,
Q'ausi con li bon le bien loent
Et vont adés le bien disant,
Le despisent li mesdisant,
Quant il pis ne lor puent fere.
Car envie est de tel afere
Qu'ele maint tot adés el cuer
De ceus qui sont mis a tel fuer
Qu'il n'oent de nelui bien dire
Qu'il ne le veillent contredire;
Si me merveil por qoi lor poise.
Gent felonnesse et pou cortoise,
Por coi metez vos sus autrui
Vostre mesdit et vostre anui?
Ci a trop povre escusement;
Vos pechiez .II. foiz mortement.
L'une est de mesdire entremetre,
Et li autre rest de sus metre
As genz la vostre felonnie.
Certes, c'est crueus vilenie ….*
De blasmer les crueus felons
Qu'on puet apeler Guenelons,
Qui retenir ne se porroient

col. 2

De mesdire s'il ne moroient,
Tant i sont mis et afaitié.
Or revenrai a mon tretié*
D'une aventure q'anprise ai,
Dont la matire molt prisai
Quant j'en oi la reson oïe,*
Qui bien doit estre desploïe
Et dite par rime et retrete,
Sanz vilenie et sanz retrete.
Car oevre ou vilenie cort
Ne doit estre contee a cort,
Ne jor que vive en mon ovrer
Ne quier vilennie conter.*
N'onc ne l'empris n'enpenrai,*

24 .iii. 39 dire 40 retrere

From recounting and narrating fine words
No one should refrain,
Rather should one gladly listen to
Fine words, for from them one can learn
Sense and courtliness as one listens to them,
Good men should rejoice over fine things,
For that is right and fitting.
The wicked have a scowl on their faces
As soon as they hear them uttered,
For just as the good praise fine things
And go around saying fine things,
Slanderers despise them
When they cannot do them any more harm.
For the nature of envy is such that
It always dwells deep in the hearts
Of those who have been reduced to such a state
That they cannot hear a word of praise for anyone
Without attempting to contradict it;
I am amazed at how upset they get.
Wicked and uncourtly people,
Why do you burden other people
With your slander and your vexation?
Any excuse for this is very poor,
And you are committing mortal sins on two counts:
The first is to indulge in slander,
And the second is to impute
Your wickedness to other people.
This is indeed cruel and villainous behaviour ….*
To rebuke the cruel wretches,
Whom one can call Ganelons*
And who could not refrain
From slander until they died,
So committed and accustomed to it have they become.
Now I shall return to my composition
Concerning a happening I have undertaken to recount,
The subject-matter of which I thought highly
When I heard the account of it;
It should definitely be made known
And told and recounted in rhyme,
Without coarseness and without incurring reproach.*
For a work with coarseness running through it
Should not be recounted at court,
Nor as long as I live, in any work of mine
Shall I ever seek to use coarse words.
I have never done such a thing, nor will I ever do so,

En oevre n'en dit que je face,
Car vilanie se desface
Et toute chose a sa saveur.*
Ne ja ne me ferai troveur
De rien qu'en oie en mon vivant
Ou vilains moz voit arivant,*
Ainz dirai de droit essamplaire
Chose qui puet valoir et plaire;
C'ert en leu de fruit et d'espece.
Nos trovons que li rois de Grece,
Alixandres, qui tant fu sire,
Et a tant prince mostra s'ire
Por aus abessier et danter
Et por lui croistre et amonter,
Ce li fist Largesce sa mere,
Qui a toz avers semble amere
Et douce a toute large gent.*
Car tant comme avers aimme argent,
La het larges a maintenir,
Por ce que biens n'en puet venir.
Li bons rois de Grece et d'Egite
Avoit desoz ses piez sozgite
De novel Ynde la major,*
Si ert la demorez assejor.
Et se vos me volez enquerre
Por qoi demoroit en la terre
f. 70r col. 1 Si volentiers et tenoit coi,
Bien vos dirai reson por qoi.
Amors, qui tant prent et embrace,
Et tot aert et tout enlace,
L'avoit ja si en braie mis
Qu'il ert devenuz fins amis,
Dont il ne se repentoit mie,
Car il avoit trouvee amie
Si bele comme a souhaidier.
N'avoit cure d'aillors plaidier,
Fors avec li manoir et estre.
Bien est Amors poissanz et mestre,
Quant du monde le plus poissant
Fet si humble et obediant
Qu'il ne prent nul conroi de lui,
Ainz s'oublie touz por autrui.
C'est droiz, qu'Amors est de tel pris;
Que puis qu'ele a .I. homme pris,
N'i doit il avoir nul desroi,

In any work or story that I may compose,
Since coarseness is destructive
And everything is affected by its flavour.*
I shall never become the composer
Of anything I hear in my lifetime
Into which any coarse words would enter,
Rather would I relate, as a truly moral tale,*
Something that is pleasing and of value;
That will replace fruits and spices.*
We find that the King of Greece,
Alexander, such a lordly figure,*
Who demonstrated his anger to so many princes
In order to bring them down and subdue them
And further enhance his own status;
This was accomplished for him by his mother Largesse,*
Which appears harsh to all the avaricious
And kind to all the generous.*
For just as the avaricious love money
Those who are generous hate holding on to it,
Because no good can come of it.*
The good king of Greece and Egypt
Had recently trampled
On Greater India*
And taken up residence there.
If you wish to ask me
Why he had remained in that land
So willingly, and stayed on there,
I can easily tell you why.
Love, which takes hold of and embraces so much,
And seizes and ensnares everything,
Had held him in such bondage*
That he had become a true lover,
For which he had no regrets,
Since he had found a beloved
As beautiful as any he could wish for.
He had no wish to woo anyone else,
Wanting merely to remain and stay with her.
Love is truly strong and powerful,
Since it can make the most powerful man in the world
So humble and obedient
That he pays no heed to himself,
Rather he is oblivious of himself because of someone else.
This is right, because Love is so precious;
For when it has taken hold of a man,
He should not attempt any rebellion against it.

Q'autant a Amors sus .I. roi
De droit pooir, ce est la somme,
Comme sor toz le plus povre homme
Qui soit en Champaingne n'en France,
Tant est sa seignorie franche.
Li rois avec s'amie maint,
S'en parolent maintes et maint,
De ce qu'il en tel point s'afole
Et qu'il mainne vie si fole
Qu'il d'avec lui ne se muet,
Con cil qui amender nu puet.*
Molt de sa gent parler n'en osent,
Mes en derrere tant l'enchosent*
Que son mestre Aristotes l'ot;
S'est bien resons qu'il li deslot.
Belement a conseil l'a mis,
Si dit: 'Mar avez ariers mis
Toz les barons de vo roiaume
Por une seule estrange fame'.*
Alixandres li respondi,
Qui autrement ne s'escondi:
col. 2 'Qantes en i covient il donques?
Je cuit que cil n'amerent onques
Qui fol m'en vodroient clamer,
C'on n'en puet c'une seule amer,
Ne m'en doit par droit plere c'une.
Et qui de cele me rancune,
S'il maint la ou ses cuers li rueve,*
Petit d'amor dedenz lui trueve.'
Aristotes, qui tout savoit
Qanqu'en droite clergie avoit
Respont au roi et si l[i] conte
C'on li atornoit a grant honte
De ce qu'en tel point se demainne
Que tote entiere la semainne
Maint avec s'amie et areste,
Qu'il ne fet ne soulaz ne feste
A sa chevalerie toute.
'Je cuit que vos ne veez goute,
Rois', dit Aristotes son mestre,
'Or vos puet en bien mener pestre,
Aussi comme une beste en pré.
Trop avez le sens destrempé,
Quant por une meschine estrange
Vo cuers si durement se change

For Love has over a king
Just as much true power, that is a fact,
As over the very poorest person
In either Champagne or France,
So absolute is its lordship.
The king dwelt with his beloved,
And many men and women talked
About the fact that he was so smitten,
And that he led such a foolish life
That he never left her side,
Like someone who could not help himself.*
Many of his people did not dare speak of this,
But behind his back they chided him about it so much
That his tutor Aristotle heard of it;*
It was right that he should dissuade him from this.
He began to advise him politely,
Saying: 'You are wrong to abandon
All the men in your realm
For one foreign woman'.*
Alexander replied to him,
Making no other excuse:
'How many women should I love then?
In my view those people have never loved
Who would wish to call me foolish,
For a man can love only one woman,
And by rights only one should please me.
Anyone who bears a grudge against me for this woman,
If he remains where his heart begs him to be,*
Finds little love within himself.'
Aristotle, who knew everything
That appertained to true learning,
Replied to the king and told him
That it was regarded as very shameful
That he was behaving in such a way,
Spending the entire week
In the company of his lover,
Without taking his ease and enjoying himself
Along with all his knights.*
I think you have gone blind,
O King', said Aristotle his tutor,
'You could now be put out to pasture,
Just like any beast in the meadow.
Your wits are very deranged*
When for a foreign maiden
Your heart is transformed so radically

Qu'on n'i puet mesure trover.
Je vos voil proier et rover
Que guerpissiez si fet usage,
Car trop i paiez le musage.'*
Alixandres einsint demeure,
Et atant maint jor et maint eure
Qu'a s'amie ne vait n'aprouche
Por le dit et por le reproche
Qu'il oï son mestre reprendre.
Mes sa volentez n'est pas mendre,
Encor n'i voist il ne qu'il seut,
Mes miex l'aimme et miex li veut
Plus qu'il ne fist onques mes.*
Hontes et mesdiz et esmés
L'en fet tenir tant qu'a celi
Revait qui molt li abeli.
f. 70v col.1 Et la bele est em piez saillie,
Qui molt ere desconseillie
De la demoree le roi.
Lors dit: 'De vostre grant desroi
Sui bien aperceue, sire.
Fins amanz comment se consire
De veoir ce que tant li plest?'
A cest mot pleure, si se test.
Et li rois li respont: 'Amie,
Ne vos en esmerveilliez mie,
Qu'el demorer ot achoison.
Mi chevalier et mi baron
Me blasmoient molt durement
De ce que trop escharsement
Aloie joer avec aus.
Et mes mestres dit que c'est maus,
Qui laidement m'en a repris.*
Neporquant bien sai q'ai mespris,
Mes je doutai despit et honte.'
'Sire, je sai bien que ce monte',
Dit la dame, 'se Dex me saut.
Mes s'engins et sens ne me faut,
Je me voudré de lui vengier,
Si que mielz porroiz ledengier
Et reprendre d'uevre plus male*
Vostre mestre chanu et pale,
Se ge vif demain jusqu'a none
Et Amors sa force me donne,
Qui poissance ja ne (ne) faudra.

That one cannot find any sense in it.
I would like to entreat and beg you
To abandon such behaviour,
For you pay too high a price for your dalliance.'
Thus Alexander remained where he was,
And held out for many days and many hours
Without going to or approaching his beloved,
Because of the words and the reprimand
He had repeatedly heard from his tutor.
But his desire for her did not diminish,
Even though he did not go to her as was his wont,
He nevertheless loved her more and wanted her more
Than he had ever done at any time.
Shame, calumny and consternation
Restrained him until he
Returned to the woman who pleased him greatly.
The fair maiden leaped to her feet
Who had been very disconsolate
At the king's absence.
Then she said: 'Of your great distress,
My lord, I have been fully aware.
How can a true lover refrain from seeing
What pleases him so much?'
Thereupon, she wept and remained silent.
The king replied to her: 'Beloved,
Do not be surprised at this,
For there was a reason for my absence.
My knights and my barons
Blamed me very harshly,
Because only too rarely
Was I sporting with them.
My tutor also said it was wrong,
And he reprimanded me for it severely.
Yet I know very well that I have behaved badly,
But I was afraid of scorn and shame.'
'My lord, I know how important this is',
Said the lady, 'so help me God.
But unless ingenuity and sense fail me,
I would like to take revenge on him for this,
So that you will be able to reprimand
Your grey-haired, pale-faced tutor
All the more and reproach him for a worse affair,
If I live until tomorrow afternoon,
And Love, whose strength will never fade,
Gives me its force.

Ne ja vers moi ne li vaudra
Dieletique ne clergie,*
Ou il savra trop d'escremie;
Et se l[e] parceverez demain.
Sire rois, or vos levez main...*
As fenestres de cele tor
Et je porverrai mon ator.'
Alixandres molt s'esjoï
De ce que dire li oï,*
Si en commença a noter
Et ceste chançon a chanter:

col. 2

Main se levoit bele Erembours,
Mout estes vaillanz, biaus cuers douz.
D'autre ne quier avoir regart.
Si me doint Dex mauvés escueil.
Amors ai te[les] con ge veil,
Si qu'a nule autre ne claim part.

Atant de s'amie se part,
Si s'en vet et cele demeure.
Au matin, quant tens fu et eure,
Sanz esveillier autrui se lieve,
Et li levers pas ne li grieve.
Si est em pure sa chemise
Enz ou vergier soz la tor mise,
En .I. bliaut inde gouté,
Car la matinee d'esté*
Estoit douce et de qoi oré.
Bien li ot Nature enfloré
Son cler vis de lis et de rose,
N'en toute sa taille n'ot chose
Qui par droit estre n'i deüst.
Si ne cuidiez pas qu'ele eüst
Liee ne guimple ne bende;
Si l'enbelist molt et amende
Sa tresce grosse, longue et blonde.
N'a pas deservi c'on la tonde
La dame qui si biau chief porte.
Parmi le vergier se deporte,
Si vait escorçant son bliaut,
Chantant vait bas, non mie haut:

Or la voi, la voi, m'amie,
f. 71r col. 1 *La bele blonde, a li m'otroi;*

Nor will his dialectic and learning
Ever prevail against me,*
Or else he is very good at parrying,*
This you will witness tomorrow.
Lord king, rise early...*
At the windows of this tower
And I shall make my arrangements.'
Alexander was filled with joy
At what he heard her say,*
And he began to play a tune
And sing this song:

Fair Erembour rose early:
'You are very worthy, my fair sweetheart,
I have no wish to pay heed to anyone else.
May God give me a poor reception.
My love is exactly as I desire it,
So that I lay no claim to any other woman.'*

Then he left his beloved;
He departed and she remained behind.
In the morning, when it was the right time and hour,
She rose without waking anyone else,
And rising caused her no grief.
Clad just in her chemise,
She entered the garden beneath the tower,
In a blue, spotted tunic,
For the summer's morning
Was fragrant, with a gentle breeze.
Nature had decked
Her fair countenance with lilies and roses.
In her whole body there was nothing
That should not rightfully be there.
Do not imagine that she had
Either a wimple or a headband tied on,
For her thick, long, blonde tresses
Made her look beautiful and set her off well.*
The lady who had such a beautiful head of hair
Did not deserve to have it cut.
She frolicked around the garden,
Raising her tunic as she moved
And singing in a low voice, not loudly:

Now I see her, I see her, my beloved,
The fair blonde, I give myself to her;

La fontainne .i. sort serie.
Or la voi, la voi, m'amie,
Une dame i ot jolie
Ou glaioloi, desouz l'aunoi.
Or la voi, la voi, la voi,
La bele blonde, a li m'otroi.

Li rois la chançonnete entent,
Qui son cuer et s'oreille tent
A la fenestre por oïr.
Molt li fet s'amie esjoïr
De son dit et de son chanter.
Encui se porra bien vanter
Son mestre Aristotes d'Atainnes
Qu'Amors bones, loiaus, lointainnes,
Se desirrent a aprouchier.*
Ne mes n'en ira reprouchier
Le roi, ne ne dira anui,
Car il trovera tant en lui
Qu'il ert de volenté toz yvres.
Levez s'ert et sist a ses livres;
Voit la bele aler et venir,
El cuer li met .I. sovenir,
Tel que son livre li fet clorre
Et dit: 'Ha! Dex, car venist ore
Cil mireors plus pres de ci,
Si me metroie en sa merci.
Comment? Si m'i metroie donques?
Non feroie; ce n'avint onques
Quant je, qui tant sai et tant puis,
Tant de folie en mon cuer truis
C'un seus veoirs tot mon cuer oste.
col. 2 Amors velt que je[l] tiengne a hoste,
Mes honors le tient a hontage,
Tel sovenir et tel outrage.*
Avoi! Qu'est mes cuers devenuz?
Je sui toz viex et toz chanuz,
Lais et pales et noirs et megres,
Et plus en filosophie egres*
Que nus qu'en sache ne qu'en cuide.
Molt ai mal emploié m'estude,
Qui onques ne finai d'aprendre.
Or me desaprent por miex prendre
Amors, qui tant preudomme a pris.
S'ai en aprenant desapris,

The spring emerges there serenely.
Now I see her, I see her, my beloved,
There is a lovely lady there
Amid the irises, beneath the alder grove.
Now I see her, I see her, I see her,
*The fair blonde, I give myself to her.**

This little song was heard by the king,
Who was straining his heart and ears
At the window in order to hear it.
His beloved made him rejoice greatly
At her words and at her singing.
Before the day is out, his tutor Aristotle of Athens*
Would be sure to proclaim
That Love, if it is good, loyal and constant,*
Longs to be promoted.*
He will not go around reprimanding
The king any more or causing him grief,
For he will find such strong feelings within himself
That he will be dizzy with desire.
Aristotle rose and sat at his books;
He saw the fair one coming and going,
And this stimulated thoughts in his heart,
Such that they made him close his books
And say: 'O God, should this paragon*
Now come closer to me here,
I would abandon myself to her mercy.
What? Would I do that then?
I would not; there has never been a time
When I, who know so much and can do so much,
Have found so much folly in my heart
That a mere glance would steal my heart away.
Love wants me to make it my guest,
But honour considers as shameful
Such thoughts and such outrage.
Nonsense! What has become of my heart?
I am old and grey,
Ugly and wan, swarthy and thin,
And sharper in philosophy
Than anyone who is known or could be imagined.
I have made very poor use of my study,
I who have never ceased to learn.
Now Love, which has captured so many worthy men,
Strips me of my learning, all the better to grab hold of me.
Through learning I have become ignorant;

Desapris ai en aprenant,
Puis qu'Amors me vait si prenant,*
Que je ne li puis contredire
Ne son voloir pas escondire.'
Einsi li mestres se demente.
La dame en .I. rainsel de mente
Fist .I. chapel de maintes flors.
Au fere li sovint d'amors,
Si chante au cueillir les floretes:

*Ci me tienent amoretes.**
Douce, trop vos aim!
Ci me tienent amoretes
Ou je tien ma main.

Einsi chante, einsi s'ebanoie,
Mes Aristote molt anoie
De ce que pres de li ne vient.
Ele set bien quanqu'il covient
A lui eschaufer et atraire.
De tel saiete li velt traire
Qui cointement soit empanee.
Tant s'est travaillie et penee
Qu'a sa volenté l'a atret.
f. 71v col. 1 Tot belement et tot a tret
Son chapel en son biau chief pose;
Ne fet semblant de nule chose
Qu'elle voie ne aperçoive.
Et por ce que miex le deçoive
Et plus bel le voi[s]t enchantant
Vers la fenestre vient chantant
.I. ver d'une chançon a toille,
Car ne velt que cil plus se çoille,
Qui tout a mis en la querele:

En .I. vergier lez une fontenele,
Dont clere est l'onde et blanche est la gravele,
Siet fille a roi, sa main a sa messele.
En soupirant son doz ami apele:
He! Biaus quens Guis!
La vostre amor me tout solaz et ris.

Quant ele ot ce dit, si pres passe
De la large fenestre basse
Que cil par le bliaut l'aert,

I have become ignorant through learning,
Since Love is taking hold of me,*
So that I cannot gainsay it
Nor oppose its will.'
In this way the tutor lamented.
The lady with a little sprig of mint
Made a garland of many flowers.*
As she did so, she thought of love,
And sang while picking the blooms:

*These loves have taken hold of me.**
Sweet one, I love you very much.
These loves have taken hold of me,
Just where I hold forth my hand.

Thus she sang, thus she disported herself,
But Aristotle was very upset
That she did not come any closer to him.
She knew very well just what was necessary
To inflame and attract him.
She intended to shoot an arrow at him
That was expertly feathered.
So hard did she work and strive
That she drew him to her just as she had planned.
In fine and leisurely fashion
She placed her garland on her lovely head,
Giving no sign at all
That she had seen or noticed anything.
In order to deceive him all the better,
And enchant him more successfully,
She approached the window, singing
A verse from a weaving song,
For she did not want him to remain hidden any longer
As she had put such effort into this matter:

In a garden, by a spring,
Whose water is clear and its shingle white,
Sits a king's daughter, her hand on her cheek.
Sighing, she calls upon her dear beloved:
O, fair Count Gui,
*Your love deprives me of laughter and solace.**

Having uttered these words, she passed so close
To the broad, low window
That Aristotle grabbed her by the tunic.

Qui cuide trop avoir soufert,
Tant l'a desirree a merveille.
A ce coup cheï la chandoille
Toute jus a terre au viel chat,
Qui pris est sanz point de rachat;
Et la damoisele s'escrie:
'Qui est ce? Diex', fet ele, 'aïe!
Avoi, qui m'a ci detenue?'
'Dame, vos soiez bien venue',
col. 2 Fet cil qui prevoz est et maire
De la folie qui le maire.
'Mestres', ce dit la dame, 'avoi!
Estes vos ce que je ci voi?'
'Oïl', ce dist il, 'ma douce dame.
Por vos metrai et cors et ame,
Vie et honor, en aventure.
Tant m'a fet Amors et Nature
Que de vos partir ne me puis.'
'Ha! Mestre', dit ele, 'despuis
Qu'ensint est que vos tant m'amez,
Ja par moi n'en serez blasmez.
Mes la chose est molt mal alee.
Ne sai qui m'a au roi mellee
Et lui blasmé de ce que tant
S'aloit avec moi deportant.'
'Dame', dist il, 'or vos tesiez,
Que par moi sera apesiez
Et li mautalenz et li criz
Et li blasmes et li estriz.*
Mes, por Deu, çaienz vos traiez
Et mon desir me rapaiez
De vostre cors gent et poli.'
'Mestres, ançois qu'a vos foli',
Dist la bele, 'vos covient fere
Por moi .I. molt divers afere,
Se tant estes por moi sorpris.
Car molt tres grant talent m'est pris
De vos .I. petit chevauchier
Sor ceste herbe en cest biau vergier,
Et si veil', dit la damoisele,
'Que desor vos ait une sele,
Si ere plus honorablement.'
Li mestres respont liement*
Que ce fera il volentiers,
Si con cil qui est siens entiers.*

He thought he had suffered a great deal,
So profoundly had he desired her.
At this blow the old cat's candle
Fell right down on to the ground
And he was irredeemably captured.*
The maiden yelled out:
'Who is this?' she said, 'God, help me!
Come now, who has grasped hold of me here?'
'My lady, welcome',
Said he who was completely in the clutches*
Of the folly that was mastering him.
'Tutor', said the lady, 'come now!
Is it you whom I see here?'
'Yes', he said, 'my fair one.
For your sake I shall put body and soul,
Life and honour, at risk.
Love and Nature have done so much to me
That I cannot be separated from you.'
'O tutor', she said, 'since it
Comes about in this way that you love me so much,
You will never be blamed for it by me.
But things have been going very badly.
I don't know who has embroiled me with the king
And blamed him for
Taking his pleasure so much with me.'*
'My lady', he said, 'be quiet now,
Because through me will be settled
The ill-will and the rumours,
And the blame and the strife.*
But in God's name come inside
And let me satisfy my desire
With your smooth and noble body.'
'Tutor, before I play the wanton with you',
Said the fair one, 'you must do
A very singular thing for me,
If you are so infatuated with me.
For I have conceived a very great yearning
To ride on you a little,
On the grass in this fine garden,
And I would also like', said the maiden,
'To have a saddle put on you,
So that I shall ride with greater honour.'
The tutor replied joyfully
That he would do this gladly,
As someone entirely devoted to her.*

Bien l'a mis Nature en esfroi,*
Quant la sele du palefroi
Li fet aporter a son col.*
Bien fet Amors d'un sage fol,*
f. 72r col. 1 Por que Nature le semont,
Quant tot le meillor clerc du mont
Fet comme roncin enseler,
Et puis a quatre piez aler
Achatonant par desus l'erbe.
Prenez essample a cest proverbe.
Que bien savrai a point conter.
La damoisele fet monter
Sor son dos et puis si la porte;
La damoisele se deporte*
En lui chevauchier et deduit.
Par mi le vergier le conduit,
Si chante cler et a voiz plainne:

Ainsint vait qui Amors mainne;
Mestre musarz me soutient.
Ainsint vait qui Amors mainne,
Et ainsint qui les maintient.

Alixandres ert en la tor,
Bien ot veü trestot l'ator.*
'Mestres', ce dist li rois, 'que vaut ce?
Je voi bien que on vos chevauche.
Comment? Estes vos forsenez
Qui en tel point estes menez?
Vos me feïstes l'autre fois
De li veoir si grant desfois,
Et or vos a mis en tel point
Qu'il n'a en vos de reson point,
Einz estes mis a loi de beste.'
Aristotes drece la teste
Et la damoisele descent.
Lors respondi honteusement:*
'Droit oi se je doutai de vos,
Qui en fin jovent ardez touz
Et en feu de droite jonesce,
Quant je, qui sui plains de viellesce,
Ne poi contre Amors rendre estal
Qu'ele ne m'ait torné a mal
Si grant con vos avez veü.
Quanque j'ai apris et leü

Nature had certainly disturbed him,
When the maiden made him carry on his shoulders
A palfrey's saddle.*
Love makes a fool of a wise man*
If Nature urges him on,
When the very finest scholar in the world
Has himself saddled like a packhorse,
And is then made to go on all fours,
Crawling over the grass.
Pay heed to this proverb,
Which I shall relate at the appropriate time.
He had the maiden climb
On to his back and then he carried her;
The young maiden took delight
And pleasure from riding him.
She led him round the garden
And sang loud and clear:

This is the way he goes who is led by Love;
Master Fool is carrying me.
This is the way he goes who is led by Love,
*And this the way for those who support them.**

Alexander was in the tower;
He had clearly seen the whole performance.*
'Tutor', said the king, 'what is this?
I can well see that someone is riding you.
What! Have you gone out of your mind,
To be reduced to this state?
The other day you prohibited me so absolutely
From seeing her,
And now she has brought you to such a state
That there is no reason in you,
Instead, you are acting like a beast.'
Aristotle raised his head
And the maiden dismounted.
Then he replied shamefacedly:*
'I was right if I feared for you,
Who are all ablaze with youthful ardour
And burn with the true spirit of young manhood,
Since I, who am well on in years,
Could not stand up to Love,
And prevent it from bringing me to the sorry situation
In which you have seen me.
No matter what I have learned and read,

M'a deffet Nature en une eure,
Qui tote rien prent et deveure,
Et bien sachiez certainement,
Puis qu'il m'estuet apertement
Fere folie si aperte,
Vos n'en pouez partir sanz perte,
Ne sanz blasme de vostre gent.'*
Molt s'est rescous et bel et gent
Aristotes de son meschief,
Et la dame est venue a chief
De trestot qanqu'ele empris a.*
Miex velt estre sanz compaingnie
Qu'avoir compaingnon a amie.
Par cest lai vos di en la fin:
Tex cuide avoir le cuer molt fin,
Et molt sachant tot sanz essoine,
Qui l'a molt povre a la besoingne.

Nature, which seizes and devours everything,
Has deprived me of it in a single hour,
And be fully aware,
Since I have clearly been forced to
Perform such an obvious act of folly,
That you cannot escape it without loss,
Or without being blamed by your people.'*
Aristotle in very fine and elegant fashion
Had extricated himself from his misdeed,
And the lady had succeeded
In everything she had undertaken.*
It is better to be without companionship
Than to have a female companion.
Through this lay I say to you finally:
There are those who think their heart is very noble,
And without question very knowlegeable,
Who in a crisis find it very impoverished.

Notes

In view of the considerable differences between the six surviving manuscripts of *Aristote*, and also between the various editions, it is not possible here to make all the comparisons between the versions and editions that would in theory be desirable. References in these notes are made in particular to Eichmann and DuVal as editors of MS A and to Reid, Delbouille and Corbellari as editors of MS D (the recent edition by Infurna largely reprints Corbellari's edition). For diplomatic editions of all six manuscripts, see Corbellari, pp. 135–201.

8. AEF have 'la frume', B 'l'anfurne' and DS 'l'enfrume'. See the notes to this line in the editions by Corbellari and Infurna, and also Tobler-Lommatzsch, vol. 3, cols 365 and 2320.

27–28. For the rhyme 'felonnie':'vilenie' AEF have 'vilonie':'felonie' (for v. 27, where S reads 'As genz la vostre felonnie' A, for example, has 'Vostre mesdit, vo vilonie', ed. Eichmann and DuVal). In v. 28 for 'crueus vilenie' A has 'cuers de felonie'. In S it is not clear whether there should be a full stop at the end of v. 28, or whether this line should be regarded as introducing what follows, i.e. 'It is indeed cruel and villainous behaviour to …'. This second possibility creates a problem with regard to the meaning of the passage, but without such an introduction vv. 29–32 are syntactically unsatisfactory. Following v. 28 in S there should probably be a line introducing v. 29, similar to the reading of v. 32 in D: 'Ge croi que petit me vaudroit …'. However, the pattern of rhyming couplets in S shows that more than one line is missing here, and there should possibly be between our v. 28 and v. 29 the four lines contained in D: 'Mais envie point ne s'estanche. / Je ne vorrai faire arrestance / Ne demoree ici endroit; / Ge croi que petit me vaudroit …' ('But envy never ceases to flow. I should not care to delay or tarry at this point. I do not think it would do me any good') (v. 29 in S is v. 33 in Delbouille's edition). See Corbellari's note to his vv. 29–32.

30. In the wake of the *Chanson de Roland*, Ganelon became the archetypal traitor, as in this text he was responsible for the destruction of the rearguard. In Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*, for instance, King Arthur states that the 'felon' Count Angrés is worse than Ganelon (vv. 1075–76) and in Gerbert de Montreuil's *Roman de la Violette* we are given the following description of Lisiart: 'Qui molt fu fel et de mal art. / Plus ot en lui homme felon / K'il n'ot onkes en Guenelon' ('Who was very wicked and of low cunning. There was more of the wicked man in him than there ever was in Ganelon', vv. 249–51). Ganelon's name was given to one of the 'trois felons' in Beroul's *Tristan* (v. 3138) and in a well-known *pastourelle* by Thibaut de Champagne the shepherdess accuses knights of being worse than Ganelon: 'Pis valent que Guenelon' (v. 36, *Chansons des trouvères,* p. 610).

34. In A the tale is referred to as a 'ditié', whereas B has 'tracier' ('Or revenra a mon tracier'), which is presumably a scribal error for 'tratier' (= *traitier* or *traitié*).

37. For 'reson' A has 'novele', B 'verté' and DEF 'matiere'.

40. Confirmation that the term *vilenie* here refers to coarse or crude words is found in EF, where we read 'Sans vilain mot et sans retraite'. A few lines later the author declares that, whatever he writes, he will always avoid 'vilains moz' (S, v. 51).

43–44. The rhyme at the end of these lines varies from manuscript to manuscript: 'rimer':'ouvrer' (A); 'ourer':'nonmer' (B); 'mueuvre':'remueuvre' (D). These lines are missing in EF.

45. The rhyme-scheme indicates that following this line there is a line missing. In D the line reads 'Ne vilain mot n'i reprendrai' ('Nor will I repeat a vile word'). The omission of this line in no way compromises the sense of the passage in S.

47–48. In D these lines read 'Quar vilanie si desface / Tote riens et tolt sa saveur' ('For coarseness destroys everything and takes away its flavour', ed. Delbouille, vv. 53–54).

51. For 'voit arivant' in S (also BDF) A has 'vont anuiant' ('cause trouble').

52. For the expression 'de droit essamplaire' Reid suggests the translation 'according to the authentic source' (p. 136). But the meaning is more likely to be 'in an upright, moral tale' (Eichmann and DuVal). Although he presumably did not view his tale in the same way as Jacques de Vitry and other preachers (Introduction, n. 25 and p. 37), Henri clearly regarded it as a tale from which a moral should be drawn. Note also the use of the term *proverbe* in v. 364 and the observation on human behaviour contained in the statement in vv. 407–08.

54. Reid comments that fruit and spice, such as ginger or cinnamon, were eaten at dessert to sweeten the mouth (p. 116). To this one can add that they were also eaten when taking one's leave or when going to bed. The phrase 'en leu d'espece' is found in Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligés*, where it is also used metaphorically: 'Aprés, por boene boche feire, / Met sor sa leingue an leu d'espece / Un dolz mot …' ('Afterwards, to sweeten her mouth, she [Fenice] places on her tongue, instead of a spice, a sweet expression …', vv. 4352–54).

56. Alexander the Great lived from 356–323 BC. For his conquests, see the note to v. 68, and for the romance tradition on which the author of *Aristote* was drawing, see Introduction, note 31.

60. The author is drawing here on the traditional view of Alexander, who was well known in the Middle Ages for his generosity, one example of this being found in v. 77 of Henri d'Andeli's *Le Dit du Chancelier Philippe*: 'Il ert plus larges qu'Alixandres' (ed. Corbellari in *Les Dits d'Henri d'Andeli)*. Corrado Bologna describes the author's comment in v. 60 of *Aristote* as 'ironico' ('La generosità cavalleresca di Alessandro Magno', p. 377). Reid relates the form *mere* here to the term *maire* 'steward, agent, principal' (used in this sense in v. 317 of *Aristote*), which is usually masculine but also attested as a feminine substantive' (p. 116). However, for the notion of 'largesce' as 'mother', see Aristotle's funeral oration for Alexander in Branche IV of Alexandre de Paris's *Roman d'Alexandre*: '"Largesce estoit ta mere et tu ieres ses fis"' ('"Generosity was his mother and you were his son"', Lettres gothiques edition, p. 810, v. 1032).

55–62. The sentence beginning at v. 56 in S has no main verb as it stands (also in A). In place of 'Ce li fist' in v. 56 D has 'Soz lui fist' (v. 65), which alters the structure of the sentence, while nevetheless still making it awkward and difficult to understand. Delbouille emends 'Soz' to 'Ço', claiming that 'il y a au v. 65 rupture du mouvement logique de la phrase' (p. 93). Corbellari emends to 'Ce', the form found in AS. The syntax in S is loose, but 'Ce li fist' can make sense if 'qui' in v. 56 is ignored. The sentence would then be a plain statement of Alexander's aggressive behaviour and 'Ce li fist' would refer back to it: 'Largesse his mother was responsible for this [behaviour]'. As the sentence is complex, the poet may have overlooked the fact that in v. 56 'qui' begins a subordinate clause that is treated it as though it were a main clause.

65. Delbouille and Reid have fourteen lines here that are missing from S. See Introduction, pp. 18–20.

68. Various expressions were used in Old French texts to refer to India: e.g. *Inde la grant*, *Inde la grignor*, *Inde la major*, *Inde la menor*, *Inde la superior*. There is an example of *Inde major* in Alexandre de Paris's *Roman* d'*Alexandre*, Branche IV, v. 375 ('"Trestoute Ynde Maior, qui me fist mainte guerre'", Lettres gothiques edition, p. 768). For examples found in other romance texts, see Flutre, *Table des noms propres*, p. 254, and for those in *chansons de geste*, see Ernest Langlois, *Table des noms propres*, pp. 359–60, and André Moisan, *Répertoire des noms propres*, t. 1, vol. 2, p. 199. *Inde la major* (Greater India) seems to imply the whole of pre-1947 India, which would include modern Pakistan. In reality Alexander conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia and India/Pakistan as far as the Punjab region. Of the many books on Alexander and his conquests see, for example, on the invasion of India, A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest of Empire*, pp. 119–19, and Peter Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, pp. 381–411.

76. The expression 'en braie' (lit. 'in brail') belongs to the world of falconry. A brail was a soft leather strap with a three- or four-inch slit in the middle used to restrain a wild hawk. When one wing was held in the slit and the two ends tied round the bird, leaving the other wing free, the bird could not jump off or beat its wings, thus calming its natural restlessness and assisting the act of training.

101. Delbouille and Reid add sixteen lines here that are missing from S. See Introduction, pp. 18–20.

104. Aristotle lived from 384 to 322 BC. For literary references to Aristotle's association with Alexander, see Hémon, 'La Légende d'Alexandre et d'Aristote', and the section 'Alexander and Aristotle', in George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, pp. 105–10 (the index to this volume contains a number of references under the heading 'Aristotle … relations with Alexander as tutor and counsellor', esp. p. 100, pp. 231–32, p. 326, pp. 366–67). In vv. 16–116 of Branche III the Old French *Roman d'Alexandre* there is a section on the advice given by Aristotle to Alexander (Lettres gothiques edition, pp. 292–99; see Infurna, pp. 19–20).

109. For 'une seule estrange fame' D has 'une feme baude'. Delbouille emends to 'une seule fame' (his v. 144) and Corbellari to 'une estrange fame' (his v. 148). Reid retains the reading in D but comments that the following line makes it clear that 'the original must have included the word *seule*' (note to his v. 144, p. 116). The lure of a

foreign princess is a common theme in Old French, especially Saracen princesses in *chansons de geste* such as *Anseïs de Cartage, Fierabras* or *L'Entree d'Espagne*. A similar attraction survives in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*.

110–18. Vv. 110–11 are absent from DE and are not included in Reid's edition, in which our vv. 112–19 (his vv. 145–52) lack the indication that they are spoken by Alexander and are therefore attributed to the author and not regarded as direct speech. In the Eichmann and DuVal text, based on A, v. 111 (their v. 146) reads 'Tantost com dire li oï'. They translate v. 112 (their v. 147) as 'What must be done about it then?', whereas we interpret this line as meaning 'How many women should he love then?'. For 'de cele me' in v. 117 Delbouille has 'de ce home' and Reid 'de ce le roi'. See Reid, note to vv. 145–52 (p. 116), and Corbellari, note to vv. 146–48 (p. 122).

128. The theme of 'recreantise', the abandonment of chivalry and responsibility to one's knights in favour of spending time with one's wife or mistress, finds its most developed expression in Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide* (v. 2430ff.). See Introduction, p. 25.

133. The verb *destremper* or *destemprer* means literally 'mix, brew, moisten, wash away' and figuratively 'disturb, upset, cause disorder to, make unhealthy'. *Destrempé* here means 'disordered, unbalanced, unhealthy'.

139. After this line Eichmann and DuVal, and Delbouille have a six-line passage missing from S. See Introduction, pp. 18–20.

148. Eichmann and DuVal, and Delbouille (vv. 190–217) add a twenty-seven line passage at this point (vv. 190–216); see Introduction, pp. 18–20.

168. Eichmann and DuVal, and Delbouille (vv. 235–36) add two lines here.

176. For 'd'uevre plus male' A has 'de honte plus male' (Eichmann and DuVal, v. 244).

181–82. Dialectic (or Logic) formed with grammar and rhetoric the three subjects of the *trivium*. At the time *Aristote* was composed, Aristotle's reputation was principally as a logician. For 'clergie' in v. 182 A has 'gramaire' (Eichmann and DuVal, v. 249) and D 'graire' (Delbouille, v. 249, emends to 'gramaire'). Eichmann and DuVal add two lines here (their vv. 250–51), taken from D.

183. For 'Ou il savra trop d'escremie' in S other manuscripts have 'Dont saura il trop d'escremie'. The term e*scremie* can mean 'fencing' or 'jousting', but metaphorically it can also have the sense 'combat, fight, struggle'. Eichmann and DuVal translate as 'Then he will experience a lot of combat'. The meaning here seems to be that Aristotle will need to have a considerable knowledge of hand-to-hand fighting if he is to overcome the maiden and her wiles. Corbellari translates *escremie* as 'science du combat' (ed., p. 217), but the precise sense of the expression *savoir d'escremie* may be 'to be skilled at parrying' (*Old French–English Dictionary*, entry *escremie*).

185. There is almost certainly an omission here, even if only of a couplet. D has ten lines between v. 185 and v. 186 (see Introduction, pp. 17–19), all of which may have been inadvertently omitted from S in copying. But the text needs at least something equivalent to the last two lines of D: 'Mar vos a laidi ne gabé! / Or soiez demain en

abé' ('I was wrong to accuse and mock you! Now be on the watch tomorrow', Delbouille, vv. 264–65). Eichmann and DuVal add the ten lines of D (their vv. 225–64) to their edition of A.

189. Eichmann and DuVal add two lines here (their vv. 269–70), taken from DEF.

192–97. It is only in S that these lines are presented as a song sung by Alexander. AB omit the introductory lines 190–91 and DEF introduce Alexander's address to the maiden with 'Si li dist debonnairement'. For v. 194 (his v. 272), Delbouille reads "'Et se ge aim autrui que vos'" ("'And if I love anyone other than you'"). Unlike three of the four songs sung by the maiden, this song cannot be called a *rondeau*, as there is no refrain. There are several songs in Jehan Renart's *Guillaume de Dole* beginning 'Main se leva / levoit' ('He rose early', vv. 318, 532, 532, 1203, 1579), but they all have refrains and are clearly dance songs. Professor Samuel Rosenberg (personal correspondence) describes this song as being 'in a class by itself'. The name Erembo(u)rs (or Arembor) is known elsewhere in just one poem, printed in *Chanson des trouvères* (pp. 92–95) and Rosenberg, *'Chanter m'estuet'* (pp. 12–14). For further comments on this and other lyric poems in *Aristote*, see Introduction, pp. 30–33.

206. Eichmann and DuVal add two lines here (their vv. 285–86), taken from DEF, and in their v. 287 they prefer the reading of DEF to that of A.

215–16. The term *tresce* (English 'tress') refers both to the hair itself and to the way in which it is arranged. A *tresce* is a plait of hair worn by men and women. As in *Aristote*, it is associated with beauty and regularly described as being *blonde*, *grosse* (to convey the abundance of the hair) and *longue* (see Myriam Rolland-Perrin, *Blonde comme l'or*, pp. 31–32).

221–28. In D the text of this song varies considerably from the wording in our version. Delbouille prints the song as: '*C'est la jus desoz l'olive.* / **Or la voi venir, m'amie!** / *La fontaine i sort serie,* / *El glaioloi, desoz l'aunoi.* / **Or la voi, la voi, la voi, / La bele blonde! A li m'otroi!**' ('Over there, under the olive tree. Now I see her, my beloved, coming towards me! The spring emerges serenely there, amongst the irises, under the grove of alders, now I see here, see her, see her, my fair beloved! I give myself to her!', vv. 303–08; the bold is Delbouille's). The song is printed with minor variations in Nico van den Boogaard, *Rondeaux et refrains*, pp. 31–32 (*rondeau* no. 17; see also *refrain* no. 1447 on p. 221). Both Delbouille (p. 77) and van den Boogaard (pp. 31–32) print the versions of the song in ABS. This type of song is a *rondeau* (*rondel*, *rondet*). It can also be called a dance song ('chanson de danse' or 'chanson de carole') and its structure is AB aA ab AB (for further details, see Reid, note to v. 301ff., p. 117). There is a similar song in Jehan Renart's *Guillaume de Dole*, which is probably the earliest narrative to contain lyric insertions: 'C'est la jus desoz l'olive, / Robins enmaine s'amie. / La fontaine i sort serie / desouz l'olivete. / E non Deu! Robins enmaine / bele Mariete' ('Over there, beneath the olive tree, Robin takes his beloved. The spring emerges serenely there, beneath the olive tree. In God's name, Robin takes fair Mariete', vv. 522–27; see Delbouille, p. 26). See also *rondeau* no. 6 in van den Boogaard, p. 28, and *refrain* no. 675 on p. 153.

235. Aristotle is first referred to as coming from Athens in Branche I of Alexandre de Paris's *Roman d'Alexandre*: 'Primes i est venus Aristotes d'Athaine' (Lettres gothiques edition, p. 88, v. 273, see also p. 182, v. 1734).

236. The adjective 'lointainnes' seems more likely to mean 'constant, loyal' rather than 'lointain, en tant que s'y s'attache (sic) un sentiment d'exception' (Corbellari, ed., p. 220).

237. Reid maintains the reading of D here: 'Sont molt bones a raproschier' (his v. 315). He translates as 'good to further', which he explains as 'worthy of encouragement' (p. 117). Delbouille and Corbellari (their v. 317) prefer the reading of the other manuscripts, including S.

246. The English term 'paragon' is used here to render the Old French *mireor* (text v. 247). Corbellari observes that the maiden draws together the narrative and lyric elements of the text: 'Miroir de l'amour, elle est en même temps la matérialisation épiphanique du texte et de la conjonction qu'il réalise entre la dynamique du récit et l'épanchement statique des chansons insérées' (*La Voix des clercs*, p. 98).

256. For 'outrage' A has 'honmage' and EF 'ostage'. Delbouille prints 'ostage', as this line (his v. 336) is missing in D.

260. There is no mention of 'filosophie' in A, which reads 'Et plus en sui aspres et aigres' ('And I am more bitter and sour', Eichmann and DuVal, v. 340).

268. Eichmann and DuVal add five lines here (their vv. 349–53), taken from DEF. See Introduction, pp. 18–20.

273. Such garlands (*chapel*, *chapelet*) were popular in the Middle Ages and they were worn by both men and women. There are several examples in Jehan Renart's *Guillaume de Dole*, including one that associates a garland with mint: 'Un chapel de flors et de menthe / Li dona la fille son oste' ('A garland of flowers and of mint was given to him by the daughter of his host', vv. 950–51). See also vv. 204–05, 1544–45, 2504, 2536–37, 3425–26, the *Lai de l'Ombre*, v. 282 ('Et chapel de flors et de vanche' / 'And a garland of flowers and periwinkles') and *Fouke le Fitz Waryn*, p. 27, ll. 37–38 ('Avoyt vestu la teste de un chapelet de rose vermayl' / 'He had on his head a garland of red roses'). For further examples, see Rolland-Perrin, *Blonde comme l'or*, e.g. p. 148. The garland in *Aristote* is clearly important as it is mentioned again in v. 290.

276. There is a line here in D that is missing from ABEFS: 'Dras i gaoit mechinete' / 'The girl was washing clothes there' (Delbouille, v. 361). Like that in vv. 221–28, the song in vv. 276–79 is also a *rondeau*. See *Guillaume de Dole*, vv. 1846–51, and van den Boogaard, p. 32 (*rondeau* no. 18) and p. 126 (*refrain* no. 369).

296–304. This song is a *chanson de toile* 'weaving song' (it can also be called a *chanson d'histoire*), a lyrico-narrative genre found in northern French but not in Occitan poetry. Twenty or so examples have survived as interpolations in romances such as *Guillaume de Dole* or in thirteenth-century songbooks. These songs are brief tales of desire from the perspective of young noblewomen. The song of Count Gui, the first stanza of which is sung here by the maiden, has survived. In the Lettres gothiques volume *Chanson des trouvères* the text appears as: 'En un vergier, lez une fontenelle / Dont clere est l'onde et blanche la gravele / Siet fille de roi, sa main a sa maxele; / En souspirant, son douz ami rapele: / "Aé, cuens Guis, amis! / La vostre amors me tout solaz et ris"' (p. 98). See Delbouille, p. 28, Corbellari's note to v. 388, and van den Boogaard, p. 94 (*refrain* no. 18).

310–12. The reference here is to the tale of Salomon and Marcoul (*Dialogus Salomonis et Marcolphi*), in which Marcoul sends some mice to Salomon who immediately abandons the candle he was looking after in order to chase them. The tale was intended to demonstrate the superiority of nature (*natura*) over nurture (*nutritura*). See Gaston Paris, review of Héron, *Œuvres de Henri d'Andeli*, p. 140, E. Cosquin, 'Le Conte du chat et de la chandelle', Delbouille, pp. 100–01, Infurna, pp. 81–82, and Eckhard Rattunde, *Li Proverbes au vilain*, pp. 35–43.

317. The expression *estre prevost et maire de* (literally 'to be bailiff and steward of') means here 'to be completely in the service of'.

332. As Corbellari points out (note to v. 415), the maiden's feigned ignorance ('"Ne sai qui …"', v. 330) is ironic and aimed at bamboozling Aristotle all the more.

336. After this line Eichmann and DuVal add two lines (their vv. 423–24), taken from DEF.

350. For 'liement' A has 'briefment' (Eichmann and DuVal, v. 437).

352. After this line E has a forty-line passage (printed by Delbouille, pp. 83–84, and Corbellari, ed., p. 183, p. 185).

353. For 'Nature en esfroi' A has 'amors a desroi' (Eichmann and DuVal, v. 440) and D 'amors mis en effroi'. Delbouille adopts the reading of BES (his v. 440). The reading of F here is defective.

355. After this line Eichmann and DuVal add four lines (their vv. 443–46), taken from D. After v. 444 in Delbouille ('Quant desor le dos li ert mise'), E adds a thirty-two line passage (printed in Delbouille, pp. 84–85, and Corbellari, ed., p. 185, p. 187).

356. For this line D reads 'Bien fet Amors d'un viel rados' (Delbouille, v. 447). For a discussion of the meaning of the term 'rados', see Héron, 1880, pp. 84–85, Reid, note to v. 439, Corbellari, ed., note to v. 447, and Zufferey in Corbellari and Zufferey, 'Un cas de paternité', pp. 68–69. The notion that love turns a wise man into a fool ('Bien fet Amors d'un sage fol') is not new. It is found, for example, with reference to Dido in the *Roman d'Eneas* ('Amor l'a fait de sage fol', v. 1408) and to Alexander in *Cligés* ('Bien fet amors de sage fol', v. 1633).

366. For this line A reads 'Par mi le vergier se deporte' (Eichmann and DuVal, v. 457) and D has 'Et Alexandre se deporte' (Delbouille, v. 458, emends to 'La damoisele le deporte').

370–73. Another *rondeau*. After v. 370 D has a line that is not found in the other manuscripts: 'Bele Doe i ghee laine' ('Beautiful Doe is washing wool', Delbouille, v. 462). Corbellari (p. 188) prints this line in error as part of his diplomatic transcription of C (our S). Bele Doe is the heroine of a song of a woman in love. See *Guillaume de Dole*, vv. 1203–16. The term *musart* in v. 317 ('imbecile, dreamer, scatterbrain, philanderer') derives from the verb *muser* 'spend one's time, loaf around, dream', which in its turn is based on Old French *mus* 'muzzle, snout'. Earlier in the text, Aristotle had reprimanded Alexander for his 'musage', for which he was paying too high a price (v. 139).

375. After this line A has two lines not found in other manuscripts: 'Qui lui donast trestout l'empire / Ne se tenist il pas de rire' ('If anyone had given him the whole

empire, he would not have been prevented from laughing', Eichmann and DuVal, vv. 472–73).

387. For 'honteusement' A has 'honestement' (Eichmann and DuVal, v. 485). After this line Eichmann and DuVal add two lines from DE (their vv. 486–87).

401–02. The reading of this line ("'Vos n'en pouez partir sanz perte'") is shared by AB, whereas EF have "'Vo(u)s n'en poiés ale(i)r sans perte', a reading that has been adopted by Delbouille (v. 501) and Corbellari (v. 503). The 'en' in our reading seemingly refers to 'folie' in the previous line. Aristotle appears to be making the point that Alexander still faces a dilemma: on the one hand, he cannot escape from the foolish behaviour that love inevitably induces without incurring a sense of loss or damage, but, on the other hand, if he yields to his desire he will inevitably be censured by his followers (v. 402).

406. Following this line there should be one rhyming with 'empris a' before the six-line conclusion. However, the line may well have been deliberately suppressed by the copyist. In vv. 401–06, immediately preceding the 'lost' line, S is closest to the reading of AB, and also fairly close to that of EF. On the assumption that the AB tradition was being followed, the next line would then read: 'Et li rois forment l'em prisa' ('And the king esteemed her for it greatly'), thus expressing Alexander's approval for his mistress's vengeance. This line would have accorded ill with the sentiment the copyist wished to express in his conclusion in vv. 407–08. V. 406 of our edition corresponds to v. 506 in the editions by Delbouille and by Eichmann and DuVal, and to v. 508 in the edition by Corbellari. These editions do not include our vv. 407–12, which are not found in other manuscripts, but they do have over seventy further lines of text, taken mainly from E (Delbouille and Corbellari take their last six lines from AB; see Introduction, pp. 18–20).

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