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Antonio Cortijo Ocaña

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THE COMPLICATION OF THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE IN 15TH CENTURY PROSE LITERATURE ON LOVE: THE *SOMNI DE FRANCESC ALEGRE RECITANT LO PROCÉS D'UNA QÜESTIÓ ENAMORADA*

ANTONIO CORTIJO OCAÑA

As a result of the massive cultivation of the literature of love during the 15th century, its topics and lyric-narrative structures became more and more repetitive. Repetition derived from the inability to innovate on the few possible plots that dealt to exhaustion with the never ending sufferings of love, the lover's devotion to his lady, and the lady's disdain of her adorer. Authors often encountered great difficulty in overcoming this *repetitio* and felt the need to employ *variatio* as a means to surpass topical rigidity. While there existed some degree of innovation in the plots, literature on love considered technical variation as a rather practical solution (Rohland). Thus, stylistic complication through the use of *colores rhetorici* and of narrative structure complexity were commonly utilized. While most critics have studied rhetorical complexity in 15th century literature (for compositions written in prose, Whinnom, "Diego de San Pedro," *Obras completas, Diego de San Pedro*; for lyric texts, Whinnom, *La poesía*; Beltrán), intertextuality and contacts among literary genres *de amore* should also be considered (Cátedra, *Història, Amor*; Deyermond, *Tradiciones*). Readers of these genres were supposed to be able to recognize and identify the myriad of intertextual references that appeared in the texts, thus allowing the literary code to be fully effective. The deciphering process, a specialized task for the modern scholarly critic, was for the 15th century reader the most enjoyable part, along with the very fictitious and unreal nature of the lover's speeches used in compositions *de amore*. In this study I shall take up the former approach—study of the intertextuality—, focusing on the complex allegory on love created by Francesc Alegre in his *Somni recitant lo procés d'una qüestió enamorada* (*Somni*).

Francesc Alegre is known to us as the translator of Leonardo Bruni's *Primera Guerra Púnica* and Ovid's *Metamorfosis* (Riquer, *Història* III, 249; Fàbrega). He also composed four allegoric narratives in prose, included in the *cançoneret* known as *Jardinet d'orats*: the *Raonament entre Francesch Alegre y Esperança*, tramès per ell a una dama; the *Sermó d'amor*; the *Requesta d'amor recitant una altercació*

entre la Voluntat y la Raó; and the *Somni*. Palau y Dulcet (*Manual*) cites editions of the *Passió de Jesucrist*, the *Vida de Josafat* (Miquel i Planas, *Estudi* 220-221), and the *Suma gloria de Venecia en metros italianos* (nos 6578-82). Ganges (103-05),¹ the best and most complete bibliographical source for Alegre, adds to the aforementioned works the *Resposta de Francech Alegre a la demanda de Romeu Llull*, the *Vida de Nostra Dona*, and *Mi dolor es de tal mensa*, written in Castilian at the end of the *Raonament*. As for biographical references, Alegre was *barceloní*, "mercader, que fou conseller del Consell de Cent de Barcelona entre els anys 1480 i 1486, i que abans havia viscut alguns anys a Sicília" (Pacheco-Bover).

By the time Alegre composed his works (ca. 1470-1500) a national literature written exclusively in Catalan still existed, albeit most Catalan authors were bilingual (Alegre himself was among them) and a close relationship existed between Castilian and Catalan literatures (Cocozzella; Ganges). This fact contributes to the entangled intertextual connections that we shall explore in Alegre's text. The *Somni* belongs to a group of *proses sentimentals i al·legòriques* produced ca. 1475 by various authors.² Pere Joan Ferrer was the author of *Pensament*; Francesc Carrós Pardo composed the *Regoneixença e moral consideració contra les persuasions, vicis e forces de amor*; the *Faula de les amors de Neptuno y Diana, ab la transformació d'aquella en roca per la ira de Cupido, feta per Claudiano, poeta, y trasladada en vulgar de catalana lengua* is an anonymous text belonging to the same group; Francesc Moner wrote *L'ànima d'Oliver*; Romeu Llull created *Lo despropriament d'Amor*. Inspired in the allegorical fashion modeled after Dante's *Commedia* and with examples in *cançonercançonero* poetry and in sentimental romances, these texts differ in that some defend a chaste concept of love, with an explicit eulogy of matrimony, while others defend a more mundane. Petrarchan influences were equally important (see *Regoneixença* and *Somni*), as was the literary atmosphere inspired by the arrival of the tradition of the *belle dame sans merci*. A number of these prose texts include fragments in Castilian, revealing a tendency to literary overlaps and cross-references between Catalan and Castilian literatures. Castilian texts reflect the same tendency, as exemplified by the mention of Oliver—the Catalan translator of Chartier's *La belle dame*—in the *Triste deleytación*, composed by a Catalan author (Riquer, *Triste* 12-16).

The plot of Alegre's *Somni* is as follows: The narrator informs a

¹ Ganges also provides a complete reference to MSS and secondary bibliographical sources. See also Serés for an extremely detailed analysis of the use of medieval and neoplatonic theories of love in Alegre's works.

² Modern editions of this work are to be found in Miquel i Planas, Pacheco and Bover, and Ribera Llopis.

female second person ("tu") that while longing for her love and living in despair he fell asleep and had a dream. In this vision (*visió*) he saw a marvelous procession of Love's Court, consisting of a cart guided by an old man (Love) and preceded by a group of lawyers. Among those following the procession the narrator recognized Petrarch, who was reciting excerpts from his *Trionfi*. Petrarch, who was accompanied by Laura and was to be the narrator's guide through the vision, informs him that he who wishes to make a claim to Love should come to the tribunal of Love. At the Court, he will be defended by lawyers and upon the final verdict may be granted the love of his beloved. Thus, the character-narrator Francesc Alegre addresses an official claim to Love. Petrarch will be his defender and Laura will be his lady's attorney. At this point, three sets of witnesses arrive at the tribunal in order to testify: Jacob, David, Salamó, Samsó; Febo, Eneas, Aquil·les, Demòfon; Lançolot, Pere Primer d'Aragó, Paris, and Macías. In the wake of the witnesses' testimony and without knowing Love's final decision, the character-narrator awakens from the vision and desires to know what the verdict would have been. He writes a letter to his friend, Antoni Vidal, asking him for advice about his love affair. Vidal, in turn, addresses a letter to Alegre in return, urging him to pursue his lady's love with all his strength.

Although the plot of the *Somni* does not offer great originality, Alegre seeks to attract the reader through a complicated net of intertextual connections that link his text to a great range of genres. This technique, of course, assumes the reader's familiarity with the referred texts which enables the satisfactory reception of the work. Furthermore, a highly rhetorical style, more than obscure at times, contributes to the baroque structure of the work and creates a complicated narrative organization which resembles the embroidered tapestries mentioned in the vision.³ The pleasure obtained by readers through this deconstruction and the enjoyable effect of the *Somni*'s verbosity, is essential in explaining the great success of this sort of literature. The *Somni* begins with the use of the first person in what seems to be a typical introduction to an allegorical love-type narration. As a counterpoint to that use, Alegre turns the first sentence into an apostrophe to the lady (second person): "Vengut lo jorn, qui em fa record d'aquell quan vós singular me cativás, (...) en extrem m'enutge" (123). The effect created is that of the dialogic literature (*jo - tu*) as used either in epistolography or in dialogue-debate varieties. This device brings the composition closer to epistolography, for the reader

³ "...circuït de draps presentant los actes gran dels Romans Cèsar Octaviá, Proteselao, Aquil·les, Pompeu, Eneas lo troiá, a qui seguien Creusa, Dido i Lavinia" (124). Quotations are taken from Pacheco and Bover.

assumes that the narrative to follow is Alegre's own letter-account to his lady of the vision he experienced. In fact, epistolary literature commonly uses an introductory *salutatio* in which the two grammatical persons are clearly expressed (Murphy). In addition, letters and dialogues were frequently utilized in the literature of love, so much so that the reader could expect to encounter a dialogue between the lover and his lady or an epistolary interchange between them.⁴ On the other hand, the expectation created at the beginning of the *Somni* is fulfilled with the epistolary interchange between the characters Alegre and Antoni Vidal at the end, albeit the expected frame of the lovers' letter is altered. Instead, Alegre introduces an *epistula familiaris*, thus modifying the structure according to the pattern of Petrarch's *De familiaribus* and the epistolary literature *de amicitia*. Moreover, we could postulate the influence of Latin literature and its use of *Rinkomposition* as a structural technique for the annular composition of the *Somni*, since Alegre participated in the humanistic delight in Classical Latin literature and was a translator of Latin works. He may also have been influenced by two other sources in his use of this literary device. First, Castilian, Portuguese and Catalan sentimental and allegorical romances (*Siervo libre de Amor*, *Sátira de inelice e infelice vida*, *Triste deleytación*, *Regoneixença i moral consideració*, etc.) had included narrations within an epistolary frame and these sentimental texts revealed a tendency towards circularity in their composition. Furthermore, an additional narrative structure may be taken into consideration, that of love lyric as composed in *cancionero* and *cançoner* poetry. In these song books there exists a large number of compositions ending in an *envoi*, which can be traced to Provençal troubador lyric. This ending was used equally in Galician-Portuguese, Catalan, and Castilian poetry from the 12th century onward.

In my view Alegre explicitly frames the *Somni* within the *salutatio* and the *petitio*,⁵ thus creating the main structure of the *Somni*: the letter frame. In order to further complicate the intertextual structure of the work, Antoni Vidal's letter may also be read as the verdict that Alegre never heard in his vision (Cupid's verdict). Thus, we can add a new "legal" frame formed by the *suplicació en l'audiència* and Antoni

⁴ Two compositions dating from the late 14th century employed these two devices: the anonymous *Història de l'amat Frondino i de Brisona* (modeled after Machaut's *Livre du voir-dit*) included for the first time narrative verse and love letters in prose; Metge's *Lo Somni* is the first attempt after Llull to introduce the dialogue in vernacular literature. In Castilian, Rodríguez del Padrón also used both procedures combined (letters and dialogue) in his continuation of Ovid's *Heroides*, *Bursario*.

⁵ "Per ço hauré a molta gràcia de vós, Antoni Vidal, com de persona avisada e de qui en tal cas se deu fer compte, me sente ajudar, consellant ab vostres escrits, quin camí seguint, ..." (135-36).

Vidal's *resposta i consell* to the main letter structure. Moreover, in an attempt to strengthen the intertextual construction of the *Somni*, Vidal plays a role as a judge similar to that played by Love himself.

The beginning of the *Somni* links this composition to allegorical literature. Once Alegre-character falls asleep, he dreams "ésser en un lloc tan plasant que, tot altre oblidat, digne se mostrava de ver avantatge ser mencionat" (123). Although the taste for allegorical literature was well established in the Iberian Peninsula at the time of Alegre's works, it is important to point out that Italian allegory originally entered the Iberian Peninsula (Rubió i Lluch) through Catalonia and its reception of Dante's century. Neither "Illion," nor a "teatre romà," nor the "casa de Minerva" could compare to the beauty of what Alegre saw. The float that transported Love and the "flota de gent, ab processos en mà, a qui seguia un forn, sobre un carro, on de continuu a dues parts obraven e acabaven una sort de sagetes" (124) could have been inspired by Dante's *carro triunfale* (*Purg.* XXVIII, XXIX). However, as the reference to Partite makes explicitly clear, it is Petrarch's *Trionfi*, and *Triumphus Cupidinis* in particular, that Alegre had in mind when writing the episode:⁶

Ivi fra l'erbe, già del pianger fioco,
vinto dal sonno, vidi una gran luce,
e dentro, assai dolor con breve gioco,
vidi un vitorioso e sommo duce
pur com'un di color che 'n Campidoglio
triumfal carro a gran gloria conduce. (Bezzola 10-15)

Similarly, in Petrarch's work there is a procession of exemplary lovers and an unidentified "una'ombra" who acts as Petrarch's guide, functioning in a parallel manner to Petrarch's role in the *Somni* with regard to Alegre-character. The Italian source, nevertheless, is slightly modified by Alegre's pen. What in Petrarch's work is just a procession, becomes a *tribunal Amoris* in the *Somni*, thus adding a new reference to the intertextual relationships of the work. This thematic modification is inspired in the literary and social fashion of the love courts (Burrus; Boase). Yolande de Bar's *flirt* (Pagés, *La poésie*), suggested by Marie de Champagne's court games, prompted a similar *mode* in Castilian and Portuguese courts. This courtly atmosphere, along with a broad literary tradition, was the social and literary environment in which we should envision Alegre's work.

⁶ "...conceguí'l, no perquè vist l'hagués jamés, mes per les passions que raonava recitant la peleia d'Amor i de Laura, de què era informat per lo primer triúmfo dels cinc seus excel·lents" (124). One must mention that Petrarch's *Triumphus Cupidinis* influenced Santillana's three allegorical compositions (*Triumphete*, *Sueño*, *Infierno*), in particular the first one, where a reference to Love's "carro triumphal" (v. 114) also appears (Lapesa).

Andreas Capellanus' *De Amore* is yet another reference we may add to the dense net of literary threads in the *Somni*. The late 14th century Catalan translation of Capellanus' work (Pagès, *De Amore*) is a keystone for the understanding of the literature of love in the Iberian Peninsula. Antoni de Domenec Mascó's translation evinces the vogue of *curialitas* ("cortesía") (34), in *amoris exercitu militare* ("cavallereiar en la host d'amor") (35) and *magnas curias visitare* ("usar en grans corts") (36) in Yolande de Bar's court.⁷ This translation offers a description of Love's palace in the manner of a *locus amoenus* and speaks of "la cavalcada del déu d'Amor," serving as a possible source of inspiration for Alegre's *Somni* (LI-LXIV).⁸ Petrarch's *Triumphus* (where both elements appear, the Love's palace and the "cavalcada") could also be a valid source in itself, although the description of the *locus amoenus* and the idea of the *tribunal Amoris* are better represented in Capellanus's work. However, since both (Petrarch's *Triumphus* and Capellanus's translation) were available to Alegre we should consider their possible influence on the *barceloni's* narrative. The 14th century Catalan lyric texts *Vesió* and *Salut*, respectively influenced by Dante's allegory and Capellanus' *De Amore*, could equally be considered literary sources (Meyer). Furthermore, *De Amore* or *Regles de amor* includes dialogues between lovers and precepts on love. Its dialogic form and the pseudoletters contained within it exerted an as yet not well recognized influence on other forms of sentimental literature. Capellanus' *De Amore* and Petrarch's *Triumphus Cupidinis* are the main literary source from a thematic point of view, while epistolography and the vision offer to Alegre the main narrative structure for his composition.

An additional work which may have exerted an influence on Alegre is the Catalan version of the French *Chastel d'Amours*, which is found in the same manuscripts that contain Chartier's works. This anonymous translation consists of "cinquante-quatre demandes et réponses d'amour" (Pagès, "La version" 24). As Pagès points out,

...le caractère courtois de la plupart de ces questions les a fait rattacher aux jeux

⁷ In search of intertextual connections in Alegre's work, the use of *curialitas* and the widespread use of Capellanus' *Tractatus* should be related to the name of *Curial* in the chivalric novel *Curial e Güelfa* (1461-62). Again, chivalric and sentimental romances, as literature of *amore*, appear to be closer than historically considered.

⁸ "La cavalcada del déu de l'Amor és el quadre segon. Andreu, perdut per un bosc on cavalcava al seguici del seu Senyor, té un *Somni* i veu de sobte una sumptuosa comitiva de cavallers i d'amazones qui porta al davant el déu d'Amor, cenyit d'àurea diadema" (Pagès, *De Amore* XXI). It is also important to point out that the Catalan translation of *De Amore* could have exerted a definite influence on the *Vesió* and the *Salut d'amour*. Bernat de Sò's *Vesió* is a late 14th century allegorical Catalan text and the *Salut* is "la narració de les joies i dels patiments reservats a les enamorades en la vida futura" (Pagès, *De Amore* XXV; Meyer).

partis et, plus directement encore, aux "Jugements d'amour" que nous a conservés le *De arte honeste amandi*, d'André le Chapelain. C'est dans la France septentrionale qu'elles sont devenues pour ainsi dire un genre littéraire dont on a découvert jusqu'à seize spécimens. (363)

In addition, Chartier's *La belle dame sans merci*, linked to the *Chastel d'Amours*, influenced the literary tone of Petrarch-character's words in Alegre's composition. Just as Catalan translations of the *Chastel* existed, there was also a Catalan version of the *La belle dame*, translated by one Oliver and accessible to Alegre (Riquer, *Alain*). The influence of this work was widespread in Catalonia and the Iberian Peninsula during the second half of the 15th century.⁹ Thus, two more stitches are sewn into the embroidered tapestry of intertextual references: the tone of the *belle dame sans merci* and the generic pattern of the *jugements d'amour* and the lovers' dialogue.

Parallel to the *jugements*, Alegre may also have profited from the genre of *lletres de batalla* (Riquer, *Lletres*; Orejudo). The dispute between Petrarch-Laura and Alegre and his lady must be linked to the bellicose figures of most of the witnesses. Thus, David, Samson, Achilles, etc. convey their respective worlds of battles, fights, and tournaments. King Pere, in his testimony, clearly expresses this idea when speaking of his ancestor: "...qui de la menys presada dona de Montpeller feu néixer aquell Jancme, no menor d'Aleixandre en grandesa d'ànimo, qui conquistà València, e l'illa de Mallorques..." (134). Samson, as well, views love as a military conquest: "Tants mil·lenars de filisteus no m'han pogut vèncer, ne les portes tancades a mon eixir contrastaren (...) e tu Senyor est sol estat lo vencedor" (131). The trial at Love's Court becomes a lovers' challenge and defiance. Again, lyric poetry and the numerous compositions included in *cançoners* dealing with battles of love, tournaments of love, and conquests of love constitute obvious referents in the reader's mind as suggested by Alegre.¹⁰

After Alegre's *suplicació* and Amor's intervention, Petrarch and Laura initiate a *controversia*. Modeled after the debate literature with its long-standing roots in Romance literary tradition—and particularly the genre of the *tensó*—, the controversy links the *Somni* to the formal structure of the *disputatio* as it first appears in Capellanus' *De Amore*. This genre, originated in the Second Sophistic as an attempt to revitalize the methods and precepts of lost forensic practice, was considered a useful device to express the dichotomy of thought

⁹ See, among others, *L'ànima d'Oliver* by Francesc Moner (Ribera Llopis).

¹⁰ Due to the close relationship between Santillana's love-allegories and Alegre's *Somni*, one should also mention the battle between the armies of Mars-Venus and Diana in *El Sueño* (XLIX-LXVII).

through dialectical interchange during the Middle Ages and was commonly utilized in the Castilian *dezires e requestas*. The latter are likely to be a direct source as a genre for Alegre's work.¹¹

Once Petrarch advises punishment for the lady's impiety and Laura defends Alegre's beloved's right to accept the lover of her choice, three sets of lawyers-witnesses approach the tribunal to give testimony. Alegre establishes three types of lovers, namely "la judaica nació," "els servidors d'ídoles," and "els cristians enamorats." This partition corresponds to Jews, Pagans, and Christians, the three medieval categories that convey respective concepts of the world to the reader and were endlessly opposed or reconciled during the Middle Ages and the 16th and 17th centuries. Jacob, David, Salamó, Samsó, Febo, Eneas, Aquil·les, Demòfon and Lançolot are also characters in Petrarch's *Trionfi*.¹² The three extant characters (Pere, Paris, Macías) must be inserted within a Catalan and Iberian Peninsular literary context. In addition to the implicit disagreement among the three groups of witnesses, Alegre creates two further levels of controversy. First, he establishes an opposition between contemporary (rei Pere, Paris, Macías) and non-contemporary characters. This literary device was inspired by Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* and *De mulieribus claris*, in which the *cataldense* introduces historical characters among other fictional ones (Ricci). The same procedure was used in Catalan literature (directly influenced by Boccaccio) as early as Metge's *Lo Somni*, in which king Joan I is one of the three characters of the dialogue. Later, in Catalan and Castilian literatures we discover several instances of this practice. Moreover, Catalan chivalric literature (for instance *Curial e Güelfa*, which was known to Alegre) usually combines fictional and contemporary characters within the framework of historical contemporary events and geography. As for the meaning of the device, it serves to confound the boundaries between fiction and reality in order to add

¹¹ Along with this generic influence of the *cancionero* poetry (and in particular the *dezires y requestas*), one should mention the importance that debate modalities of literature exerted on the sentimental romance. Juan de Flores's *Grisel y Mirabella* and *Triunfo de amor* are examples of this use, and the latter illustrates a not yet well studied relationship with the theme of the *infierno de enamorados*. See Waley and Grieve.

¹² Lists of paradigmatic lovers, although in use since Ovid's *Heroides*, had become commonly utilized in love literature following the example of Boccaccio and Petrarch. One of the books in which this list is more exhaustive and complete is Gower's *Confessio Amantis* which arrived to the Iberian Peninsula in the late 14th century with Felipa de Lencastre, queen of Portugal (Cortijo Ocaña, "La traducción"; "La novela"). Examples of paradigmatic lovers also appear in several compositions of the *Cancionero de Baena* and in Rodríguez del Padrón's *Servo libre de amor*. Santillana's *Triunphete*, st. XII, shows a close parallel to Alegre's list: "Vy David e Salamón / e Jacob, leal amante, / con sus fuerças a Sansón / e Dalida más puxante; / de los xristianos, a Dante, / vi Tristán e Lançarote / e con él a Galeote, / discreto e sotil mediante" (Gómez Moreno, *Kerkhof* 112).

verisimilitude. Secondly, Alegre creates a more interesting dispute between peninsular and non-peninsular lovers: Macías *vs.* Paris: "Vós, Paris, com a francès estàveu aturat en raonar a la noble Viana, no perquè de secret volguesseu gonyar fama, mes fallint-vos raons de què los nostres espanyols no freturen" (135). While Macías had become a paradigm of the Spanish lover in *cancionero* poetry,¹³ texts in which Paris and Viana function as role models for lovers also abounded in Castilian and Catalan sources. P. Cátedra (*Història* 26), among others, recalls Francesc Imperial, the inventories of the libraries of Alfonso the Magnanimous and Guillem de Cabanyelle's inventory, *Curial e Güelfa*, *Glòria d'amor*, and *Triste deleytació*.

Alegre's opposition of Spanish and French lovers implies that the reader is well familiarized with such a dichotomy. Taking into account the efforts since the end of the 14th century at translating French romances into Catalan and Castilian, Alegre's opposition reveals the "Hispanicization" of several of the French sentimental plots and of the readers' familiarity with this practice.¹⁴ As for *Paris e Viana*, the story was known in Catalonia at least since the time of Joan I and Yoland de Bar, when the original French romance text likely arrived to the Iberian Peninsula, via Anjou and Pierre de Beauvais (Cátedra, *Història* 32). Moreover, by mentioning Paris and Viana Alegre introduces the reader to the sentimental-chivalric fictional world, yet again widening the reader's intertextual horizons of expectation. Thus, the circular epistolary and autobiographic procedures used by sentimental fiction texts—already suggested from the beginning of the *Somni*—contribute to the use of a *Rinkomposition* structural disposition in Alegre's work, linking the sentimental tone to the sentimental structural and formal techniques.¹⁵

The close connections between Santillana's *Infierno* (and more specifically his three love-allegories) and Alegre's *Somni* can be expanded to include the relationship of Alegre's work to the vision-poem *Glòria de amor* (*Cançoners d'obres enamorades*, fols. 1-24 [Hea-

¹³ One could mention, among many other texts, Santillana's *El Infierno de los enamorados* (LXI-LXIV), and Rodríguez del Padrón's *Servo libre de amor* (Prieto 110).

¹⁴ Once again, Santillana's *Infierno* might be the source for Alegre's opposition of French and Spanish lovers: "...e finalmente Maças / en España fuy llamado" (LXIV).

¹⁵ Paris and Viana's story, apart from its obvious sentimental tone, offers an early example of lover's letters. The story itself might be linked to that of Troilus and Criseide. The lover's triangle was utilized by Ovid in his *Heroides* and by Boccaccio in his *Filostrato*. This latter work was translated early into French in the same Angevin milieu that produced *Paris et Viane*. The Troilus motif was so prevalent as to inspire Rodríguez del Padrón to write two original love letters (from Troilus to Briseide and from Briseide to Troilus) in his *Bursario* (Saquero-Rolán 235-247). Again, the influence of Troilus's story and *Paris e Viana* together is observed in the *Història de Pierres de Provença* (Miquel i Planas, *Història*), thus showing the close relationship between sentimental texts in both prose and verse in Catalan and Castilian literatures.

ton]). Written in 1462-63 (Riquer, *Història* III, 158), this latter work may be considered as a direct source for the *Somni*. Apart from the theme of the poem (*infierno de enamorados*) and its literary sources (*Roman de la Rose*, *Divina Commedia*, Boccaccio's *Amorosa Visione*, *Filocolo*, *Filostrato*, *Teseide*, *Ninfale Fiesolano*, *Ameto*, *Fiammeta*, and *Corbaccio*, Petrarch's *Trionfi* and *De viris illustribus*, the French or Catalan *Paris et Viane*, Santillana's *Triumphete*, *Sueño* and *Infierno*, and Ausias March's lyric compositions (Heaton 41-45), which are obviously related to those of Alegre's composition, there are numerous passages in Rocaberti's work that are particularly salient. Thus, Petrarch appears in the poem with other Italian, French, and Provençal poets, all of whom recite their respective works (vv. 744-67). As in Alegre's work, there exists a poetic rivalry of nations between Italy and France in the 1462-3 composition:

Estranys dictats	e poesies belles	
Los bons amants	cascu dells no dubtave	
Dir ne comptar	d'amor grans maravelles.	
Lurs rahons grans	viu esser infinides;	
Mes a la fi	jo viu quel de Florança	
França vence	per diverses partides.	(756-61)

Macías appears in vv. 1040, 1047, and 1081. Again, there are several references to contemporary characters, the most important being the "Compte de Luna" (v. 1427). Although the final meaning of Rocaberti's composition is different from that of Alegre ("...but I had learned that those who abstained from love profited most" (Heaton 41), when the poet-character is received by Cupid, the god of love addresses a speech to Rocaberti (vv. 1251-1344) that resembles Antoni Vidal's advice. In Heaton's words (37), Cupid proclaims: "I will grant him the secret joys of love if he will be righteous toward women and maidens. Let him then bestow upon them more loyally all that comes under my power." In addition, Cupid encourages Alegre-character to continue to adore his lady.¹⁶ Finally, the tone of Chartier's work, *La belle dame*, and Ausias March (with the motive of the "Fleur-de-lis," vv. 1514-44) are likely to have exerted their influence on Alegre. Nevertheless, Alegre is clearly separated from the predominant Catalan conception of love that appears in most of the compositions of his fellow poets.¹⁷

¹⁶ Vidal's advice is an amplification of Cupid's command in *Glòria d'amor*: "...exercitau tot ate qui honrar-vos pot [...]; vege amor sol ésser lo moviment qui vostre voler li dóna; teniu desig tots temps veler-la veure [...]; jamás digau seguir no la vullau, per molt que us do gran pena [...]; quan veureu aquell enutjós desdeny qui tanta enyorança dóna, contra ço que el voler vos inclina, seguiu la voluntat sua, mostrant-li l'adolorit continent del que dins vós s'estima [...]" (Pacheco-Bover 137-38).

¹⁷ "E així, entrant en la Sancta religió del matrimoni, pres aquell hontar e gloriós

As for internal intertextuality, Petrarch's words suggest a connection between Alegre's *Somni* and his *Sermó* (Cátedra, *Amor*, Apèndice 4): "Sien per ço excel·lent príncep, opremuts los superbos, e ab llaor exalçats los humils, sentenciant ser aquest complagut, qui sol per la humilitat ara mostrada mereix lo premi de satisfacció" (129). Through the irreverent use of Mt. 19, 30 for erotic purposes, Alegre links the *Somni* to homiletic literature, whose structural and thematic devices influenced love poetry and prose during the 15th century. One of the most popular varieties of this *metàfora a lo divino* was the *sermón de amores*, cultivated by, among others, Diego de San Pedro and Alegre himself (see *supra* for bibliography) (Wardropper; Whinnom, *La poesía* 21-33 and notes 30 and 31 for bibliography). Finally, Alegre's *Sermó*, through its use of learned naturalistic argumentations in Love's defense, is close to the conclusions of the *Somni*:

E, així, seguint aquestos consells (among others, *mentis accensio, vocis prolatio, perseverans visitacio, laudum acomulacio, donorum frequentacio, honoris exhibicio, and mulierum fame continua deffencio*) y ab sencera intenció continuant los mencionats serveys, no dupteu enamorats que en aquest món d'elles haureu plasent satisfacció y, après la mort, per molts segles immortal fama conservar lo vostre nom. (211).

Our intention is not to suggest the importance of Alegre's works or to consider his role in the history of Catalan literature. As Riquer reminds us, most of the allegorical titles from the 15th century lack a well constructed plot and are predominantly repetitive rhetorical exercises. Despite this, the *Somni recitant una qüestió enamorada* offers a unique possibility to explore the complex intertextual relationships among love compositions written in Castilian, Catalan, and Portuguese. More importantly, it suggests that the sentimental prose of the 15th century may not be fully explained without reference to other love texts written in the Iberian Peninsula languages. Genre structures established by scholars have not led to a complete understanding of the love literature that those structures convey. Rather, under a general topic that may be termed *de amore*, the limits and boundaries among genres are typically diffused. Letters, sermons, juridical texts, *declamationes*, debates, etc., are incorporated into this literature on love. Moreover, the "sentimental tone" is similarly achieved through prose and verse; consequently, narrative and lyric

hàbit de virtuosa amor, acompanyat de companya tal, que un sí e un no units nos té, e segons nos té, e segons per Déu és dit: "*Et erunt duo in carne una*," tot altre foll pensament a part llançat, d'honestes desigs, honrats delits, grats plers, e de temprats enuigs no freturós, lo restant de ma vida ab propòsit ferm en aquest virtuós estament llongament, plasent a Déu, desig viure" (Pacheco-Bover 119-20).

genre structures show a tendency to borrow elements from one another. On the other hand, allegory and *peregrinatio vitae* are the main metaphoric paradigms for this type of literature seen from the point of view of content. Through the characters' journey in seek of love the reader is transported to his own quest. Love, as had been expressed in literature since the 12th century onwards, is the power that propels human existence. Through the dichotomy of mundane and religious love, authors and readers showed their appetite for a deeper meaning of existence. The literary-erotic game that was played at Marie de Champagne's court, along with the reception of Dante's and Boccaccio's works, gave impetus to the renaissance of old Provençal concepts in the court of the count-kings of Aragon. The *mise en prose des epopées et des romans chevaleresques du XIVème siècle* (Doutrepont) required the literary introspection imparted to love literature by Boccaccio's and Machaut's works. At that point, Capellanus's dialogic treatise was recovered at Yolande de Bar's court. We could also assume that discussions on love took place among courtiers, and Capellanus' book offered them a guide and methodology of love. Love literature also profited from the broad development of the use of letters in the royal Catalan chancery. This epistolary development proved essential when used in literature. Epistolary interchange as a literary device linked the letter frame to other dialogical procedures. Furthermore, the privatization of the conveyance of letters inspired by Italian humanism transported the courtly discussions of love to the more intimate atmosphere of private reading. Dante's awareness of *la vulgare lingua* used as a literary tool, Cicero's and Petrarch's custom of polishing their respective epistolary works, along with the development of the study of the *colores rhetorici* and the importance of translation in creating the need to "improve" the language of translation, provoked an interest in style.

Women's inclusion in the reading public of 14th century Italy (and later in Catalonia and Castile during the 15th century), and the social role played by noble female patrons, are important elements to take into account as well. Love literature's idealization of women provoked pro- and anti-feminist debates during the 15th century. Reactionary fear against the new female social and literary conception is likely to have been of paramount importance in the creation of the debate. Finally, one must consider that literature was one of the few aspects of life from which women did not feel excluded. The importance given to chaste love and the criticisms of the evil power of women do not necessarily imply that women did not play an increasingly important role in the reception of literary works. Rather, these facts may portray the disparity between their progressive incorporation in a "learned" milieu and their as yet improvable social situation.

Within this context, Alegre's *Somni* and Antoni Vidal's final exhortation to the pursuit of the lady's love stand in opposition to the contemporary conclusions of the *Faula de les amors de Neptuno i Diana*, Romeu Lull's *Lo despropriament d'Amor*, Francesc Moner's *L'ànima d'Oliver*, and Carrós' *Regoneixença i moral consideració* (Pacheco and Bover), which defend chaste love and matrimony. The *Somni* manifests the manner in which intertextuality performed in love literature, showing how it was necessary for the reader to hold a broad knowledge of literary forms and structures in order fully to comprehend the author's intention. Apart from the influences of Petrarch, Boccaccio, *cancionero* poetry, and the lyric and narrative compositions included in the *Jardinet d'orats*, one must also mention Santillana's allegorical triad: *El Triunphete de amor*; *El Sueño y El Infierno de los enamorados*. Deyermond ("Santillana") has suggested that these three poems form a "trilogía unitaria" that exemplifies a moral teaching: "cuidado con el amor." Deyermond also reminds us of the connections between Santillana's love-allegories and Saint Augustine's *Confessiones*, Abelardus' *Historia calamitatum*, and Juan Ruiz's *Libro de Buen Amor*. Tiresias—one of the main characters in Metge's *Lo Somni*, whose title is implicitly connected to Alegre's work—is Santillana's guide in *El Sueño*. Once again, in an attempt to prove the intertextuality of love literature in the 15th century in the Iberian Peninsula and to highlight its blurred generic boundaries, Deyermond asserts rhetorically (87) "¿hasta qué punto es descabellado sugerir que *El Sueño e Infierno*, tomados conjuntamente, son un precursor de la novela sentimental?"

Alegre establishes two intertwined spheres of meaning in his work: the fiction of the dream-vision and the pseudo-reality of Alegre's and Antoni Vidal's contemporary *personae*. This literary-history dichotomy is set in a different plane through the opposition of fictional and historical lovers, including among the latter the quasi-mythical figure of Macías. The separation between French and Spanish lovers functions in a parallel manner. Above all, these structures must be included in the vision frame that was directly influenced by Petrarch's *Triumphus Cupidinis*. Finally, this latter frame is embraced by the most successful of all sentimental literary devices in 15th century Iberian Peninsula literature: the epistolary structure. Thus, the vision, full of learned references to Christian and Pagan figures and to literature, becomes personalized in the form of a pseudo-private letter that is sent to the author by his friend Antoni Vidal.

The reader, as a mute witness, has been brought from the magnificence of Love's tribunal and the apex of Apollo's domain to the intimacy of Alegre's room while the latter is quietly reading his friend's letter. The letter counsels Alegre against despair, and as in

his *Raonament*, in his *Requesta d'amor* and his *Sermó*, emboldens the recipient to remain steadfast in his struggle against the lady's disdain.

ANTONIO CORTIJO OCAÑA
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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