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ALIENOR OF AQUITAINE: HER LITERARY ROLE AND INFLUENCE IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

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ALIENOR OF AQUITAINE: HER LITERARY ROLE AND INFLUENCE IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

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Aliénor's Life

Aliénor of Aquitaine was one of the first and most active patrons of Provençal poetry. Known as Aliénor "until David Hume vandalized her name into 'Eleanor'," this Queen of France, along with her children, spread a love of poetry and music to many provinces in France.[1] French poets followed her across the English Channel when she became Queen of England and introduced their art to the English Court. "The oldest English lyrical poetry, whence derives in unbroken succession the great poetic heritage of England, obtained its original models, both directly and through French versions, from the Provençal songs."[2] Robert Latouche has applied Pascal's phrase, "Le nez de Cléopâtre: s'il eut été plus court, toute la face du monde aurait changé," to Aliénor, by saying, "La boutade de Pascal ne serait pas déplacée si on l'appliquait à la reine d'Aquitaine. Cette belle princesse a joué dans l'histoire de l'Occident au douzième siècle un rôle presque aussi fatal que la célèbre reine d'Egypte."[3] In order to grasp clearly the scope of her literary role and influence, it is necessary to view certain major events during her life, her Courts

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[1]Robert Briffault, The Troubadours (Bloomington, Ind.: Ind. Univ. Press, 1965), p. 5.

[2]Loc. cit.

[3]Robert Latouche, Le Film de l'Histoire médiévale en France 843-1328 (Paris: B. Arthaud, 1959), p. 246.

of Love, her association with the Provençal troubadour poetry and examples of poetry written during her reign not only as Queen of France and later Queen of England, but also as queen of the troubadours, and her influence on writers other than the troubadours.

Intrigue and adventure marked the life of Aliénor and her ancestors. Her grandfather Guillaume IX, considered the first troubadour, abandoned his pious wife Philippa of Toulouse in order to live with his new love, the Countess of Chatellerault. The Countess had a daughter Anor by her previous marriage. Anor in turn married the son of Philippa and Guillaume IX, Guillaume X. Aliénor was born to Anor and Guillaume X in 1122. "She was named after her mother, as the legend says, Alia-Anor, or as history has chosen to call her, Eleanor."[4] Her father died during a pilgrimage to Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle. To protect her vast domains, it was his dying wish that she marry the future King of France, Louis Florus. Thus, the young couple was wed on July 25, 1137, at the Cathedral Saint-André in Bordeaux. Their union created a geographic empire, with Aliénor contributing the largest part. So great were the festivities following their marriage, that their contemporary chronicler, Morigny, said that it would require "la bouche de Cicéron et la mémoire de Sénèque pour exposer la richesse et la variété de ces présents et le faste

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[4]Amy Kelly, Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1950), p. 6.

déployé pour ces noces."[5] After receiving the crown as Duke of Aquitaine in Poitiers, Louis escorted his new bride to Paris, where he was to become King of France after his father's death on August 4, 1137.[6]

A woman whose ancestry could be traced back to Charlemagne, Aliénor was exposed throughout childhood to an elegant life filled with the music, poetry, dance, and festivities beloved by the dukes of Aquitaine.[7] In the courts of her youth she had learned to read and to write--a fact unusual for the majority of men and women of her time. Aliénor was herself a poetess and "by right of a bitter tongue, a passionate temperament, and a shrewd intelligence she was recognized as the arbiter of the poetry of her time."[8] "Altogether the mind of the young duchess had been freely exposed to a great variety of ideas and made hospitable to novelty."[9]

Louis, on the other hand, was educated in the cloistral disciplines--a fact which resulted in many marital conflicts.[10] In fact, Aliénor would one day say, "J'ai parfois l'impression

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[5]Regine Pernoud, Aliénor d'Aquitaine (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1965), pp. 16, 17, 11, 13, 18.

[6]Melrich V. Rosenberg, Eleanor of Aquitaine (Boston: Houghton Miffin Co., 1937), pp. 22-3.

[7]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 5; Pernoud, op. cit., p. 15.

[8]Raymond DeLoy Jameson, Trails of the Troubadours (London: John Long, Ltd., 1928), p. 25.

[9]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 5.

[10]Ibid., p. 7.

d'avoir épousé un moine."[11] To combat the dullness of life with Louis in Paris, Aliénor sent for troubadours to entertain the French Court. For example, Marcabru arrived to sing her praises only to be dismissed by her jealous husband. The poet tried to avenge his banishment in these verses about a tree:

> Haut et grand, branchu et feuillu
> ...Et de toutes parts épandu,
> De France en Poitou parvenu
> ...Sa racine est Méchanceté
> Par qui Jeunesse est confondu...[12]

For a time Aliénor seemed to exert a certain influence over her pious husband. She persuaded him to seek possession of the city and county of Toulouse, which had once belonged to her family through her grandfather's first wife, Philippa. When Louis requested the assistance of the Count of Champagne to overthrow the then current ruler of Toulouse, Alphonse Jourdain, the Count refused and also alerted Jourdain to the impending attack. Following the failure of this venture, Louis was further influenced by Aliénor to interfere in the marriage of Count Ralph, whose wife was the niece of Count Thibaud of Champagne. Louis arranged a divorce between Count Ralph and his wife on the grounds of consanguinity so that Ralph could marry Petronille, Aliénor's sister. Angered by this royal act, the Count of Champagne, already Louis' enemy, appealed to Pope Innocent II, who upheld the first marriage and who excommunicated Count Ralph. To avenge this insult to royal

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[11] Pernoud, op. cit., p. 42.

[12] Ibid., pp. 41-2.

authority and because of the Count's earlier refusal to aid in the capture of Toulouse, Louis burned one of the Count's castles. Unfortunately, a nearby church caught fire--a church known in history as "Vitry-the-burned."[13] After the fire at Vitry, Louis, overwhelmed with guilt, became more and more reverent. He fasted frequently and sought various ways to show penitence, even giving a crystal vase, received from Aliénor as a wedding gift, to Abbot Suger on the occasion of the inauguration of the choir at St. Denis. Aliénor's previous domination of Louis was gradually replaced by the Church's hold on him.[14] Because she was still childless, Aliénor sought the help of Bernard de Clairvaux, who agreed to pray for her if she would seek peace in France. One year later in 1145 she gave birth to a daughter, whom she named Marie in honor of the Virgin.[15]

Also in 1145, the Christian city of Edessa in the Holy Lands fell to the Moslems.[16] To expiate his sin of having burned the church at Vitry, as well as to free Christian territory from pagan hands, Louis left with his soldiers for the Second Crusade on June 14, 1147, accompanied by Aliénor and a host of other women

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[13]Curtis Howe Walker, Eleanor of Aquitaine (Richmond, Va.: Wm. Byrd Press, Inc., 1950), pp. 20-4.

[14]Pernoud, op. cit. p. 42.

[15]Cardinal Georges Grente, Dictionnaire des Lettres Françaises: Le Moyen Age (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1964), p. 49; Pernoud, op. cit., p. 47.

[16]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 29.

and many troubadours.[17] Numerous legends surround Aliénor during this crusade. For example, some chroniclers claimed that she dressed as an Amazon and rode into battle, while others intimated that she became involved in love affairs on at least two occasions. Most authorities, however, discount such rumors and believe that the subsequent collapse of the royal couple's marriage was due to quite different reasons.[18] Pernoud contends, for example, that she did not have an affair with her uncle Raymond de Poitiers in Antioch. Instead he holds that the marriage, already on unstable grounds because of Louis' growing devout attitudes and Suger's control over him, was further weakened when Aliénor was exposed to the glittering oriental world of Constantinople--so unlike her more drab existence in Paris. It is also likely that Louis was preoccupied with military decisions and thoughts of fulfilling his holy duties, while Aliénor was delighting in the entertainment and splendor of the elegant court at Antioch.[19] When Louis refused to help her Uncle Raymond defend Christian Antioch against Saracens and insisted instead on going on to Jerusalem as a pilgrim in accordance with their original plan, Aliénor was further alienated. After one year in Jerusalem, the royal couple returned to France in separate ships in July, 1149. Although Aliénor applied for a

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[17]Rosenberg, op. cit., pp. 72-3.

[18]Frank McMinn Chambers, "Some Legends Concerning Eleanor of Aquitaine," Speculum, XVI (1941), 460-1.

[19]Pernoud, op. cit., pp. 75-6.

divorce in 1149, Pope Eugenius III temporarily reconciled the two, and in 1150 Aliénor gave birth to her second daughter, Aélis.[20] But Louis became more and more the model of a penitent sinner, while Aliénor probably longed for the opulence she had seen in the Orient.[21] Years of discontent and conflict ended in a divorce in 1151-1152.

At this point began the second major era in Aliénor's long life. On May 18, 1152, after having returned to her home at Poitiers, she married Henri Plantagenêt, who was Count of Anjou and Duke of Normandy, and who became two years later King of England.[22] Their union formed an English empire covering almost one-half of France: "Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Brittany, Poitou... the Limousin, Auvergne, Gascony, and Guienne."[23] Since Henri and Aliénor were still vassals of Louis as King of France and were suppossed to have his permission to marry, they were summoned to appear before him, but they refused. Therefore, Louis, with the assistance of Henri's youngest brother Geoffroy, attempted to foment unrest in Anjou. When Henri remained the stronger in this contest, Louis requested peace. Finally free from Louis, Aliénor soon presented Henri with her first male heir, Guillaume, born in August, 1153.

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[20]Rosenberg, op. cit., pp. 113-21.

[21]Pernoud, op. cit., p. 81.

[22]Rosenberg, op. cit., pp. 136, 144, 147.

[23]John Frederick Rowbotham, The Troubadours and Courts of Love (London: Swan Sonnerschein & Co., 1895), p. 53.

The King of England at this time was the grandson of Guillaume le Conquérant, Etienne de Blois, who held the throne through his mother, Adèle de Blois. Etienne's one legal son, Eustache, was not fit to rule, and his other son, the bastard Guillaume, had no ambition nor ability. Thus, before his death, Etienne designated Henri Plantagenêt as his heir on November 6, 1153.[24] Henri and Aliénor held their first court at Caen in a château built by Guillaume le Conquérant, Aliénor's great-grandfather-in-law.[25] "[Aliénor's] cultivated tastes still continued, and her patronage of literature and song was unabated as ever."[26] But Etienne died on October 25, 1154, and Aliénor and Henri journeyed to Westminster Abbey where they were crowned on Sunday, December 19, 1154. Shortly thereafter, on February 28, 1155, Aliénor gave birth to their second son, Henri. Although their eldest son, Guillaume, died at age three in 1156, the next ten years were basically good ones for the English royal family. Mathilde, named for Henri's mother, was born in 1156, followed by Richard in 1157, Geoffroy in 1158, Aliénor in 1161, Jeanne in 1165, Jean in 1166.[27]

At the beginning of their reign, Henri and Aliénor were united in their efforts to control the English and French domains

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[24]Pernoud, op. cit., pp. 101-4.

[25]Jameson, op. cit., p. 67.

[26]Rowbotham, op. cit., p. 51.

[27]Pernoud, op. cit., pp. 105-8.

into an organized, submissive realm.[28] They traveled widely in England and on the continent. Henri was quite unlike her first husband, for Henri was an active, energetic man whose preoccupation was not religion but ruling his kingdom. Aliénor herself had a hand in administration. Numerous documents and charters show her signature and indicate that on occasion she acted in the absence of Henri.[29]

This apparently solid marriage was to collapse just as the first one. Aliénor received her first disappointment from Henri when he failed to take the city of Toulouse for her, just as Louis had failed previously. This time it was Louis who thwarted their plans by being inside the city when Henri planned to attack. To have carried out his project would have caused Henri to breach the chivalry's code of ethics by forcing him to fight his own lord, for Louis was still lord over Henri as Duke of Anjou.[30] Another thorn in Aliénor's side was Thomas à Becket, who began to usurp some of her power and influence over Henri and to replace her involvement in political affairs.[31] The third factor which hastened the couple's separation was Henri's affair with Rosamond Clifford.[32] But unlike legend purports, Aliénor could not have poisoned her

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[28]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 94.

[29]Pernoud, op. cit., pp. 108-12.

[30]Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 182.

[31]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 97.

[32]Pernoud, op. cit., p. 145.

husband's mistress, as she was not in the vicinity at the time of the girl's death.

Thus Aliénor left England and established her own independent court at Poitiers, beginning in 1168. It was there, until 1174, that she conducted one of her most brilliant courts to which conteurs, poets, ecclesiastics, clerks, chroniclers, and others flocked.[33] She was joined by Marie de Champagne, her daughter by Louis VII, as well as by the writers Wace, Benoît-de-Sainte-Maure, Chrétien de Troyes, and the troubadour poet Bernard de Ventadour,[34] all of whom will be studied in more detail later in this discussion. Her independent reign soon ended, however, because King Henri II held Aliénor responsible for the numerous rebellions of their sons Richard and Henri. Young Henri, for example, was irritated with his father, who refused to give him any power or authority, although he had been designated as the next king. The boy enlisted the help of Louis of France and in so doing enraged his father. Old King Henri further alienated his namesake by trying to give some of young Henri's castles to his brother Jean. Richard, Aliénor's favorite son, was also in constant disagreement with his father. For her supposed part in these young men's revolt, Aliénor was captured by Henri's men in 1174 and taken to Salisbury Castle, where she remained in confinement until 1183. Henri temporarily

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[33]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, pp. 152, 155, 161.

[34]James J. Wilhelm, Seven Troubadours: The Creators of Modern Verse (University Park, Penn.: Penn. State Univ. Press, 1970), p. 147.

released Aliénor in 1184 to travel through her lands in France as a reminder to Philippe of France which lands were hers![35] Little else is known of Aliénor's life during her imprisonment, except that she was sometimes allowed visitors, such as her daughter Mathilde on one occasion in 1183. Henri became more and more despotic toward the end of his life, and she gained complete freedom only after his death on July 6, 1189.[36]

Released from prison by her son Richard, the next King of England, Aliénor re-entered political life as regent in her son's behalf, while he departed for the Holy Lands to fulfill his life-long ambition to participate in the crusades.[37] During his return from the crusades, Richard was taken prisoner in Austria by Archduke Leopold. Again Aliénor exhibited her strength and influence by arranging for her son's release in 1194. Henceforth her life was a quiet one spent for the most part at Fontevrault Abbey, where she died in 1204.[38] She had outlived her beloved son Richard, as well as her daughters Marie and Aélis.[39]

While looking at the effigy on her tomb at Fontevrault, an observer might reflect, "Here Eleanor lies serene, the play of a smile in her whole expression, in her hand a small volume, which

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[35]Walker, op. cit., pp. 171, 174-5, 179, 181, 197.

[36]Pernoud, op. cit., pp. 192, 195, 202-3.

[37]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 249.

[38]Rosenberg, op. cit., pp. 273, 281.

[39]Pernoud, op. cit., p. 272.

one of her apologists has said need not be regarded as a missal."[40] Geoffrey of Monmouth said of her: "The eagle of the broken pledge shall rejoice in her third nestling."[41]

> She is called "the eagle" because she spread her wings over two realms, the French and the English; the "broken pledge" signified that she was disjoined from the French king by reason of consanguinity, and from the English king by her imprisonment, which lasted sixteen years. By her "third nestling" is signified Richard, her third son.[42]

Provençal Poetry

What was this Provençal troubadour literature in which Aliénor was so involved? A close examination of the troubadour poets' artistic medium will provide a background against which to consider the Queen's role as their patroness. First of all, the term "troubadour" comes from the verb trobar, which is "derived from the low Latin tropus, an air or melody: hence the primitive meaning of trobador is 'composer' or 'inventor'...of new melodies."[43] Wilhelm further clarifies the meaning of the word "troubadour" by stating that the noun is based on the verb trobaire from a Provençal word which, in turn, is derived from the Greek word tropos "(a turning; often a turn of thought or figure of speech); it was then

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[40]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 387.

[41]Ibid., p.247, citing Geoffrey of Monmouth, Prophecies of Merlin, Book VII, 3.

[42]Loc cit., citing Ralph of Diceto, Opera Historica, 2:67.

[43]Rev. Henry J. Chaytor, The Troubadours (London: Kennikat Press, 1912), p. 10.

adopted by the Romans as tropus (metaphor)."[44] In the Middle Ages the Latin word was used in "ecclesiastical circles as a short, formulaic phrase in Gregorian chants or as a dramatic bit inserted in the religious service."[45] Thus, says Wilhelm, troubadour is "related to the 'tropes' of Latin rhetorical handbooks of Christian sacred liturgy; but the emphasis, as is apparent in modern French trouver and Italian trovare, is upon discovery, invention, creativity."[46]

Although numerous theories exist regarding the origin of this troubadour literature, three main views are shared by most authorities. Popular poetry of the era may have given rise to the lyric poetry of the troubadours. The "Latin culture of the Church" is a second possible source, and literature of Arabs in Spain is a third contention.[47] Wilhelm provides the strongest arguments in favor of the Church's Latin culture as the origin. He believes that the Christian religion, the "interplay of holy and profane rhetoric," and the writings of Ovid and St. Augustine influenced these usually well-educated troubadours. He states, furthermore, that "Arabic poems are richly sensual and decidedly homosexual; the

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[44]Wilhelm, op. cit., p. 15.

[45]Loc. cit.

[46]Loc. cit.

[47]Anthony Bonner, Songs of the Troubadours (New York: Shocken Books, Inc., 1972), p. 14; Chaytor, op. cit., pp. 7-9; Briffault, op. cit., pp. 19-22. See also Urban Tignor Holmes, Jr., A History of Old French Literature From the Origins to 1300 (Rev. ed. 1938; Reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), pp. 172-3.

troubadour poems are neither."[48] Cohen argues, on the other hand, that Arabic influence on troubadour poetry was quite strong. The French met the Arab world, its poetry and its songs while going through Spain to the crusade during the second half of the eleventh century. Further evidence of this is apparent in a miniature which shows "un jongleur arabe à côté de l'autre."[49] Lazar supports this latter theory, because as a result of the crusades, many new influences entered the lives of Frenchmen. Their lives no longer evolved necessarily around the Church. An exposure to oriental civilization caused people to be interested in earthly luxuries too. The Church's control over the aristocratic society diminished in the twelfth century, and many divorces occurred. Eventually the concept of love which became popular in French troubadour poetry was not a Christian ideal but one with Arabic overtones.[50] Moreover, Rowbotham points out that one finds similarities in the poetic forms of Arabic writers and of troubadours. For example, "in their compositions for solo singers, the Arabians were in the habit of employing dual verses, each matching with the other."[51] The troubadours wrote in the "same poetical form, the verse so

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[48]Wilhelm, op. cit., pp. 15, 18.

[49]Gustave Cohen, La Poésie en France au Moyen Age (Paris: Richard-Massé, Editeurs, 1952), p. 32.

[50]Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et Fin'Amors dans la littérature du XIIe siècle (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1964), pp. 9, 12-13.

[51]Rowbotham, op. cit., p. 31.

constructed being called coblas or 'couplets'."[52] The Arabians also used the casida, a long poem built on only one rhyme. The troubadours wrote similar poems of as much as one hundred lines with the same rhyme throughout.[53] Thus it is evident that certain themes and forms were not entirely original with the troubadours.

These poets, however, did make unique contributions to literature. They wrote "the first lyric poetry in any modern European language [from approximately 1095 to 1295], and all other lyric poetry in Europe either descends from it or was at one time tremendously influenced by it."[54] Their verses were intended to be sung, not recited, and love was the main theme.[55] At the beginning of the twelfth century, troubadour poetry was destined for the aristocratic nobles and courts, but rarely for the middle class and never for the comman man.

> The environment which enabled this poetry to exist was provided by the feudal society of southern France. Kings, princes and nobles themselves pursued the art and also became the patrons of troubadours who had risen from the lower classes.[56]

Their poems usually exemplified a skillful, innovative handling of a traditional theme, not an inspired, original work.[57] The

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[52] Loc. cit.

[53] Loc. cit.

[54] Bonner, op. cit., p. 1.

[55] Loc. cit.

[56] Chaytor, op. cit., p. 10.

[57] Loc. cit.

Limousin region, along with Poitou and Saintonge, are considered the "birthplace of Provencal lyric poetry," for the earliest known troubadour lyrics were composed in these areas. "Provençal" designated the "literary language common to the South of France and not the dialect of Provence properly so-called."[58] All knowledgeable poets of western countries wrote in the Provençal tongue "whether or not [they were] Provençal."[59]

There are several reasons why this part of France was considered superior in the Middle Ages to the North "in art, learning and the refinements of civilization."[60] The Roman culture infiltrated southern France more thoroughly and earlier than the North. The Greek civilization spread in southern France when Greek sailors and merchants established colonies at Narbonne and Marseille. Furthermore, cities such as Bordeaux, Toulouse, Arles, and Lyon were cultural capitals, whereas the North was preoccupied with fighting foreign invaders. The South was also the first area in France to accept Christianity, and the southern Visigoths seemed "more amenable to the influences of culture than the Northern Franks."[61] Before the eleventh century the Arabs and Moslems had ruled the Mediterranean world, but when the First Crusade was preached in Clermont-Ferrand in 1095 and when, in 1099, the

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[58] Ibid., p. 4.

[59] Briffault, op. cit., p. 6.

[60] Chaytor, op. cit., p. 5.

[61] Loc. cit.

Crusaders took Jerusalem, life in France underwent a vast change. Ports were set up in southern France to serve as crossroads between the Mediterranean world and northern Europe. Occitania, which included Aquitaine, Languedoc, Auvergne, and Provence, became a thriving, opulent region. In addition, the North and the South of France represented two different worlds: in the North were kings, and in the South were numerous noble families, each ruling a given area but being ruled by no one supreme monarch. The most powerful of these lords were the dukes of Aquitaine and the counts of Poitiers, areas dominated by the family of Aliénor.[62]

The troubadours, who wrote the "first love-songs in western Europe," wandered from court to court near Marseille, Toulouse, and Tours.

> When they were not making war or playing at politics, they were playing at love or making poems; and they made love and poetry with the same ardor and ruthlessness that they displayed in the taking of cities and the killing of enemies.[63]

Although they wrote on all social and political questions of the age, these poets excelled in writing about love and were "the first lyric poets in medieval Europe to deal exhaustively with this subject."[64] Usually the women to whom their songs were written were married; so marriage was obviously not an issue. It must be

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[62]Bonner, op. cit., pp. 2, 4-5.

[63]Jameson, op. cit., pp. 4, 8-9.

[64]Chaytor, op. cit., p. 14.

noted that in the eleventh century Virgin worship was already quite popular. This adoration of the ideal woman spread to the female sex as a whole in troubadour poetry. The relationship between the troubadour and his lady came to ressemble that between the troubadour as vassal and his lord.[65]

The four accepted stages of the development of love were as follows: "aspirant" (fegnedor), "suppliant" (precador), "recognized suitor" (entendedor), and "accepted lover" (drut). To be installed, the love pledged his loyalty to the lady, and she acknowledged him by a kiss or the gift of a ring. The poet showed his gratitude by writing or singing a poem for his lady. As secrecy seemed of paramount importance in these relationships, the lady received a pseudonym or senhal. Scholars disagree on the nature of such relationships. Gaston Paris, for example, believed that they involved carnal love, while Henry Chaytor said that such love was intellectual, not emotional.[66] The various meanings and qualities of love expressed by the troubadours will be viewed separately in the discussion on Aliénor's Courts of Love.

In spite of a popular impression that the troubadour exemplified a lover who was constantly on his knees and who sang his devotion to the one whose love filled his life with happiness

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[65]Ibid., pp. 14-15.

[66]Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[67]It is interesting to note that even the word l'amour was feminine in the Middle Ages! Cohen, La Poésie, p. 39.

and purpose, it must be remembered that he was actually a skillful artist.[68] He created "une poésie très élaborée et très savante, qu'accompagne...une musique de mode grégorien, non moins élaborée et non moins savante."[69] Numerous techniques were employed by the troubadours, who attended no formal school but who learned their art from other poets. They composed a "love song or chanso [with] five, six or seven stanzas (coblas) [and] with one or two tornadas or envois."[70] The stanza consisted of from two to forty-two lines. There was an earlier form of chanso called ver, which was closer to popular poetry and which had shorter stanzas and lines. These poet-composers created tunes called son (diminutive of sonnet). Another type of chanso was the sirventes, which was a "vehicle for satire, moral reproof or political lampooning."[71] A third troubadour device was the planh, a song celebrating the memory of a lady, a friend or perhaps a patron. The tenso utilized by the poets was a form popular at tournaments, where one poet sang a stanza on a given theme and to which his opponent responded in another stanza using identical metrical form. Of popular origin, the pastorela always concerned a shepherdess-heroine. The parting of lovers at dawn was painted in the alba, or dawn song; in its counterpart,

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[68]Gustave Lanson, Histoire de la Littérature Francaise (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1894), p. 87.

[69]Cohen, La Poésie, p. 31.

[70]Chaytor, op. cit., p. 23.

[71]Ibid., pp. 23-31.

the serena, the lovers longed for reunion in the evening. The troubadour offered a defense for having angered his lady in the escondig.[72] Moreover, "the troubadours were the originators of the fixed verse forms: the rondeau and the villanelle, the triolet and the ballade, the aubade and the serenade."[73]

It is important to recall that during this period many ladies were married very young--often by age eight or nine--and that by age fourteen they often administered a castle. The husband of that period had absolute rights and "could confine his wife to her room for years; he could chastise her with a rod, starve her, humiliate her in a thousand ways, even make her a servant to his mistress."[74] Aliénor serves as a prime example of these truths. In addition, because the Church fathers had not decided whether women had souls, the rights of women were doubtful, and they were truly vassals to their husbands. It is not surprising that young girls turned to the court poets who, unlike the girls' husbands, wrote beautiful love songs for them.[75] These troubadours created the "paragons of every feminine charm and perfection."[76] "The conventions of Provençal love-songs are the first expression of a profound difference in the treatment of erotic themes which divides

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[72]Ibid., pp. 31-4.

[73]Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 158.

[74]Jameson, op. cit., p. 14.

[75]Loc. cit.

[76]Briffault, op. cit., p. 16.

our literature from those of classical antiquity or of barbarian cultures."[77] Somewhat jealous husbands tolerated young poets, because their poetry was a form of publicity which attracted to the court the more powerful nobles, who, in turn, helped the husband protect the castle.[78]

But regardless of their motives, the troubadours

> founded and developed a tradition of writing and loving which when taken over by Dante and Petrarch became part of the literary code of all succeeding generations. This tradition has influenced the work of all writers of love poems, even the writers of popular ballads in the music-halls of the present time.[79]

The northern trouvères borrowed the following forms from their southern counterparts: "the chanson, from the Provençal canso"; "the aube from the alba"; jeux partis, from the juocs partitz"; "tencons, from tensos" and others.[80] During the reign of Henri II and Aliénor, moreover, there was abundant travel between England and France. As a consequence, "traces of Provençal influence are unmistakable in...Middle English lyric poetry."[81] "Anglo-Latin and Anglo-Norman literature was similarly affected."[82]

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[77] Loc. cit.

[78] Jameson, op. cit., p. 16.

[79] Ibid., p. 18.

[80] Holmes, op. cit., p. 195.

[81] Chaytor, op. cit., p. 135.

[82] Loc. cit.

For example, "the Norman Thomas, Archbishop of York, the opponent of Anselm wrote religious songs in imitation of those performed by jongleurs."[83] Furthermore, Provençal poetry influenced French lyric poetry, which in turn influenced both Italian and German lyric poetry, such as the minnesinger in Germany. The echos of troubadour lyrics were heard also in Spain and Portugal.[84] "In short, there was no poetry in Western Europe that remained unaffected in one way or another by the troubadours."[85] But the troubadours did not spread their poetry far and wide without assistance.

> Il se peut que d'obscurs hasards, voyages de jongleurs, relations entre gens du Nord et gens du Sud pendant la croisade de 1147, aient contribué pour leur part à propager les germes de la poésie provençale; mais aucun ne semble avoir eu d'importance comparable à l'action personnelle d'Eléonore.[86]

Courts of Love

Courtly poetry originated in such courts as that of Aliénor, who held a twelfth-century type of "salon."[87] After her marriage to Henri II, Aliénor presided over one such court in Caen, then another one later in England.

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[83] Loc. cit.

[84] Gaston Paris, La Littérature Française au Moyen Age, 3rd ed. (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1905), pp. 206-7.

[85] Bonner, op. cit., p. 19.

[86] Joseph Bédier and Paul Hazard, Histoire de la Littérature Française Illustrée (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1923), p.28.

[87] Briffault, op. cit., p. 86.

> All the factors for the creation of a new literature were there in a favoring atmosphere: the bountiful duchess herself bent upon fashioning with befitting elegance her new milieu, a patron to whom the biographer of the troubadours describes as given to liberality, to chivalry, and to poetry, together with her gay young household; returned crusaders like herself filled with eastern themes; story tellers of Britain purveying Arthurian romance; travelers upon pilgrim routes; starveling poets, unemployed canons, chroniclers of the Normans and the Angevins--all commingling in an ancient tradition of learning, and all vying with each other to please a fair young world and earn the duchess' largess. In view of the circumstances, it is impossible to wonder whether the Tristram story was not dressed at this time by some necessitous conteur to have a pleasing, if veiled, topical significance for the duchess who had renounced a dull king for a bold young knight.[88]

John of Salisbury and others complained about the exotic entertainment introduced by Aliénor into the English courts. He called it an ancient Babylon because of the new music, mimes, histriones, fabliaux, dancers, buffoons, acrobats, and other spectacles supported by Aliénor. She thus initiated the English court to the artistic wonders she had discovered during the Crusade with Louis.

Perhaps the most significant period of Aliénor's literary patronage began in 1168 or 1170 when she left Henri II in England and returned to her home in Poitiers, where she enjoyed a separate,

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[88]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 87.

independent court for several years.[89]

> It must be remembered that for nearly forty years the ducal court had been in abeyance in Poitou and Aquitaine. It was necessary for the duchess to reassemble the exiled elements of the Poitevin entourage and subdue to civility a generation that had lacked the disciplines of a somewhat fixed and authentic court.[90]

Here Aliénor was joined by her daughter, Marie de Champagne, who was accompanied by her father's chaplain, Andreas.[91] Together the two ladies laid the foundations for the twelfth century ideal of Courtly Love, which Alexander Denomy describes in this manner:

> Courtly Love is a type of sensual love and what distinguished it from other forms of sexual love, from mere passion, from so-called platonic love, from married love is its purpose or motive, its formal object, namely, the lover's progress and growth in natural goodness, merit, and worth. That is the essence of the love of the troubadours....What is done, moreover, under Love's compulsion cannot be sinful or immoral; rather it is virtuous and righteous as a necessary source of natural goodness and worth. [Furthermore], ...it is desire which is the means to the end and purpose of Courtly Love: the ennobling of the lover....In the sense that the troubadour lyrics center about [the] ...courts and incorporate many such ideals in just that measure do they belong to courtly literature, and are therefore, labeled courtly lyrics. But applied to love, courtly has quite

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[89]Amy Kelly, "Eleanor of Aquitaine and Her Courts of Love," Speculum, XII (1937), 7.

[90]Ibid., p. 12.

[91]Ibid., p. 13.

> another meaning. It is the term that designates the species of the love of the troubadours. It denotes and particularizes that sort of love that is...the origin and font of man's natural excellence, the novel conception that sexual love is the ennobling force in man.[92]

These ideas of Courtly Love were expounded in Aliénor's court at Poitiers as evidenced in Capellanus' work, Tractatus amoris et de amoris remedio Andreoe capellani papoe Innocentii quarti.[93] Arpad Steiner believes, unlike Gaston Paris, that De Amore "was written between 1174 and 1186."[94] In a later article, however, he assigns the dates 1184-85.[95] At any rate, there seems to be sufficient evidence that Capellanus wrote this codification of love either during Aliénor's independent reign at Poitiers or shortly thereafter to record the events of the recent past.[96] In general, the majority of scholars who have researched this work in depth tend to agree that the events portrayed by Capellanus should not be believed as proof that trials of real lovers with women

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[92]Alexander J. Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," Speculum, XXVIII (1953), 44, 46-7.

[93]Rowbotham, op. cit., p. 224.

[94]Arpad Steiner, "The Date of the Composition of Andreas Capellanus' De Amore," Speculum, IV (1929), 92, 95, citing Gaston Paris, "Le conte de la Charette," Romania, XII (1883), 526ff.

[95]Arpad Steiner, "The Identity of the Italian 'Count' in Andreas Capellanus' De Amore," Speculum, XIII (1938), 308.

[96]See the two articles by Steiner as well as John Jay Parry, ed. and trans., The Art of Courtly Love (1941; Reprint, New York: Frederick Ungar, 1959) and Kelly, "Eleanor, Courts," p. 4.

rendering judgments actually took place in Poitiers, but rather that the cases demonstrate intellectual, literary games,[97] probably not unlike those of a Marquise de Rambouillet in the seventeenth century. Furthermore, it was actually Marie de Champagne who commissioned the writing of the work.[98] But as Kelly states:

> Though in the work of Andreas, Marie de Champagne appears more conspicuously than Eleanor, as presiding genius of the courts of love, the queen herself is certainly the more dominant figure in Poitiers, the sustainer and patron of the society which gave substance to the chivalric ideal.[99]

A review of De Amore will reveal many of the themes employed by various authors of romans courtois as well as troubadours, all of whom will be discussed in the following sections. Thus Aliénor's tremendous influence in literature of the twelfth century will become increasingly apparent.

Speaking of Capellanus' Art of Courtly Love, Parry declares,

> It is, like Brunetto Latini's Tresor or the Speculum Majus of Vincent of Beauvais, one of those capital works which reflect the thought of a great epoch, which explain the secret of a great civilization.[100]

Parry contends that the origin of courtly love is "in the writings of the poet Ovid who lived in Rome in the time of the Emperor

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[97]Pernoud, op. cit., p. 162; Rita Lejeune, "Rôle littéraire d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine et de sa famille," Cultura neolatina, XIV (1954), 42; Kelly, "Eleanor, Courts," p. 4; Gaston Paris, Mélanges de Littérature Francaise du Moyen Age, ed. Mario Roques (1912; Reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1971), pp. 476-81.

[98]Parry, op. cit., p. 17.

[99]Kelly, "Eleanor, Courts," p. 5.

[100]Parry, op. cit., p. 3.

Augustus."[101] Such poems as "Ars amatoria," "Remedia amoris," and "Amores" were probably sources for Andreas' work. Both writers popularized the theme of sensual love, yet a fundamental difference separates them. "Whereas in Ovid man is the master employing his arts to seduce women for his pleasure, in Andreas woman is the mistress, man her pupil in homage, her vassal in service."[102] If one remembers the life of Aliénor with Louis VII and with Henri II, it is easy to imagine that Aliénor would have supported a literary work in which women remained superior to men. In his preface Andreas states that his book is addressed to a man called Walter who has recently fallen in love but who does not have experience in matters of the heart. This book should serve as his guideline, continues Andreas.

First of all, Andreas defines love in this manner:

> Love is a certain inborn suffering derived from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace.[103]

A person in love suffers a great deal for fear of displeasing or losing his love, or suffers in advance for want of or longing for the other. "Love gets its name (amor) from the word for hook (amus), which means 'to capture' or 'to be captured,' in the chains

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[101] Ibid., p. 4.

[102] Kelly, "Eleanor, Courts," p. 3.

[103] Parry, op. cit., p. 28.

of desire and wants to capture someone else with his hook," says Andreas.[104] Love can change a man's personality, character, and appearance. The sentiment is practically impossible to experience, according to Capellanus, before the age of twelve for girls and fourteen for boys, or after fifty for women and after sixty for men. Blindness is an obstacle to love, because the lover needs to see his love and to meditate on her. Moreover, excessive passion impedes love, since an overly passionate man is more like an animal who wants every female, rather than a man capable of adoring one love. Thus Walter is advised that there is a distinct difference between lust and true love.

Andreas continues to counsel Walter by declaring that there are five criteria for the beloved, but the first three are the most significant: "a beautiful figure," "excellence of character," "readiness of speech," "great wealth," and "readiness with which one grants that which is sought."[105] Although external beauty is an asset, Capellanus contends that traits of character are more desireable in a woman. The selection of a lover requires careful consideration. When a decision is reached, these four states should be followed: "giving of hoping," "granting of a kiss," "enjoyment of an embrace," and "yielding of the whole person."[106]

Capellanus then devotes almost one half of his book to instruct men of various social classes on how to talk to women of

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[104] Ibid., pp. 29, 31.

[105] Ibid., pp. 31-3.

[106] Ibid., pp. 34-42.

different levels of society.[107] While trying to request that his love be received by a woman of higher nobility, for example, a bourgeois said, "To live in love is more pleasant than any other way of life in the world."[108] In the seventh dialogue, "a man of the higher nobility speaks with a woman of the simple nobility."[109] When she protests that she is happily married and should not have a lover, he counters her objections with these words, which will be reflected in much of the troubadour poetry:

> But I am greatly surprised that you wish to misapply the term "love" to that marital affection which husband and wife are expected to feel for each other after marriage, since everybody knows that love can have no place between husband and wife. They may be bound to each other by a great and immoderate affection, but their feeling cannot take the place of love, because it cannot fit under the true definition of love. For what is love but an inordinate desire to receive passionately a furtive and hidden embrace? But what embrace between husband and wife can be furtive, I ask you, since they may be said to belong to each other and may satisfy all of each other's desires without fear that anybody will object?[110]

Capellanus continues his argument:

> But there is another reason why husband and wife cannot love each other and that is the very substance of love, without which true love cannot exist--I mean jealousy--is in such a case very much

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[107] Ibid., pp. 36-141.

[108] Ibid., pp. 55.

[109] Ibid., p. 91.

[110] Ibid., p. 100.

> frowned upon and they should avoid it like the pestilence; but lovers should always welcome it as the mother and the nurse of love. From this you may see clearly that love cannot possibly flourish between you and your husband. Therefore, since every woman of character ought to love, prudently, you can without doing yourself any harm accept the prayers of a suppliant and endow your suitor with your love.[111]

Finally, to resolve the above dispute, the couple requested the Countess of Champagne to render a decision. Her reply was that love cannot exist between married persons, because "lovers give each other everything freely...but married people are in duty bound to give in to each other's desires and deny themselves to each other in nothing."[112] In addition, Marie de Champagne claimed in the case dated May, 1174, that no love could exist without jealousy.

Capellanus believes that there are two sorts of love: pure and mixed. Pure love involves contemplation of the lover and brief contact with the person, but does not culminate in the complete sexual act. Mixed love, needless to say, involves carnal love. Andreas warns that pure love is the most desireable, longest lasting, and least harmful. He also advises that a man should avoid loving a nun, a prostitute, or a woman who gives her love too quickly. Love ends when it becomes public,[113] as seen in the troubadour use

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[111] Ibid., p. 101.

[112] Ibid., pp. 106-7.

[113] Ibid., pp. 107-56.

of a senhal in poetry. He concludes his advice to Walter by offering these basic rules of love:

I. Thou shalt avoid avarice like the deadly pestilence and shalt embrace its opposite.
II. Thou shalt keep thyself chaste for the sake of her whom thou lovest.
III. Thou shalt not knowingly strive to break up a correct love affair that someone else is engaged in.
IV. Thou shalt not choose for thy love anyone whom a natural sense of shame forbids thee to marry.
V. Be mindful completely to avoid falsehood.
VI. Thou shalt not have many who know of thy love affair.
VII. Being obedient in all things to the commands of ladies, thou shalt ever strive to ally thyself to the service of Love.
VIII. In giving and receiving love's solaces let modesty be ever present.
IX. Thou shalt speak no evil.
X. Thou shalt not be a revealer of love affairs.
XI. Thou shalt be in all things polite and courteous.
XII. In practicing the solaces of love thou shalt not exceed the desires of thy lover.
XIII. Marriage is no real excuse for not loving.
XIV. He who is not jealous cannot love.
XV. No one can be bound by a double love.
XVI. It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing.
XVII. That which a lover takes against the will of his beloved has no relish.
XVIII. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved.
XIX. When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.
XX. If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.
XXI. He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little.
XXII. Every act of a lover ends in the thought of his beloved.

XXIII. A lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.

XXIV. No one should be deprived of love without the very best of reasons.

XXV. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved.[114]

To complete his instructions to lovers, Capellanus recounts twenty-one cases presented before the Courts of Love. The presiding judges were Aliénor and her daughter Marie, her niece Isabelle of Flanders, and Ermengarde, Countess of Narbonne.[115] The following two cases decided by Aliénor indicate her attitudes toward the ideal of love:

> A man, although he was enjoying the embraces of a most excellent love, asked her for permission to obtain the embraces of a different woman. Having received this he went away and refrained longer than usual from the solaces of the first lady. But after a month had elapsed he came back to the first one and said that he had never received any solaces from the other lady, nor had he wished to receive them, but he had merely wanted to test the constancy of his loved one. This woman refused him her love on the ground that he was unworthy, saying that for him to ask and receive such permission was reason enough for her to deprive him of her love. But the opinion of Queen Eleanor, who was consulted on the matter, seems to be just the opposite of this woman's. She said, 'We know that it comes from the nature of love that those who are in love often falsely pretend that they desire new embraces, that they may the better test the faith and constancy of their co-lover. Therefore a woman sins

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[114] Ibid., pp. 122, 143-56, 81-2, 184-6.

[115] Ibid., pp. 167-77.

> against the nature of love itself if she keeps back her embraces from her lover on this account or forbids him her love, unless she has clear evidence that he has been unfaithful to her.'[116]
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> Then a question like this came up: A worthless young man and an older knight of excellent character sought the love of the same woman. The young man argued that she ought to prefer him to the older man because if he got the love he was after he might by means of it acquire an excellent character, and it would be no small credit to the woman if through her a worthless man was made into a man of good character.
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> To this Queen Eleanor replied as follows:
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> 'Although the young man may show that by receiving love he might rise to be a worthy man, a woman does not do very wisely if she chooses to love an unworthy man, especially when a good and eminently worthy one seeks her love. It might happen that because of the faults of the unworthy man his character would not be improved even if he did receive the good things he was hoping for, since the seeds which we sow do not always produce a crop.'[117]

Among the reasons for such documents as the Tractus and for the existence of the Courts of Love were the excessive actions of some troubadours to prove their love. Pierre Vidal, for example, who was a friend of Aliénor's son Richard, loved Louve de Penautier, whose name (Louve) means "she wolf." He disguised himself as a wolf and allowed himself to be hunted and

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[116] Ibid., pp. 168-9.

[117] Ibid., p. 170.

nearly killed to demonstrate his devotion to her.[118] Another reason for the Courts of Love was "to legislate on all questions of the affections, to arrange disputes between lovers, to pass sentence on any lover who was in the wrong, and generally to establish a system of jurisprudence."[119] It is clear that such ideas as found in the Tractus resulted in the troubadours' exaggerated ideal of love. One said, "For sweet love do I labour night and day in the improvement of my lays."[120] Another declared, "For love sing the birds, and for love sing I."[121] The work is a summary of the ideas and themes promoted by Aliénor and which will be seen in lyric poetry and the romans courtois.[122]

Aliénor was not the first to promote discussions on love, but the originality of her Courts of Love was in giving them a formal system and an importance never before equaled.[123] In addition to the influence of the Art of Courtly Love on other forms of literature, the work itself "enjoyed considerable popularity," as is apparent in the numerous translations of the book.[124] Besides the preserved manuscripts of the text, there were early printed editions at Strasburg in 1473 and Dortmund in 1610 and 1614.

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[118] Rowbotham, op. cit., p. 233.

[119] Ibid., p. 235.

[120] Ibid., p. 226.

[121] Loc. cit.

[122] Lazar, op. cit., p. 268.

[123] Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," p. 42.

[124] Parry, op. cit., p. 22.

There are two translations into Italian dating from the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Two other translations dating from the fifteenth century exist in German. And finally, "in Spain the work of Andreas served as a textbook for those courts of love that were established in Barcelona by King Juan of Aragon (1350-1396) and his wife Violant de Bar."[125]

> L'oeuvre d'André le Chapelain, en fin de compte, possède plus qu'une valeur littéraire. C'est un document important sur la crise morale et philosophique que traversait la société de son temps. Il reflète le divorce sociale-laïque des classes aristocratiques et les exigeances de la tradition chrétienne.[126]

Thus, combining the intellectual discussions of love with evenings of recitals of love poems, Aliénor molded an elite society from a motley group of soldiers, jousters, troubadours and nobles.[127]

Troubadour Poetry

The troubadour poetry written in honor of Aliénor or the poetry of which the themes were expounded by the Queen and the Courts of Love provide further evidence of her vast influence in the literature of the twelfth century. The definition of several terms will be helpful in better understanding the inter-relationships between Aliénor, the Courts of Love, and the troubadours.

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[125] Ibid., pp. 23-4.

[126] Lazar, op. cit., p. 278.

[127] Kelly, "Eleanor, Courts," p. 15.

Just as Capellanus promoted the idea that a man should sacrifice all to win his lady-love, and that he should exercise discipline in his behavior, and that his worth and joy in life evolved around his dame, who was never his wife, so the troubadours spread the notions of l'amour courtois, cortezia, fin'amors, and jovens. Denomy defines cortezia in this way:

> Cortezia is a quality that arises from love and which has its origin in love. He who does not love cannot be courtly. It is a virtue closely allied to the moral principle jovens. The downfall of jovens with its component virtues of liberality and fidelity in love transforms cortezia into vilanage. Cortezia consists in observing moderation between the extremes of excess and deficiency, in cultivating humility and avoiding pride and vainglory, in promoting excellence of speech and act and in avoiding what is odious and vile....For the troubadours, cortezia is an outcome of love. Love is not a characteristic or trait of cortezia nor is it simply the element that applies to life and living the courtly virtues. Secondly, cortezia is a specific and particular virtue, although an abstract one, on the same level as valors, pretz, jois, francheza, etc....Cortezia is an ideal and a virtue of the courtly lover.[128]

Lazar further clarifies these terms: "Le mot courtois peut être pris dans un sens moral et dans un sens social. Au sens moral, il s'adapte parfaitement à la cortezia des troubadours, à la corteisie des poètes du Nord, et signifie un ensemble de qualités et de vertus."[129] He continues by saying that amour courtois is the

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[128]Denomy, op. cit., pp. 62-3.

[129]Lazar, op. cit., p. 23.

"source de toutes les vertus (franchise, générosité, humilité, honneur, etc.) y compris la cortezia."[130] To explain the themes of the troubadours, Lazar suggests that:

> La cortezia est l'apanage de l'homme qui aime selon le code de fin'amors; la fin'amors est la source de toutes les vertus: mezura, jovens, jois, cortezia, pretz et valors, donars, etc....Jovens est...la réalisation parfaite de l'idéal de cortezia, dont l'élément le plus important est cette "Générosité" tant invoquée.[131]

Aliénor's troubadour grandfather, Guillaume IX, said of l'amant courtois:

> Il doit être obéissant
> à bien des gens, celui qui veut aimer,
> et il convient qu'il sache faire
> des actes avenants,
> et qu'il se garde de parler à la cour
> vilainement.[132]

One troubadour who is indebted to Guillaume IX for his themes and who wrote six love songs which popularized the courtly themes of Aliénor is Jaufré Rudel.[133] Although there is little known about him, his biographer indicates that he loved a far-away lady, the Countess of Tripoli.[134] Scholars disagree greatly, however, on the identity of this distant love. Lejeune remains

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[130] Ibid., p. 26.

[131] Ibid., pp. 28, 42.

[132] Lazar, op. cit., p. 29, citing Jeanroy, Les Chansons de Guillaume IX, duc d'Aquitaine, VII, vv. 31-6.

[133] Alan R. Press, Anthology of Troubadour Poetry (Austin, Texas: Univ. of Texas Press, 1971), p. 27.

[134] Ernest Hoepffner, Les Troubadours dans leur Vie et dans leurs Oeuvres (Paris: Librairie Colin, 1955), p. 29.

confident that the lady in question was actually Aliénor d'Aquitaine.[135] Jeanroy believes that there were really two different women to whom Rudel referred in his various poems as a dame lointaine.[136] Appel contends that the Virgin Mary was Rudel's subject, and Frank holds that the lady represents Rudel's desire to go to the Holy Lands.[137] Wilhelm disagrees entirely with the latter two theories, for he declares that the far-away dame of Rudel could not be Mary, because then "there is no real reason for the tragic nature of the composition. The Virgin and her grace are present everywhere for one who believes in her."[138] In addition, Rudel did in fact accompany Louis VII and Aliénor on the Second Crusade.[139] Therefore, unless he wrote all of the poems to the dame lointaine before this journey, the lady cannot be construed to be representative of a desire to see the Holy Lands, as Grace Frank suggests. Regardless of the true identity of this far-away love, Rudel presents the themes of the lover who aspires for an ideal woman, who suffers for lack of her, and whose very existence seems to depend on her. The following poem exemplifies his feelings:

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[135]Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," p. 9.

[136]Grace Frank, "The Distant Love of Jaufré Rudel," Modern Language Notes, LVII (1942), 528, citing Jeanroy, 2nd ed., CFMA, 1924, p. iiiff.

[137]Loc. cit., citing Appel, Archiv, CVII, 1901, 338ff.

[138]Wilhelm, op. cit., p. 92.

[139]Paris, Mélanges, p. 499.

In May when the days are long
I like the sound of birds far away,
And when I depart from their songs
I remember my love who's far away.
Head hanging I go, grief-torn.
No song, no flowering hawthorn
Do I admire more than winter ice.

And lord I'll rightly call the one
Who'll help me see my love so far!
But now instead of good I've won
Two evils: he and I so far!
Ah, I'd take to the pilgrim's way
And stand with a staff, arrayed
In a cloak, reflected by her eyes!

For the love of God, what bliss
To seek out her hostel far away,
Where, if she wants, I'll insist
On lodging by her, now far away.
Then talk will be truly dear
When this far-off lover, near,
Hears speech that brings me solace's prize.

Half joyed, half pained would I depart
From sight of my love so far away;
But now! when can I even start?
Our lands are so very far away!
O, I'd just get lost in the maze
Of those many lanes and highways....
But--in God the matter lies!

Never will I know happiness
In love, without my love who's far.
She's the most graceful, very best,
In any place, either near or far.
For her, so fine beyond comparison,
Even in the realm of the Saracens
I'd gladly suffer the captive's cries!

God Who made all that comes and goes
And created this far-off love:
Over me strength and courage dispose
So that I really see my far-off love
Abiding in such a dwelling-place
That her room, that her garden space
Will always assume palatial size!

You're right if you say I lust or
Burn for my far-off love.
All other joys lose their luster
Compared to that from my far-off love.
But what I want is now denied
Just as my godfather prophesied:
I'd love but not feel love's reprise.

So what I want is now denied.
Curse that godfather who prophesied
I'd love but not feel love's reprise![140]

Certain critics try to seek religious overtones or symbols in Rudel's poetry, but Paris contends that this theory is not necessarily valid. He states:

> Il n'y a pas besoin de preuves particulières pour montrer que ce qui caractérisait cette époque, c'était en général, mais surtout dans ce qui touchait à l'amour et au service des dames, une prédilection marquée pour tout ce qui était exalté, fantastique et mystérieux.[141]

Another of Rudel's poems alludes to the female singing masters around him. One might tend to think of Aliénor, for example, since it is an established fact that she knew the poet. In this poem Rudel continues the theme of the far-away lady, but also mentions the courtly theme of _jois_ that she would bring to him. The idea of Capellanus as well as of Aliénor and of Marie de Champagne that true love cannot exist within marriage is also present. The purely sensual aspects of _fin'amors_ are evident in the fifth stanza of the following poem:

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[140]Wilhelm, _op. cit._, pp. 90-1.

[141]Paris, _Mélanges_, p. 504.

I have a lot of singing-masters
Around me, and female ones too:
Fields and flowers, trees and bowers,
Songs and lays and cries of birds,
Thanks to the sweet and gentle season,
Yet I stand with just a bit of joy
For there's no pleasure that can cheer me
Except the solace of a mighty love.

Let the shepherds have their pipes
And the children their little rhymes.
But I'll take that special kind of love
That makes me rejoice for joy!
For I know it's good in every way
Toward a friend who's ill beset.
And so too often I feel I'm lost
For I don't have what my heart awaits.

Far is the castle, far the tower,
Where she lies--her husband too--
And if by some clever counselors
I'm not advanced in counsel wise--
For other advice does little good
Since my fine yearning springs from heart--
Then I'll have nothing left but death--
Unless I get some joy right soon.

All her neighbors I hail as lords
In that realm where this joy was bred,
And I think it would be a great honor
To be one there, for the lowest serf
Can call himself a loyal courtier;
Toward the love enclosed in my heart
I have good feeling, good thoughts too,
And I know she's aware of these.

My heart [cors] is there so completely
That it has neither top nor root;
And my spirit's there with her too,
Sleeping beneath her covers;
But this love of mine bounds back ill,
For I love her much; she doesn't care.
Soon I'll see if my suffering brings
Me some share of good enjoyment.

My will sets out upon the course
In night and in the light of day,
Over there for some hope of help;
But later it comes back and tells me:
"'Friend,' says she, 'the jealous ones
Have raised up such a commotion
That it would be hard to slip away
So that we could enjoy each other some.'"

And so my discomfort grows and grows,
For I don't possess her in a place of ease;
Yet tears and sighs don't cause such grief
That one little kiss (and nothing more!)
Couldn't restore the heart hale and safe.
Good is my love; much good it's worth,
And for this evil I know a cure
Without the probe of a wise old doctor.[142]

These stanzas also show Rudel's concept of himself as a poet and his desire for a woman who possibly encompasses great virtue and beauty and who causes the troubadour poet great pain:

He cannot sing who gives no melody, or compose
verse who
sets down no words, nor does he know how rime
goes unless
in himself he understands the rules; but my
own song begins
in this way: the more you hear it the
better it will be.

Let no man marvel at me if I love that which
will never see
me, for in the heart there's joy of no other
love but of that one
which I never saw; nor am I gladdened so
much by any joy,
yet I know not what good of it will come to
me.

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[142]Wilhelm, op. cit., pp. 98-100.

I am stricken by joy which slays me, and by
a pang of love
which ravishes my flesh, whence will my body
waste away;
and never before did it strike me so hard,
nor from any blow
did I so languish, for that is not fitting,
nor seemly...

The poem is good and there they'll do
something of which
one will sing.[143]

"For...Jaufré Rudel the search for Jois appears to be more important than the experience of Amors, which is the means by which Jois or 'individual happiness' can be found."[144] Rudel is "searching for a Jois which will be supreme, lasting and beneficial and will go beyond the limits of everyday experience."[145]

The troubadour who was probably the most directly influenced by Aliénor and her courtly themes was Bernard de Ventadour, a poet considered to be "le plus grand [poète] lyrique de notre XII^{e} siècle, en tout cas dans la langue occitane."[146] Holmes credits Bernard as the one responsible for spreading from Provence to the north of France "the kernel of courtly love, the subjection of the lover to the lady's will."[147] Lazar labels him "le poète idéaliste et courtois par excellence."[148] He was the son of a servant at

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[143]Press, op. cit., pp. 35, 37.

[144]L. T. Topsfield, Troubadours and Love (Cambridge, England, 1975), p. 44.

[145]Loc. cit.

[146]Pernoud, op. cit., p. 118.

[147]Holmes, op. cit., p. 171.

[148]Lazar, op. cit., p. 48.

the Château de Ventadour in Limousin. The Seigneur de Ventadour educated Bernard, who later composed songs and sang them for the Vicontess de Ventadour. Bernard was chased from the castle, however, by the Seigneur, who feared an intimate relationship between his wife and the poet. Bernard then spent time at the courts of Aliénor, with whom he fell in love.[149] Amy Kelly cites the following lines in support of this theory:

> And he (the poet Ventadour) went away and came to the Duchess of Normandy, who was young and of great worth, and she had understanding in matters of valor and honor, and cared for a song of praise; and the songs of Bernard pleased her; she received and welcomed him cordially. He was a long time in her court and he fell in love with her and she with him. He made many good songs. And while he was with her the King of England married her and took her from Normandy and led her away.[150]

Bernard again spent time at her court when she returned to France, but Henri sent Bernard to England supposedly to entertain with his lyre but perhaps because he was jealous of his wife's fondness for the poet. "In exile from his mistress, he begged to return from Henry's heavy service to her court where 'ladies and chevaliers, fair and courteous', moved in a world composed."[151]

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[149]Rowbotham, op. cit., pp. 56-8.

[150]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, p. 85, citing Raynouard, Choix des poésies originales des troubadours, V, p. 79.

[151]Ibid., p. 86.

These stanzas chosen from various poems were written by Bernard to Aliénor during their separations, and each exemplifies the troubadour ideals of love promoted by the Queen.

My heart is so full of joy
that all seems changed:
winter's cold transformed to flowers
white, red, and yellow,
for with the wind and with the rain
my joy increases,
and thus my merit mounts and rises
and my song improves.
Such love lies in my heart,
such joy and sweetness,
that ice seems as flowers
and the snow verdure.[152]

I endure more pains of love
than Tristan, the lover
who suffered such endless grief for blond Isolde.[153]

I know that God does me
great favor and great honor,
for I adore the lovliest of women,
and she me (as far as I can tell),
but I am here, far away,
not knowing how she is.
Thus I die of grief,
unable to see her
as often as I would wish.[154]

Gentle lady, have mercy
on your true lover
who, in good faith, swears
he's never so loved anyone.
With joined hands and bowed head
I give and commend myself to you;
and if some day you find
occasion--smile on me;
that is my greatest wish.[155]

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[152]Bonner, op. cit., p. 47.

[153]Ibid., p. 88.

[154]Ibid., p. 90.

[155]Ibid., p. 91.

"Bernart is the first great troubadour who accepts completely the service d'amour and addresses his songs of love entirely to a lady of exalted rank."[156] He writes:

> Ce n'est merveille si je chante
> Bien mieux que tout autre chanteur,
> Car j'ai plus engagé mon coeur
> Envers cet amour que je hante.
> Coeur et corps, savoir et le sens,
> Force et puissance je lui donne
> Et son frein est si fort halant
> Que tout à lui je m'abandonne.[157]

In the following lines "My Squire" is believed to be a senhal for a friend or fellow troubadour. Both Bonner and Pernoud claim that Aziman, which means "diamond" or "magnet" is a senhal for Aliénor.[158]

> My God grant
> My Squire and me to wander
> throughout the world;
>
> and let him take along
> whatever he most wants,
> and I my Aziman.[159]

This poet-lover declares in a type of "literary manifesto" that "un chant ne peut avoir de valeur que s'il part du coeur, et le chant ne peut venir du coeur que si fin'amors y réside.[160]

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[156]Topsfield, op. cit., p. 112.

[157]Gustave Cohen, La Vie Littéraire en France au Moyen Age (Paris: Editions Jules Tallandier, 1949), p. 83.

[158]Bonner, op. cit., p. 259; Pernoud, op. cit., p. 119.

[159]Bonner, op. cit., p. 191.

[160]Hoepffner, op. cit., p. 49.

He continues: "Il n'est pas étonnant que je chante mieux que tout autre chanteur, puisque plus que les autres, je suis entraîné vers l'amour."[161] Bernard shows how completely he accepts the courtly ideals of poetry by saying that he is prepared to die for his love, which is an act of cortezia.

> Que mout m'es grans cortezia
> C'amors per midons m'aucia.
>
> For it were a deed of great courtesy
> If love for my lady slew me.[162]

Topsfield states these views:

> Fin'Amors is love that is sincerely felt. Love is humility, patience, and fidelity, and all men, regardless of birth or position, are equal in its service....But in love a man has no supremecy, and if he seeks it there, he woos like a church, for love desires nothing unseemly. It puts poor men and rich on the same footing, and, when one lover wants to decry another, love cannot remain long in the company of pride, for pride decays and true love gives the lead.[163]

Another element important to troubadour ideals is Jois, which is felt strongly by Bernard in these lines which also show his love of nature:

> I have heard the sweet voice of the nightingale in the woods and it has pierced to the depths of my heart so that its sweetens and soothes for me all the care and the sufferings that love gives me. And hurt as

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[161] Loc. cit.

[162] Topsfield, op. cit., p. 117.

[163] Ibid., p. 120.

> I am, I truly have need of the joy of others. Every man who does not dwell in a state of joy and does not direct his heart and his desire towards love, leads a base life, for all that exists abandons itself to joy, and sounds and resounds: meadows, gardens and orchards, landes, plains and bosks.[164]

Bernard, unlike Rudel, who could find solace in a world of contemplation or imagination, needs his earthly, physical love and joy to exist as a poet. He is the epitome of the troubadour ideal proposed by Aliénor's court, for his very life and breath depend on his dame.

The last poet to be examined is Bertran de Born. A minor nobleman born in the early 1140's, he shared the castle Hautefort in Perigord with his brother. He married twice and fathered five children and retired as a monk in the Abbey of Dalon before his death around 1215. Although Bertran was not a professional troubadour, he used his poetic talents to win the favor of other noblemen, especially the Plantagenêt princes, such as Henri, Richard, Count of Poitou, Duke of Aquitaine and from 1189 King of England, and Geoffroy, Count of Brittany.[165] Wilhelm states that "in order to approach Bertran's work with some sort of order, one must be sketchily acquainted with the leading personages of his day. The unifying figure of the last half of the twelfth century is Eleanor."[166] Frequenting the courts of the Plantagenêt princes, Bertran de Born is credited with creating, through his poetry, great dissention

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[164]Ibid., p. 124.

[165]Press, op. cit., p. 153.

[166]Wilhelm, op. cit., p. 146.

between the young princes and their domineering father Henri II. For this reason Dante placed the poet in hell.[167] In the following war-like stanzas Bertran cries for the lack of taste in his society and longs for the days of moral heroes:

> Gladly would I write a sirventes
> If anyone would like to hear one sung,
> For valor's dead, with honor and with good,
> And if I tried to avenge their murderers,
> Unless the end of the world would come,
> Waters couldn't drown them all
> Nor worldly fires cremate enough.
>
> Realms there are, but royalty--no!
> Counties, yes; of counts bereft;
> Marches there are--but no marquis;
> Castles are rich, demesnes bulk broad,
> And yet the chatelains do not appear,
> Though the hoardings are huger than before;
> Lots of feasts (yet with little fare)
> Because of those shabby, greedy rich.
>
> If Philip the King, King of the French,
> Has wanted to make Richard a gift
> Of Gisors, the lofty keep and the land,
> Richard should certainly thank him lots;
> But if Philip had a heart like mine,
> Richard wouldn't move those heels
> Without a showdown--to Richard's loss.
> But since he says no, put the horseshoes on![168]

To write love poetry was not the prime desire of Bertran, but his excellence as a poet, nevertheless, enabled him to compose some beautiful lines for various women. He had written poetry for Richard, Coeur de Lion, during the latter's visit to his sister Mathilde, Duchesse de Saxe, during the winter of 1182-83. Mathilde

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[167] Chaytor, op. cit., p. 57, citing Dante, Inferno, xxviii, 119-42.

[168] Wilhelm, op. cit., pp. 162-3.

wanted to be celebrated in Bertran's poetry, too; so he wrote the following lines to her:

> Les trois (soeurs) de Turenne
> dépassent en renommée toute
> beauté terrestre, mais elle
> (la Saxonne) les dépasse
> encore plus que l'on ne
> dépasse le sable.
>
> Votre valeur est au-dessus
> de toutes les autres: ce sera
> un honneur pour la couronne
> romaine, quand elle ceindra
> votre tête.
>
> Par le doux regard qu'elle me
> lance et par son clair visage
> Amour fit de moi son esclave.[169]

These stanzas selected from various poems demonstrate his ability in writing the love-song. The theme of constancy is especially vivid.

> Let me be lord of a castle split in shares,
> And let me live in the tower with three peers,
> And let us all hate each other's guts,
> And may I always need a good crossbowman,
> A doctor and serf, watchmen and porters too,
> If ever I've heart to love another lady.
>
> May milady desert me for another knight
> And let me not have any idea where I am:
> May the wind fail when I'm far out at sea;
> In the court of the king, may porters trounce me,
> And in the battle's press, may I flee first,
> If he didn't lie who told you all those tales.
>
> And since I'll never find your like,
> One who's both beautiful and good,
> Whose body's richly full of joy,
> With lovely manners
> And ever gay,

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[169]Hoepffner, op. cit., pp. 101-3.

Whose worth is wealthy and ever true,
I'll go around subtracting
One pretty feature from every girl
To make my Lady Self-Conceived.
Who'll last me till I have you back.[170]

A third aspect of the talent of this troubadour is seen in these stanzas taken from a planh written by Bertran de Born following the death of the young prince of England, the son of Aliénor and Henri II of England.

If all the dolour and the weary woe,
The grief, the pity, and the misery
Which through this age in copious current flow,
Could in a swell of grief united be,
Ne'er could they wail our lovely English prince
With a sufficiency of wild lament;
His death hath all the fane of honour rent,
And left the world a prey to dire despair.

Weeping and sorrowful, and full of woe
Be Europe's paragons of chivalry!
The mourning troubadours and jongleurs know
How death is now their fiercest enemy--
Death which has pierced our lovely English prince,
For generous heart so proudly eminent.
Ne'er will there be again for dire event.
Such grief, such sorrow, such profound despair.[171]

In such lines Bertran ranks among the treat troubadour poets whose outpourings of emotion in verse were fostered by Aliénor and who helped to establish the high standards to which lyric poets have aspired for generations.

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[170]Wilhelm, op. cit., pp. 165-7.

[171]Rowbotham, op. cit., p. 77.

Aliénor's Other Literary Influences

Another domain in which Aliénor played a role of paramount importance was in the works of authors other than the troubadours. The theme of love and the new position of women in society and in literature were largely due to Aliénor and her courts. A work such as Le Roman de Troie provides examples of these truths.[172] In his dedication to Aliénor, Benoît de Sainte-Maure, author of Le Roman de Troie, says:

> For my presumption shall I be chid
> By her whose kindness knows no bounds
> Highborn lady, excellent and valiant,
> True, understanding, noble,
> Ruled by right and justice,
> Queen of beauty and largess,
> By whose example many ladies
> Are upheld in emulous right-doing;
> In whom all learning lodges,
> Whose equal in no peer is found,
> Rich lady of the wealthy king
> No ill, no ire, no sadness
> Mars thy goodly reign.
> May all thy days be joy.[173]

Philippe de Thaun made a second dedication of his poem Bestiaire to Aliénor after 1152.[174] Wace dedicated his history of England, Brut, to the Queen. He devotes a vast amount of this work to the exploits of King Arthur, and thus popularizes some of Aliénor's favorite legends. Brut was so successful that Henri II asked the author to write a similar history of the Normands, which became

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[172]Tilley, op. cit., p. 291.

[173]Kelly, Eleanor, Kings, pp. 100-1, citing Benoît de Sainte-Maure, Roman de Troie, vv. 13431-13470.

[174]Holmes, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

Le Roman de Rou.[175] Pernoud declares that Aliénor is responsible for "cette fusion entre courtoisie, thèmes chevaleresques et mythes celtiques."[176]

Pernoud believes, furthermore, that the life and personality of Aliénor are reflected in an epic poem written about 1150 called Girart de Roussillon. One thinks of Louis VII when the king in the poem cries, "O Reine, que de fois vous m'avez engigné!"[177] Lejeune points out, moreover, that this epic depicts a king, Girart, who marries Berthe through duty, although he loves another woman, Elissent. The latter gives her love to the King. The ideals promoted by Aliénor's Courts of Love are evident. Thus René Louis concludes "que le remaniement de Girart de Roussillon a été élaborée, non seulement dans un milieu poitevin, mais dans l'entourage même d'Aliénor, et pour lui plaire."[178] The author also utilizes contemporary events in the life of Aliénor in his epic. For example, he refers to the Second Crusade, Saint Bernard, and descriptions of Constantinople.[179]

In another chanson de geste, le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne, one may also find traces of the influence of Aliénor. Charlemagne's wife tells him that there is another man who is superior to him

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[175]Ibid., p. 129; Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," pp. 36-71.

[176]Pernoud, op. cit., p. 123.

[177]Ibid., p. 124.

[178]Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," pp. 10-11.

[179]Ibid., p. 10.

and who is wearing a crown. The Emperor, disturbed by his wife's insuations, forms an expedition at once to investigate this statement and leads his troops toward Jerusalem. Such conduct is most unlike the traditional, strong male figure in other chansons de geste, and it is believed that these ideas would not have occurred to a poet prior to the marriage of Aliénor and Louis VII and her domination over him.[180]

Aliénor left her mark in literature written in the langue d'oïl. When she moved to Paris as Queen of France and later to London as Queen of England, she helped to spread the themes of southern lyric poetry which influenced the narrative literary forms for over fifty years. A brief glimpse at her itinerary during a twenty-year period proves that she had the opportunity to come into contact with many writers. She conducted a court in Poitiers from 1152-1154, others in Normandy, Maine and Anjou in 1154, 1158, 1159-1162, and 1165. In 1154-1156, 1157-1158 and 1163-1164 she held courts in England. From 1165 to 1173 she spent most of her time in Poitiers or in Aquitaine. Many writings during these years reflect the themes promoted by her and are often written in the Poitevin dialect. One example is Le Roman de Thèbes, written about 1155, which is similar to an epic poem but which shows influence of the Poitevin dialect. Another anonymous poem, le Roman d'Enéas, written about 1160, exemplifies the great power of love through the passionate cries and wails of the two main characters, Lavine

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[180]Ibid., p. 15.

and Enée. The poem is said to belong to "cette école littéraire 'normande' qui s'était formée à la cour des Plantagenêts."[181]

Lejeune gives Aliénor credit for being the unifying force in the works of various authors due to her interest in Ovid, and she encouraged writers to modernize stories of classical antiquity to reflect "le monde courtois" of twelfth century France. Lejeune states:

> Ce facteur "Ovide", si important chez Bernart, suffirait à prouver, semble-t-il, qu'il gravita autour d'Aliénor et qu'il composa pour elle. Car c'est dans son entourage, et sans doute pour répondre au goût personnel de cette fille d'Aquitaine connaissant le latin, qu'on trouve miraculeusement réunis, entre 1150 et 1175, tous les grands auteurs influencés par Ovide: outre Bernart de Ventadour, il y a le poète de Thèbes et celui d'Enéas, il y a celui de Piramus et Tisbé (vers 1160) et celui de Narcissus, il y a celui de Philomena, Chrétien de Troyes, dont les autres ovidiana de jeunesse (vers 1165?), complaisamment cités par lui, ont disparu. Il y a, enfin, Benoît de Sainte-Maure dont le monumental Roman de Troie, vers 1160-1165, constitue un événement littéraire de tout premier ordre.[182]

Aliénor once again enters the scene when one views the Tristan legends. The Welsh minstrel, Bleheris, visited the court of Guillaume X and Aenor and interested Aliénor in the Tristan story, according to Walker and Loomis.[183] This individual, Bleheris,

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[181] Ibid., pp. 20-1

[182] Ibid., pp. 22, 24.

[183] Walker, op. cit., p. 6; Roger Sherman Loomis, "Bleheris and the Tristram Story," Modern Language Notes, XXXIX (1924), 324.

sometimes called Breri, is "a figure of primary importance in the development of the matière de Bretagne."[184] Mr. Loomis comments:

> The achievement of Bleheris, then, lies...in introducing a story of extra-marital passion to the vary center of the cult of courtly love. The theories with which the Midi was aflame and which the troubadours celebrated in lyric form, Bleheris exemplified in his burning tale of Tristram and Ysolt. To him, we may believe, Eleanor owed her marked devotion to that particular romance."[185]

How did Aliénor, in turn, spread the Tristan story? Loomis provides six links of the legend to the Queen. The Thomas version was written "under the patronage of some member of the royal Angevin house, perhaps Eleanor herself."[186] It is widely accepted that the lais of Marie de France were dedicated either to Henri II or to his son. A third link to Alienor is her daughter Mathilde. of Saxony for whom a Tristan story was translated by Eilhart. Chrétien de Troyes

> who says that he wrote 'del roi Marc et Iseut la blonde,' and whose poems from Erec to Lancelot, are full of reminiscences of that story, wrote under the patronage of Marie de Champagne, another daughter of Eleanor's.[187]

The poet Bernard de Ventadour, furthermore, who wrote for Aliénor, mentions Tristan in several poems. In fact, it is thought that the earliest mention of Tristan which can be reliably dated is in one of Bernard's poems. The final link is the poetry of Cercamon, who

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[184]Loomis, Ibid., p. 320.

[185]Ibid., p. 325.

[186]Ibid., p. 322.

[187]Loc. cit.

mentioned Tristan and who wrote poems to Aliénor on the occasion of her first marriage and at the time of her father's death in 1137. "Especially noteworthy is the fact that Tristram is first mentioned in Continental literature by two troubadours immediately associated with that romantic and influencial woman. All this cannot be mere coincidence."[188] Lejeune concurs with these views.[189]

Marie de France is another writer whose life and writings are connected to Aliénor. Charters indicate that the Abbess of Shaftesbury, Mary, was a sister of Henri II and aunt of Jean.[190] Even if she was not the King's sister, it is generally accepted that Marie de France dedicated her lais to Henri II. Lejeune provides interesting facts to prove that the geographic location used in many lais correspond exactly with the itinerary of Aliénor at the same time that the particular lais are believed to have been written. Eliduc mentions Totness (Totenois) and Exeter (Excestre). From Christmas 1162 to the spring of 1165, Aliénor traveled in England and stayed frequently in the château de Sherborne in Dorset, which is located on the road between London and Exeter. Totness is also near Exeter, and there too is a castle where Aliénor is reputed to have stayed.

Lanval alludes to the island of Avalon where Arthur was carried. In Milon, Suthwales or Gales is the hero's homeland.

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[188] Loc. cit.

[189] Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," pp. 31-5.

[190] John Charles Fox, "Marie de France," The English Historical Review, XXV (1910), 305.

Yonec refers to the cities of Caerleon (Carlion) and Caerwent (Caruent) near Newport in Monmouthshire. There is also a pilgrimage in Yonec to the cathedral of Saint Aaron in Carlion in Galles. Aliénor resided in the vicinity of Galles at Marlborough during her English stay from 1162 to 1165. This particular area is centrally located so that she could have transmitted legends from Avalon.

Deux Amants, another lai by Marie de France, takes place at Pitres on the Seine near le Pont-de-l'Arche in Normandy, which Aliénor visited in 1165. Saint-Malo is the site of Le Laostic, and le Fresne takes place around Dol, while Chaitivel mentions Nantes. In 1167 Aliénor held her Christmas court in Brittany.[191]

Foster contends that Marie de France furthered the cause of women in the twelfth century and that her writings show clear debts to Aliénor. He declares:

> Marie's great strength lies chiefly in the fact that she was a woman in an age when the cult of womanhood was becoming all but a religion. The predetermined laws of conduct for her set were being carefully formulated by the Courts of Love.[192]

Her lais give insight into the changing literary trends of the mid-twelfth century, when authors began to treat love in a different manner. "Les thèmes amoureux se transforment avec le passage de l'idéologie courtoise du Midi vers le Nord de la France.[193]

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[191]Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," pp. 39-40.

[192]S. Foster Damon, "Marie de France: Psychologist of Courtly Love," P.M.L.A., XLIV (1929), 968.

[193]Lazar, op. cit., p. 174.

Lanval demonstrates the courtly ideals of Alienor. Marie changed a crude Germanic legend into a story with elements of a courtois hero. Lanval became the epitome of the troubadour ideal. Lazar says,"On verra...dans sa manière de traiter le sujet, Marie révèle l'influence que les théories provençales de l'amour ont exercée sur elle, soit directement, soit par l'intermédiaire d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine."[194] Furthermore, the fairy in Lanval insists that he keep the couple's love a secret. This idea is similar to the troubadours' use of a senhal in poetry.

Yonec exemplifies fin'amors, as the lady is unhappily married and desires the Prince, who is in the form of a "oiseau-chevalier"--a typical theme of troubadour poetry. The acceptance by the Courts of Love of the act of adultery appears in Yonec, also, for the unmarried couple have a child. They must keep their love a secret, not in the traditional fashion of a senhal, but to prevent the jealousy and anger of the lady's husband. But when the lady becomes impatient and seeks to see her lover constantly, her suspicious husband sets traps for her lover (l'oiseau-chevalier), who is captured and mortally wounded. Thus her lack of mesure causes his death![195] Damon mentions the fact that in Yonec the lady is "given to day-dreaming about the happy, illicit ways of Courtly Love."[196]

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[194]Ibid., pp. 175-6.

[195]Ibid., pp. 179-80.

[196]Damon, op. cit., p. 990.

Fin'amors re-appears in Laustic, in which one finds the theme of the unhappily married woman, the chevalier, and the jealous husband. It is noteworthy, however, that Marie does not completely adhere to the perfect courtois code in her lais, as she allows sometimes the man, sometimes the woman, to make advances. Also, the woman may be either proud and aloof or friendly.[197] A further point to indicate the variety of style used by Marie is that "in Laustic the lovers are faithful and innocent; in Chievrefueil, the lovers are faithful but not innocent."[198] Thus we see examples of Capellanus' "pure love" and in the latter lai "mixed love," and Marie's acquaintance with Aliénor and her entourage are readily apparent.

Chrétien de Troyes, the last author to be examined, demonstrates faithfulness to the code d'amour in some works as well as original views on love in other writings. Aliénor's favorite troubadour, Bernard de Ventadour, inspired Chrétien in at least one song. His lost version of Tristan was probably inspired by Aliénor, whose interest in the legend has been discussed earlier. And he wrote several works at the requrest of Aliénor's daughter Marie de Champagne.

The geography of Erec et Enide once again parallels the itinerary of Aliénor and her family. Lejeune explains:

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[197]Lazar, op. cit., pp. 185-91.

[198]Damon, op. cit., p. 970.

> On peut admettre aussi qu'Erec et Enide, le premier roman breton connu, se rattache à des événements qui intéressent la Bretagne française: fiançailles, en 1166, de Geoffroy Plantagenêt (8 ans), fils de Henri II et d'Aliénor, avec Constance (5 ans), héritière du duc de Bretagne; réception de Geoffroy comme duc de Bretagne en mai 1169; cour plenière tenue à Nantes, à la Noël de la même année, par Henri et Aliénor, cour si somptueuse qu'elle équivalait à un couronnement. C'est de cette cour brillante que Chrétien s'est souvenu dans la description finale de son oeuvre--couronnement d'Erec et Enide, également à Nantes.[199]

Lazar points out that although Erec et Enide contains some elements of the code courtois, Chrétien is original in implying that perfect love within marriage can exist. Chrétien is obviously influenced by l'amour courtois even in his revolt against one of its elements!

Cligès, on the other hand, offers many traditional themes of l'amour courtois. Just as for the troubadours, love was the raison d'être, so Soredamor is deeply moved by love's powers. "Elle s'interroge longuement, et son monologue traduit remarquablement toute la casuistique de l'amour courtois."[200] She suffers from loving Alixander and cannot comprehend her feelings. For the troubadours, adoration of the loved one was essential, and Alixander kisses a cloth enveloping Soredamor's golden hair. Chrétien continues the troubadour tradition of using vocabulary from nature to describe feminine beauty. The lovers in Cligès are glad to suffer from love

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[199]Lejeune, "Rôle d'Aliénor," pp. 29-30.

[200]Lazar, op. cit., pp. 205-15.

and do not want to be relieved from it. "L'influence de la lyrique provençale est manifeste."[201]

The theme of Lancelot is one example of a work suggested by Aliénor's daughter Marie de Champagne.[202] Her influence is obvious, because Lancelot is the only roman of Chrétien in which he so completely adheres to fin'amors. Lancelot loves the married queen Guenièvre, and he is typical of l'amant courtois in his total adoration for and complete submission to his dame. His love for her consumes his entire being, and he practically loses touch with reality. He refuses to be tempted by the seductions of another woman. He exemplifies the obedient lover when he withstands blows in combat to please a whim of Guenièvre. Lazar adds:

> La scène amoureuse qui se joue devant sa fenêtre, et ensuite dans la chambre, rassemble toutes les caractéristiques de la fin'amors: salut amoureux, embrassements, union, joie d'amour. La progression enseignée par le code d'amour provençal se trouve ici absolument respectée.[203]

Yvain is another roman which demonstrates Marie de Champagne's influence on Chrétien, for he creates the unusual situation in which Yvain falls in love with the widow of the man he has just slain. Yvain says, "Je ne dois pas la haïr, car je pécherais contre Amour; puisqu'Amour veut que je l'aime, je dois donc l'aimer."[204] However, once more Chrétien sees the solution

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[201] Ibid., pp. 215-22.

[202] Holmes, op. cit., p. 174.

[203] Lazar, op. cit., pp. 235-40.

[204] Ibid., p. 246.

to their dilemma--marriage. Yet Laudine maintains the traditional fin'amors concept of a distant, authoritarian dame, even after their marriage.[205] Thus Chrétien adds his name to the long list of writers in the twelfth century who furthered the ideals of Aliénor and her entourage in the Courts of Love.

It is readily apparent that the literary role and the literary influence of Aliénor of Aquitaine are almost boundless. She welcomed the troubadour poets to her court, where she was instrumental in creating many ideas incorporated into their poetry. Furthermore, Aliénor personally inspired the writing of various celebrated works, and she reared her children to follow in her footsteps as patroness of the arts. Lejeune even states that one may label Aliénor a "génie."[206] Her contributions to later centuries are far greater than most biographers tend to admit, for they dwell on her political life and devote only a matter of pages to her literary accomplishments. When one recognizes her influence on poets whose songs provide the basis for all lyric poetry of succeeding generations, one must conclude that this Queen did far more than reign in two lands and rear future kings. Gustave Cohen has beautifully summarized her central place in the literature of twelfth-century France:

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[205] Ibid., p. 248.

[206] Rita Lejeune, "Rôle littéraire de la famille d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine," Cahiers de Civilisation Médiéval, I (1958), 333.

De Limousin en Auvergne et à Orange au bord du Rhône, en Aquitaine et dans le Toulousain, ces sons d'amour s'élancent comme des abeilles d'or faisant couronne autour de leur reine et qui bourdonnent dans le soleil de mai, butinent le suc des fleurs odorantes de la garrique pour faire ce miel unique de la poésie occitane dont la France du nord et l'Europe occidentale entière s'enivreront.[207]

[207]Cohen, La Vie, p. 84.

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On August 2, 1975, the author married George W. Harris, Jr., a native of Richmond, who works for the Federal Government in procurement and contracting. In June, 1977, Mr. and Mrs. Harris will move to Michigan, where Mr. Harris will begin a new position as Chief of Procurement and Supply in the Detroit Office of the Corps of Engineers. Mrs. Harris has accepted a position to begin in September, 1977, at the University-Liggett School in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, where the couple plans to live. She will teach French in the Middle School to grades six, seven, and eight.

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