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ET MARION

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Kevin Brownlee

TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE COUPLE:
GENRE AND LANGUAGE IN THE *JEU DE ROBIN ET MARION*

Thirteenth-century French literature is characterized by extensive and wide-ranging experimentation with generic forms. Pre-existing literary genres are fused, deconstructed and recombined in a dazzling variety of generic “hybrids” which in turn give rise to further innovations. In Guillaume de Lorris, in *Aucassin et Nicolette*, in Rutebeuf, in Jean de Meun (among many others) this vital process of generic transformation is itself a central poetic concern.¹ The striking preoccupation with literary genre as *process* evinced by thirteenth-century authors implies (and, presumably, both responds to and reinforces) a sensitivity to and appreciation of this issue on the part of the thirteenth-century literary public. It forms part of what Hans-Robert Jauss has termed their “horizon d’attente.”² This is the context in which I would like to consider Adam de la Halle’s *Jeu de Robin et Marion*,³ for the play constitutes a particularly striking example of the phenomenon of generic transformation that characterized—and indeed generated—so much of thirteenth-century French literature.

As many critics have remarked, Adam’s *Jeu* involves the transposition of a lyric genre, the *pastourelle*, into theater. For the purposes of the present discussion, it is essential to keep in mind that this brilliant and innovative generic transformation would have been clearly perceived as such by Adam’s thirteenth-century audience.⁴ What is at issue, then, is the function of a genre (i.e., the *pastourelle*) as visible subtext in the *Jeu de Robin et Marion*. For, in the words of Paul Zumthor, “il ne s’agit pas de dramatisation d’un texte préexistant, mais d’un montage opéré à partir du texte virtuel constitué par la tradition des pastourelles.”⁵ Indeed, structurally speaking, Adam’s play involves the systematic “dramatization” of two different subsets of the *pastourelle* genre:⁶ in the first half (1-396) it is a question of what scholars have termed the *pastourelle* “classique”;⁷ in the second half (396-780) it is a question of what has been called the *pastourelle-bergerie* or the *pastourelle désintéressée*.⁸ In the first instance, the first-person *chevalier-poète* is both narrator and protagonist; in the second instance, this same *chevalier-poète* is rather a witness to and (limited) participant in the central action. In both instances, the generic form of

the *pastourelle* involves a first-person voice through which the entire narration and/or description is filtered.

In the *pastourelle* “classique” the first-person *chevalier-poète* encounters, during the course of a springtime ride in the country, a beautiful shepherdess who provokes in him an irresistibly intense erotic impulse, which leads inevitably to a seduction attempt: a love request, generally accompanied by flattery, by promises of rich gifts and even of marriage and a sumptuous future life. In the words of Maurice Delbouille, “l’auteur raconte cette aventure comme s’il en avait été le héros” (4). The outcome of this erotic encounter varies widely: often the *chevalier*’s amorous proposal is successful; often he is rebuffed, only to force himself upon the unwilling shepherdess; more rarely, the shepherdess is able to ward off her unwanted would-be lover by means of verbal cleverness or sheer ferocity; at times, finally, the arrival of an angry shepherd-lover (often accompanied by friends) results in the departure of the *chevalier*, either through threats of violence or indeed through a physical altercation.⁹

In the *pastourelle-bergerie* or *pastourelle désintéressée* the *chevalier-poète* out on his springtime morning ride comes across various combinations of shepherds and shepherdesses engaged in dances, songs, games and disputes (see Faral 213-16 and Zink 57, 104-05, 108-09). Though his role here is primarily that of witness, however, the primacy of his first-person voice and perspective is rigorously and visibly maintained. To quote Michel Zink, “dans ce [sous-]genre objectif et narratif, où le poète n’est même plus le héros d’aventure, il trouve encore moyen de se mettre en scène. . . . Le poète prend bien garde de nous rappeler que c’est lui qui raconte l’histoire, qu’il nous la raconte à nous, et que, quoi qu’il arrive, nous sommes de son côté” (104).

The “generic ground rules” of the *pastourelle* thus involve an aristocratic first-person protagonist (the *chevalier*) whose “point of view” informs, determines, the audience’s perception of every aspect of the subject matter of a particular *pastourelle*: the experience of erotic desire; the projection of that desire onto the shepherdess figure (Zink 102-03, esp. 117-19); the verbal and behavioral activities of the shepherdess, the shepherd(s) and indeed the *chevalier* himself. In other words, the *je* of the *chevalier* and the *je* of the poet are coterminous in this specific genre’s conventions regarding poetic identity. Adam de la Halle’s transformation of the lyric *pastourelle* into theater undoes this construct. The *je* of the *chevalier* no longer corresponds with the *je* of the poet. A radical split, of necessity perceptible to Adam’s audience, has been effected. The privileged *je-chevalier* of the lyric *pastourelle* is transformed into a third-person character in Adam’s drama: an *il-chevalier* who is, quite simply, one “character” among many. At the same time, the lyric *je* of the *pastourelle*’s poet-author is “suppressed” or, more accurately, has become “implicit.” In the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* the erotic encounter and *all* the characters involved in it—including the *chevalier*—are presented from the perspective not of a

“participant” in the drama, but of a necessarily non-articulated *je*: that of Adam de la Halle as global author figure. Adam’s functional presence in this regard is, as it were, guaranteed by the operation of generic transformation as literary process. For the generic *horizon d’attente* of Adam’s thirteenth-century audience is necessarily determined by an awareness of the *pastourelle* as generic subtext for the play they are watching. Thus, the detachment of the *chevalier* component from the first-person lyric voice component of the conventional “hybrid” speaking subject in the *pastourelle* brings to the foreground the *implicit* presence of a controlling authorial *je* no longer linked to—or even limited by—a single character in the unfolding drama.¹⁰ At the same time, of course, this transformation has important implications in terms of the presentations and identities of the various third-person characters who populate Adam’s play. In the balance of the present essay I would like to analyze in some detail each of the two parts of the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* from this perspective. I will be focusing on the encounters between Marion and her two male suitors in terms of linguistic interchange and the notion of linguistic power as a key theme in the play. For it is in these terms that Adam’s transformations of the *pastourelle* couple—or couples—can, I think, be best understood.

In broad structural terms, the *Jeu* involves two equal halves in which the central female figure, Marion, interacts (in sequence) with two very different lover figures. In the first half Marion confronts the *chevalier*: his kind of love is presented and rejected. In the second half Marion confronts Robin: his kind of love is presented and accepted—and celebrated. In addition, each half exploits a different “socio-linguistic” opposition presented, of course, in terms of a highly self-conscious—and sophisticated—manipulation of literary conventions. In the first half the opposition is between *chevalier* and *bergiere*; in the second half the opposition is between *bergier* and *bergiere*. Marion repeatedly reaffirms the first of these “socio-linguistic” oppositions in order definitively to reject the *chevalier*’s love proposal, while she overcomes the second “socio-linguistic” opposition in order to effect a definitive amorous union with Robin. In both cases it is Marion’s linguistic “prowess,” cleverness and efficacy that are at issue. It is by means of her deft manipulation of words that she successfully wards off the *chevalier* as would-be lover in the first half. And it is her authoritative articulation of a code of linguistic propriety—a kind of shepherd-version of *courtoisie*—in the second half that enables her to transform, to “educate,” Robin into an exemplary lover.

The first half of the *Jeu* involves four separate scenes in which Marion confronts the *chevalier*. The first and longest of these (1-100) serves as the opening scene for the play as a whole and clearly establishes Marion’s verbal mastery.

It is interesting to note that the beginning sequence highlights the generic transformation effected by the play as a whole. Marion’s initial love song (1-

8)—an obvious composite of standard *pastourelle* motifs¹¹—would necessarily be presented as a “quotation” in the lyric *pastourelle* remembered by, and filtered through the perspective of, the *chevalier-poète*, whose first-person identity would have been previously articulated—established—in the opening lines of the poem. In the *Jeu*, of course, Marion’s song is sung “directly” to the audience at the outset, and it is followed by the appearance of the *chevalier* who, as character, sings a standard *pastourelle* opening couplet (9-10). We have, then, a witty *mise-en-abyme* of the genre itself which stresses that this *chevalier*’s status is no longer that of the privileged speaking subject of the lyric *pastourelle*.¹²

The actual confrontation between *chevalier* and *bergiere* involves first of all a series of questions posed by the former and systematically “misunderstood” by the latter.¹³ His questions involve an “aristocratic” vocabulary and mentality, a kind of “chivalric” discourse or register. Marion’s replies involve a contrastive “pastoral” or “peasant” discourse. (Needless to say, both of these discursive systems are conventional *literary* codes.) In each case it is the impossibility of communication between the *chevalier* and the shepherdess that is stressed.¹⁴ When the *chevalier* uses the word “oiseil” (25) (bird) to ask about the presence of game birds (associated with the aristocratic sport of falconry), Marion answers in terms of songbirds: “et cardonnereus et pinchons” (29) (goldfinches and chaffinches). When the *chevalier* asks, more specifically, about an “ane” (34) (a female duck sought after by the aristocratic hunter), Marion replies as if he had asked about donkeys: “Ch’est une beste qui recane?” (35) (Is that the beast that brays?). When the *chevalier* asks about a heron (40) (a noble game bird, an “haron”), Marion replies as if he had asked about a herring (“herens” [41]). In these last two cases, of course, Marion’s “misinterpretations” involve a comical paronomasia which further emphasizes the communicative incompatibility between the “chivalric” and “peasant” linguistic registers. The knight himself recognizes that Marion is verbally manipulating him and holding him at bay: “Par foi, or sui jou esbaubis. / N’ainc mais je ne fui si gabés” (45-46) (Heavens alive! She strikes me dumb—Never been made such a fool of before).

When the *chevalier* proceeds to make a series of three explicit love requests, Marion continues to use similar techniques of linguistic riposte. The first love request simultaneously articulates the radical “socio-linguistic” difference between Marion and her would-be lover, in terms of thirteenth-century literary conventions: “Or dites, douche bergerete, / Ameriés vous un chevalier?” (57-58) (Tell me, pretty shepherdess, / Could you love a knight?). Marion’s reply is a refusal to accord meaning to the very term used by the knight to define his own “generic” identity: “Je ne sai que chevalier sont” (60) (I don’t know what “knights” are). The second love request emphasizes the knight’s horse, i.e., the most graphic and literal proof of his identity as *chevalier* (69-72).

Marion rejects this “courtly” or “knightly” horse as dangerous rather than prestigious in terms of her own “peasant” identity, which valorizes instead Robin’s dray horse (in a kind of radical discursive coherence). Marion parries the third love request by a third kind of play on the knight’s identity: having gotten him to reveal his name, she sings a two-line song in which she contrasts the name of the *chevalier* in the rhyme position with that of Robin, i.e., she plays on phonetic similarity in order to highlight semantic difference: “Vous perdés vo paine, sire *Aubert*: / Je n’amerai autrui que *Robert*” (83-84, my emphasis) (You are wasting your time, Sir Aubert, I will never love anyone else but Robert).

The knight responds with a re-articulation of his socio-linguistic difference from Marion, presented as a sufficient reason for love between them on his terms: “Chevaliers sui et vous bergiere” (88) (I am a knight and you are a shepherdess). Marion replies by denying that this “social” difference constitutes an imperative for her to love the knight; rather, she reaffirms simultaneously her own identity and her amorous link with one of her “class” (utilizing, it should be noted, courtly discourse): “Ja pour chou ne vous amerai. / Bergeronnete sui, mais j’ai / Ami bel et cointe et gai” (89-91) (I will never love you for all that. I am a shepherdess, but I have a handsome, elegant, delightful lover). This affirmation on Marion’s part (which involves yet another refusal to accept *chevalier* as a prestigious socio-linguistic category) is efficacious, in that it causes the knight to give up his attempt to seduce the shepherdess: “Puis qu’ensi est j’irai me voie. / Hui mais ne vous sonnerai mot” (93-94) (If that’s the case, I’ll take my way and never speak to you again).

It is important to note that the *chevalier* marks his departure by singing the opening verses of another *pastourelle* (97-98) (Langlois, ed. 61). On the other hand, this provides a frame for the entire scene by recalling the literarily self-conscious citation of a *pastourelle* opening which had accompanied the knight’s first appearance (9-10).¹⁵ On the other hand, the (conventionally obligatory) tense system used in this *pastourelle* opening (imperfect + *passé simple*, first-person singular) combined with its place in the narrative sequence of the *Jeu* (i.e., after the knight/shepherdess encounter) works to reinforce still further the impression of playful generic transformation and recombination (established in the initial citation of a conventional *pastourelle* opening in musical form by the *chevalier* in vv. 9-10). By verses 97-98, the (transformed, *pastourelle*) “narrative” (presented, of course, in dramatic terms) has already preceded this (conventional, *pastourelle*) introduction. An obvious *disjunction* between the generic subtext (or point of departure, i.e., the *pastourelle*) and the innovative generic hybrid (i.e., the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* itself) is here being suggested.

In Marion’s second encounter with the *chevalier* (289-323) she begins by invoking *courtly* standards, behavioral and/or linguistic: “Pour Dieu, sire, alés

vokemin, / Si ferés trop grant *courtoisie*” (291-92, my emphasis) (For heaven’s sake, sir, get along! I’ll take it as a courtesy). When the knight makes yet another love request (by means of an evaluative comparison between his falcon and Marion which favors the latter) (301-02),¹⁶ the shepherdess reiterates her desire to remain a shepherdess, reaffirming the communicative gap that exists between herself and the knight: “Car je n’ai a vous que parler. / Laissiés m’entendre a mes brebis” (313-14) (I’ve nothing I want to say to you: just leave me to mind my sheep in peace!).¹⁷ Once again, the knight articulates a self-reproach, recognizing that he has been bested in a battle of wits with Marion: “Voirement, sui je bien caitis / Quant je met le mien sens au tien!” (315-16) (Really, I have descended low—bandying words with a girl like you). In the face of Marion’s repeated evocation of the absent Robin (whom she hears approaching), the *chevalier* finally withdraws both himself and his love suit, for the second time: “Bergerete, a Dieu remanés: / Autre forche ne vous ferai” (322-23) (Shepherdess, goodbye! God bless you! I will not press you anymore).

Two things are important to note in this context. First, the *chevalier* explicitly renounces force (“forche” [323]) in his dealings with Marion: this simply makes explicit what has, in fact, been the operative “ground rule” from the beginning of the play, i.e., that their confrontation is verbal and “intellectual.” Second, Robin is excluded from this “verbal contract” both as potential active agent and as (actual) passive recipient. Thus, Marion’s repeated evocations of Robin’s imminent arrival are meaningful to the *chevalier* only as an expression of her affective preferences (or her identity), not as an effective threat of the use of physical force. This becomes quite evident when the *chevalier*, having turned away from Marion (as noted above), encounters Robin in the process of mishandling his falcon (324-29), which, we remember, has already been presented as a kind of metaphor for Marion in the chivalric register. The *chevalier* immediately reproaches and physically punishes Robin for this “transgression” against the code of courtly/chivalric behavior (330-33). Not only does this highlight Robin’s inefficacy as Marion’s protector (in terms of *pastourelle* convention), but it also emphasizes the primary importance of Marion’s verbal prowess within the context of Adam’s play.

Indeed, it is Marion who intervenes—verbally—to save Robin from more physical harm, thus initiating her third confrontation with the *chevalier* (334-53). This involves, of course, a reversal of the *pastourelle* plot convention in which the intervention of a male-shepherd-lover saves the female-shepherdess-object-of-desire from the clutches of the *chevalier*-rapist. In addition, it further emphasizes Marion’s status as privileged and effective actant, in a verbal context.

The scene of this third confrontation between knight and shepherdess ends with Marion’s being carried off on the former’s horse. Her final words both reproach the *chevalier* for resorting to physical violence and reaffirm Robin’s

impotence in this context: “Chertes, dont me ferés vous forche. / Robin, que ne me reskeus tu?” (352-53) (Then you’ll do me a violence! Robin, why don’t you rescue me?). Marion’s reproachful use of the word *forche* here seems to echo the *chevalier*’s earlier use of the word when he had promised *not* to use “autre forche” (323): she is implicitly reproaching him for going back on his word.

The fourth and final confrontation between Marion and the *chevalier* (378-96) opens with a request by the shepherdess: “Biaus sire, traiés vous ensus / De moi, si ferés grant savoir” (378-79) (Fair sir, please get away from me! This will be the proper thing). This appeal to chivalric *sagesse* parallels and complements, I think, Marion’s earlier appeal to chivalric *courtoisie* (292). Interestingly, the *chevalier* begins his reply by addressing Marion as *Demisele* (380), the only time in the entire play that this courtly title is used. His clearly erotic (but linguistically “proper”) love request (380-83) ends with an emblematic offer: the “peasant” Marion is presented with “aristocratic” food (the “oisel de riviere” [384], game from the *chevalier*’s successful hunt) and invited to eat. Now, as we know from Jean Dufournet’s important study (“Complexité” 144-50), food is used programmatically in the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* to signify literary “social class” and personal identity. Marion thus counters the *chevalier*’s offer by verbally reaffirming the value of the “peasant” food that she and Robin had shared earlier (119-59), in a kind of semiotic avowal of mutual love in the “alimentary register”: “J’ai plus kier men froumage cras, / Et men pain et mes boines pumes / Que vostre oisel a tout les plumes” (386-88) (I far prefer my own fat cheese and my bread and my juicy apples—not your bird for all its feathers).

It is this deft verbal manipulation of the “food code” that underscores Marion’s final and definitive rejection of the entire “chivalric register”: no communication, no exchange, no reciprocity is possible: “Ne de riens ne me poés plaire” (389) (Nothing you do can please me). The *chevalier* retires in the face of Marion’s linguistic and affective strategy (which she herself later terms an “engien” [419] [trick]), reproaching himself for the third and final time: “Chertes, voirement sui je beste / Quant a cheste beste m’areste! / A Dieu, bergiere” (395-97) (Really, I’m making an ass of myself by coming down to your level. Farewell, shepherdess). The first half of the *Jeu* is over.

The second half of the play (398-780) focuses on the relationship between Marion and the lover she *accepts*: Robin. Here again Marion’s verbal authority is consistently emphasized. What is at issue, I would like to suggest, is a process of linguistic “education” in which Marion “teaches” Robin how to use and interpret correctly the language of love.¹⁸ Questions of linguistic decorum and appropriate diction are repeatedly treated as Robin is progressively “weaned” from the “crude” amorous discourse of the *bergiers* and comes to accept the “refined” amorous discourse of the *bergieres*. For it is this gender opposition that provides the basic literary “socio-linguistic” structure in the second half.

The process begins almost immediately after the *chevalier*'s departure, when Robin misunderstands what is to Marion an obvious distinction in the amorous vocabulary. When she commands him to embrace her—"Vien donkes cha, acole moi" (404) (Come along here and give me a hug)—Robin instead kisses her in public, thus earning Marion's first reproach: "Eswarde de chest soterel, / Qui me baise devant la gent!" (406-07) (Now just look at this madman here—kissing me right in front of everyone!).

In the context of the first game the shepherds play, Marion's sense of linguistic and behavioral propriety is again in evidence. When the game, the "jeu de saint Coisne," is proposed and approved by two of the shepherds (Huart and Baudon), Marion comments: "Ch'est vilains jus . . ." (446) (It's a nasty game).¹⁹ The game is finally ended when, after a discourteous quarrel between Gautier and Huart over who lost a particular round, Marion intervenes to reiterate her earlier linguistico-esthetic value judgment, which has, as it were, now been validated by events: "Ho! seigneur, chis jus est trop lais" (479) (Hey! People, this game is terrible). It is at this point that the key gender division operative throughout the second half of the play is explicitly stated by Peronelle: "Nous sommes chi deus baisseletes, / Et vous estes entre vous quatre" (483-84) (There are two of us girls and there are four of you men).

In the ensuing episode the theme of appropriate diction, of linguistic propriety, becomes even more explicit. Gautier violates both linguistic and behavioral decorum with his suggestion for a "new" game: "Faisons un pet pour nous esbatre. / Je n'i voi si boin" (485-86) (Why don't we fart to amuse ourselves? I can't think of anything better). Significantly, it is now Robin who condemns this violation:

. . . Fi! Gautier,
Savés si bel esbanoier,
Qui devant Marote m'amie
Avés dit si grant vilenie?
(486-89)

(For shame, Gautier! A fine idea of fun you have—in front of Marion my sweetheart, to mention such a filthy thing.)

It is important to note that Robin's use of the term *vilenie* here recalls Marion's use of the term *vilains* (446) to condemn the shepherds' initial proposal to play the "jeu de saint Coisne."²⁰

In the course of the second game played by the shepherds and shepherdesses—referred to as "les rois et les reines" (496) (kings and queens), but in fact it is "le roi qui ne ment" (the king who does not lie)²¹—Robin's linguistic education continues. Baudon, in his capacity as "king," asks Robin a question to which he must reply, in accord with the rules of the game: "Robin, quant une

beste naist, / A coi sés tu qu'ele est femele?" (533-34) (Robin, when an animal's born, how do you tell that it's a female?). This question in effect constitutes a command that Robin commit an act of linguistic impropriety: by *naming* the female genitalia.²² Robin resolves the conflict between the code of the game and the code of refined diction by opting out of the former: he refuses to give Baudon the answer he desires (536-40). Significantly, Marion immediately intervenes to approve of Robin's behavior: "Il a droit, voir. / . . . car li demande est laide" (541-42) (He's quite right. . . for it's a dirty question). This evidence of linguistic "progress" on Robin's part is, however, juxtaposed with a demonstration that he still has certain failings in this area: for the second time Robin is invited to embrace his beloved—"Va, s'acole dont Marion" (545) (Go give Marion a hug)—and for the second time he publicly kisses her instead ("me baise" [547]). This time his "misunderstanding" (and his "misbehavior") involves a conscious choice, and Marion's reproachful characterization of Robin as a "sot" (547) (fool) seems to be doubly appropriate.²³

The final round of "le roi qui ne ment" involves an appropriately decorous love question put to Marion by the king: "Di moi, Marotele, / Combien tu aimes Robinet" (587-88) (Now, Marotele, tell me how much you love Robinet). Marion's reply serves as an exemplary instance of linguistic "courtoisie" within the "shepherd register." It is delicate, charming and amusing all at the same time, while simultaneously signaling a witty, sophisticated and self-conscious manipulation on the part of Adam as playwright of *pastourelle* conventions: "Je l'ain [Robin], sire, d'amour si vraie / Que je n'ain tant brebis que j'aie, / Nis cheli qui a aignelé" (592-94) (My love for him, Sir, is so true that I love him more than I love my sheep—even this one, with the little lamb).²⁴

This figurative use of "sheep" by Marion to speak of her love for Robin is immediately followed by an episode in which one of her "real" sheep is literally threatened, carried off, by a wolf. We have what appears to be a replay, entirely in the "shepherd register," of the *chevalier's* attempt to carry off Marion.²⁵ The attempted *raptus* of the shepherdess is here rewritten as the attempted *raptus* of a sheep. Numerous parallels establish links between the two episodes and emphasize the key contrast with regard to dénouement: Robin's success in the second instance.²⁶ Two other significant reworkings of earlier episodes follow. Marion's reproach to Robin concerning the improper way in which he holds the rescued sheep (608-09) recalls the *chevalier's* reproach to Robin for the improper way in which he held the "rescued" falcon (324-25, 344-45). In the case of Marion's sheep, Robin's "excuse" is valid and effective.²⁷ Next we have a recall of the scene in which Baudon (as the "Roi") tried to make Robin name the genitalia of a female "beste" (533-34). This time it is a question not of a hypothetical animal, but of a literal "beste" (608), and it is Gautier who indicates her (literal) genitalia in order to make an obscene pun: "Mais eswar comme elle est chi perse" (613) (Look at her bruise/vagina). This breach of

linguistic decorum provokes an immediate reprimand from Marion: “Gautier, que vous estes vilains!” (614) (Gautier, you’re a dirty lout). It also evokes Gautier’s earlier linguistic impropriety—the use of the word *pet* (485) (fart), reprimanded by Robin, who uses the term *vilenie* (489) (filthiness)—and serves to mark Gautier, as it were, for indecorous language.

In this context it is worth noting Robin’s clumsy and inappropriate embrace of Marion, which causes her to protest: “Hé! Robin, que tu m’estrains fort. / Ne sés tu faire belement?” (627-28) (Hey, Robin! You’re squeezing me to death. Can’t you learn to behave yourself?). This is the fourth embrace in a series of five in the second half of the *Jeu*. It is initiated, as was the second (545-46), at the request of Baudon (the same [male] shepherd who speaks on the second occasion with the authority of the game [*jeu*], “le roi qui ne ment,” and on the fourth occasion as a character in the play [*jeu*]). Both the second and the fourth embraces (initiated by a male figure extraneous to the couple) are “failures,” as is the third (553-55), initiated by Robin himself (see above, n. 23). All are identified by Marion as such, though the third and fourth embraces do not involve the explicit terminological distinction between *acoler* and *baisier*. The first and last (760) are both initiated by Marion and mark the difference between the “uneducated” and the “educated” Robin.²⁸

In the final scene of the *Jeu* (717-80) a series of resolutions are enacted in terms of the various constructs that we have been considering up until now. The scene opens as Robin, returning after a brief absence, displays his mastery of the linguistically appropriate code for articulating amorous sentiment in the peasant register (i.e., the “peasant *courtoisie*” that we have previously discussed) (See Brusegan 126). He initiates, with impeccable “shepherd refinement,” an explicit verbal affirmation of Marion’s love:

ROBINS:

Marote, je sui venus. Tien.
Or di, m’aimes tu de boin cuer?

MARIONS:

Oie, voir.

ROBINS:

Trés grans merchis, suer,
De chou que tu ne t’en escuses.

(717-20)

(ROBIN: Here I am, Marion. Now tell me, do you really love me? MARION: I do, truly. ROBIN: Thank you, darling, for saying it so frankly.)

Next there occurs a final (and successful) confrontation between Robin and Gautier, who functions—in the context of the “peasant register”—as the

Jeu's last avatar of the *chevalier* figure, both in terms of action and in terms of words. First Gautier recapitulates in miniature—and in an exaggeratedly direct fashion—the *chevalier*'s behavioral transgression: he attempts to take physical possession of Marion. Robin's intervention this time, in contradistinction to his ineffective "non-intervention" vis-à-vis the *chevalier*, is instantaneous and successful—and exclusively verbal: "Gautier, ostés vo main de la. / Et n'est che mie vostre amie" (735-36) (Gautier, remove your hand from there. She's not your girl). It is important to note, however, that it is Marion's authoritative voice that definitively resolves this confrontation (as was, indeed, the case with the *chevalier*): "Gautier, par amour, tenés cois, / Je n'ai cure de vos gabois" (740-41) (Gautier, please behave yourself! I don't care for your playing about).²⁹

At this point Gautier re-enacts the verbal transgressions that he has himself committed twice before in the play. Here, however, he speaks as a kind of poet figure, and in this regard also he recalls the *chevalier* (the first-person voice of the lyric *pastourelle* who is transformed into a third-person character in Adam's play). Gautier's transgression as inscribed poet figure involves his *singing* an obscene verse from a parodic thirteenth-century epic. First, he presents himself as a (parodic, "peasant," i.e., non-noble) *jongleur*: "Je sai trop bien canter de geste. / Me volés vous oïr canter?" (743-44) (I'm very good at singing ballads. Would you like to hear me sing?). Next Gautier mimes the conventional opening of a *jongleur*'s performance: "Fai moi donc escouter. / Audigier, dist Raimberge, bouse vous di" (746-47) (Well then, listen to me: "'Audiger,' said Raimberge, 'shit to you'").³⁰ It is the definitively "educated" Robin who now censures, in terms of literary and linguistic decorum, Gautier's transgressive and inappropriate inscribed poem: "Ho! Gautier, je n'en voeil plus. Fi! / Dites, serés vous tous jours teus? / Vous cantés c'un as ors menestreus" (747-49) (Now Gautier! That's enough of that! Ugh, tell me, won't you ever change? You're singing like some filthy minstrel).³¹

In the concluding episode of the last scene of the *Jeu*, Robin is requested (first by Peronnelle, then by Marion) to lead a *treske* (farandole). Two aspects of this request must be noted. First, this is the dance that Marion had (unsuccessfully) requested of Robin at the end of their extended amorous exchange by means of the "peasant dance code" in the first half of the play (192-244). In terms of the plot line, Robin's performance of this dance has been deferred as of vv. 227-28. Second, Robin's role as "leader" of the *treske*, both in the first and, here, in the second half of the *Jeu*, is presented as the culmination of his love service to Marion, a ceremonial articulation of Robin's love in the most refined gestural terms of the "peasant register." In this context the verbal exchange between Marion and Robin which precedes the final dance sequence is particularly significant. When Marion makes her (second) explicit request for this demonstration of Robin's love service—"Par amour, Robin, or le [treske] maine" (758) (Please, Robin, start the farandole now)—her shepherd

lover protests, in linguistically appropriate terms: “Hé! Dieus! que tu me fais de paine!” (759) (Good Lord! You do impose on me!). It is at this point that Marion overcomes Robin’s (conventional and “legitimate”) protests by initiating the fifth and final “embrace sequence”: “Or fai, dous amis, je t’acole” (760) (Come on now, sweetheart, I’ll give you a hug). This invitation on Marion’s part allows Robin to demonstrate that he has finally mastered the linguistic and behavioral love code appropriate to the “peasant register.” There is no longer any terminological or semantic confusion of *acoler* with *baisier*. Rather, Robin explicitly declares his new “competence” in the amorous shepherds’ linguistic and behavioral code: “Et tu verras passer d’escole, / Pour chou que tu m’as acolé” (761–62) (You’ll see me a master of my trade as a result of your hugging me).

The *Jeu* concludes with a ceremonial celebration of the “pastoral” couple. Robin, now fully “educated” by Marion in the language and behavior of (shepherd) love, initiates the final, emblematic dance with his beloved: “Mais nous arons anchois balé / Entre nous deus, qui bien balons” (763–64) (But first we ought to dance together, the two of us—we dance very well). Marion’s final evaluative comment constitutes a definitive “endorsement” of Robin’s love service: “Chertes, tous li cuers me sautele / Que je te voi si bien baler” (769–70) (Truly, my heart leaps when I see you dance so well). It is only at this point, authorized, as it were, by Marion, that Robin is able to lead a “public” farandole that will include all the “peasant” characters. This celebratory, public, ritual dance ends the play.

To summarize, by way of conclusion. In the first half of the *Jeu* Marion confronts the *chevalier*, who fails as her lover. It is Marion who causes this failure by means of her verbal prowess and expertise: she systematically and effectively refuses to accord any semantic (or indeed communicative) value to her would-be lover’s diction, to what we have called the “chivalric register.” In the second half of the *Jeu* Marion confronts Robin, who succeeds as her lover. It is Marion who both causes this success and defines its very terms, i.e., she establishes and enforces the proper linguistic (and behavioral) code for articulating and expressing love in the “shepherd register.” In both halves of the *Jeu* the unarticulated first-person voice of Adam de la Halle as poet-author figure constitutes a powerful, implicit presence. It is the literary sophistication of Adam’s late thirteenth-century audience—their awareness of the *pastourelle* tradition as operative generic subtext for the *Jeu*—that allows us to take this kind of powerful, implicit authorial presence as a given. By his brilliantly visible transformation of the lyric *pastourelle* into the theatrical *Jeu*, Adam de la Halle signals to his audience from the outset that the *je* of the lyric poet will be definitively separated from the *je* of the aristocratic *chevalier*. The latter is, of course, “de-privileged,” represented on the stage as one third-person character among many. The *chevalier*, in Adam’s *Jeu*, is in no way identified

with or authorized by the unarticulated first-person voice of the global poet-author figure. On the other hand, this authorizing “absent” voice is not, in any sense, figured by, identified with, Robin, the other—successful—male lover in the play. Rather, I would like to suggest, the two halves of Adam’s play, considered together, serve to present *Marion*—the diegetic embodiment of verbal power, semiotic efficacy and literary authority—as the privileged figure of the unexpressed authorial *je*. Adam, as it were, represents himself by, speaks “through,” the overdetermined literary convention that is his female protagonist. By means of this particularly brilliant instance of generic transformation, Adam effects a new kind of self-consciously literary “collaboration” between male subject and female object.³²

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1. For a general discussion of literary genre in this context see the editors’ Introduction in *Romance: Generic Transformation from Chrétien de Troyes to Cervantes*, ed. Kevin Brownlee and Marina Scordilis Brownlee (Hanover: UP of New England, 1985) 1-22. On the subject of thirteenth-century poetics see Karl D. Uitti, “French Literature: After 1200,” *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. Joseph Strayer (New York: Scribner, 1984) 4: 255-65.

2. Hans-Robert Jauss, “Littérature médiévale et théorie des genres,” *Poétique* 1 (1970): 79-101. See also his “L’Histoire de la littérature: un défi à la théorie littéraire,” *Pour une esthétique de la réception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978) 21-80.

3. All references and citations are from Adam de la Halle, *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion*, ed. Ernest Langlois, *Classiques Français du Moyen Age* 36 (Paris: Champion, 1924). Unless otherwise noted, references will be to lines of verse. See also the fine edition of Kenneth Varty, Adam de la Halle, *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion*, musical transcriptions by Eric Hill (London: Harrap, 1960). Translations are from Richard Axton and John Stevens, *Medieval French Plays* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971) 257-302, with selective emendations.

4. Most specifically, if we can believe the *Jeu du pèlerin*, the Neapolitan court of the Count of Artois for whom Adam presumably composed the work around 1285. See Langlois, ed. iv, x. Varty emphasizes the importance of this particular audience (15). But see Jean Dufoumet, “Du *Jeu de Robin et Marion* au *Jeu de la feuillée*,” *Sur le “Jeu de la feuillée”: Etudes complémentaires*, Bibliothèque du Moyen Age (Paris: SEDES, ca. 1977) 95-124. Dufoumet argues persuasively for close links between Adam’s two plays and suggests that the *Jeu de Robin et Marion* precedes the *Jeu de la feuillée*.

5. Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972) 446.

6. For this division see Jacques Chailley, “La Nature musicale du *Jeu de Robin et Marion*,” *Mélanges d’histoire du théâtre du moyen âge et de la Renaissance offerts à G. Cohen* (Paris: Nizet, 1950) 111-12; and Grace Frank, *The Medieval French Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954) 231-35. See also Varty 12-16.

7. See Alfred Jeanroy, *Les Origines de la poésie lyrique en France au moyen âge* (Paris: Hachette, 1889); Maurice Delbouille, *Les Origines de la pastourelle* (Brussels: M. Lamertin, 1927).

8. See Gaston Paris, *Mélanges de littérature française du moyen âge* (Paris: Champion, 1912) 539-615; and Pierre Le Gentil, *La Poésie espagnole et portugaise à la fin du moyen âge* (Rennes: Plihon, 1949). The *pastourelle-bergerie*, it should be noted, flourished with particular vigor in Picardy. See Delbouille 4-5 and Michel Zink, *La Pastourelle. Poésie et folklore au moyen âge* (Paris: Bordas, 1972) 28-29, 105.

9. For a classification of these standard variants in the *pastourelle* plot line, see Edmond Faral, "La Pastourelle," *Romania* 49 (1923): 209-13, and Delbouille 4-5. See also Zink 25-29.

10. One result of this transformation of the lyric *je* is, I would like to suggest in a somewhat speculative vein, a valorization of the poet-author figure as such, no longer requiring the "support" of the noble identity provided by the *chevalier* component of the *pastourelle*'s standard first-person voice. For Adam's authorial persona, see Sylvia Huot, "Transformations of the Lyric Voice in the Songs, Motets, and Plays of Adam de la Halle," *Romanic Review* 78 (1987): 148-64; see also her *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987) 64-74.

11. For Adam's use of *pastourelle* citations in the *Jeu*, see Jean Dufournet, "Complexité et ambiguïté du *Jeu de Robin et Marion*. L'ouverture de la pièce et le portrait des paysans," *Etudes de philologie romane et d'histoire littéraire offertes à Jules Horrent* (Liège: n.p., 1980) 141-59, esp. 141, 147-50. Of particular interest to Dufournet is the way in which the *Jeu* opposes "deux textes qui révèlent deux versions différentes du monde paysan, l'un antérieur au *Jeu*, composé de refrains-centons, écrits ou non par Adam, l'autre sorti de la plume d'Adam, qui prête ainsi à ses héros plusieurs langages" (147).

12. For a good discussion of the parodic dimension of this opening emphasis on generic transformation, see Rosanna Brusegan, "Le *Jeu de Robin et Marion* et l'ambiguïté du symbolisme champêtre," *The Theater in the Middle Ages*, ed. Herman Braet, Johan Nowé and Gilbert Tournoy (Leuven: Leuven UP, 1985) 124-25.

13. Jean Frappier comments on Marion's "strategic" employment of a "feinte niaiserie," in *Le Théâtre profane en France au moyen âge: XIII^e et XIV^e siècles* (Paris: CDU, 1960) 117. See also Brusegan on Marion's relation to her "generic" *pastourelle* model: "le premier échange de répliques entre la bergère et le chevalier révèle une indépendance et une force des personnages féminins, supérieures à celles que lui attribuent la pastourelle classique, sauf le cas de Marcabru, et la 'pastourelle à plusieurs personnages'" (125).

14. In linguistic terms, Marion systematically and strategically violates the Cooperative Principle. See H.P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, ed. Peter Cole and Jerry L. Morgan (New York: Academic Press, 1975) 41-58; and Mary Louise Pratt, *Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1977) 125-32, 152-200.

15. Cf. Dufournet's discussion of the structural function of this frame ("Complexité" 141 ff.) as well as his trenchant structural analysis of the entire first confrontation between Marion and the *chevalier* in terms of parallels and progressions ("Complexité" 142-43, 147-48).

16. The "aristocratic" falcon (*oiseil* [296, 301]) is here used as a metaphor/stand-in for the "peasant" object of desire ("une si bele amie" [302]). This metaphoric equivalence was normally operative within the context of courtly discourse, the most famous example being Machaut's use of noble birds of prey to figure the beloved lady in the *Dit de l'alierion* (ca. 1349). See Kevin Brownlee, *Poetic Identity in Guillaume de Machaut* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1984) 63-93.

17. The animal figures function here as emblems of the respective social identities of the two characters: the knight prefers Marion to his "chivalric" animal (falcon); Marion prefers her "peasant" animals (sheep) to the knight.

18. In more general terms, Charles Mazouer speaks of Marion's "supériorité" to Robin as involving "une certaine délicatesse, là où Robin reste bien lourdaut" ("Naïveté et naturel dans le *Jeu de Robin et Marion*," *Romania* 93 [1972]: 386).

19. In the course of the game the distinction between shepherds and shepherdesses is implicitly strengthened by the fact that Marion and Peronelle win (i.e., they do not laugh), while Gautier, Baudon and Huart either lose or are accused of losing. Robin seems to be somewhere in between the two opposing "extremes" of this configuration.

20. There also seems to be an implicit evocation of *vilenie*'s antonym, *courtoisie*, which, we remember, is used by Marion (for the only time in the play [292]) to reproach the *chevalier*.

21. This is identified by Langlois, ed. (66-67) as a "jeu aristocratique." See also Ernest Langlois, "Le Jeu du Roi qui ne ment et le jeu du Roi et de la Reine," *Romanische Forschungen* 23 (1906): 165, and Dufournet, "Complexité," 149-50.

22. At the same time this request seems to recall the *chevalier's* use of *beste* to refer to Marion (396), as well as Marion's own use of her sheep as a means of self-representation (see n. 24 below). Baudon's question thus appears to "implicate" Marion, i.e., to refer to her more directly as part of the act of linguistic impropriety that he wants Robin to commit.

23. Robin here follows his "uncourtly" public kiss with an equally "uncourtly" public embrace. His invitation to Marion ("Vien avant, suer, et si m'acole, / Par pais faisant" [553-54]) leads to the following reproach: "Va, diavle, sos! / Tu poises autant comme uns blos!" (554-55). Robin's new awareness of the semantic distinction between *acoler* and *baisier* is not yet sufficient to produce a complete transformation of his behavior as a lover. On the *acoler/baisier* opposition in Adam's works, see Gilbert Mayer, *Lexique des œuvres d'Adam de la Halle* (Paris: Droz, 1940), taking into account the reservations expressed in Julia Bastin's review in *Romania* 67 (1942-1943): 383-97; and, more generally, Tobler-Lommatzsch (*umhalsen* vs. *küssen*).

24. Marion has already referred to her "brebis" twice before in the play as a means of articulating her amorous preferences within the context of her literary "identity" as shepherdess: first, when she rejects the *chevalier's* proposal ("Laissiés m'entendre a mes brebis" [314]), and second, when she rushes to defend Robin from the *chevalier's* beating ("Anchois perdroie mes brebis / Que je ne li alasse aidier!" [336-37]).

25. See Dufournet, "Du Jeu," 110-11 for a discussion of the motif of sheep attacked by a wolf in the *pastourelle*, which also points out that the absence of the *chevalier* here marks a departure from *pastourelle* convention. See also Brusegan: "l'épisode de la brebis volée par le loup métaphorise la séduction du chevalier" (126).

26. The two most striking are as follows: (1) Marion's request that Robin rescue her sheep from the wolf ("Robin, keur i tost, dous amis, / Anchois que li leus le menjüe" [599-600]) recalls her earlier request that Robin rescue *her* from the *chevalier* (353); (2) Robin's self-designation as "preu" before he successfully chases off the wolf ("Si verrés ja bachelier preu" [602]) recalls his earlier vain boasting of how he would confront the *chevalier* in the event of the latter's reappearance ("con je seroie ja preus / Se li chevaliers revenoit!" [416-17]).

27. Once again the "animal code" is used to articulate socio-linguistic appropriateness: a "courtly" animal (falcon) is opposed to a "peasant" animal (sheep). The attempted crossing of literary "class" lines thus appears as a failure, for Robin can justify his behavior only in the "peasant register."

28. See Dufournet, "Complexité," 151. For a different reading, which interprets the embraces in explicitly sexual terms, see Kenneth Varty, "Le Mariage, la courtoisie et l'ironie comique dans le *Jeu de Robin et Marion*," *Marche Romane* 30 (1980): 287-92, esp. 288-90.

29. Cf. vv. 45-46, where the *chevalier*, after his very first confrontation with Marion, declares himself "gabés" by her.

30. See Langlois, ed., 68 and Dufournet, "Du Jeu," 105, 114. See also Eric Hicks, "Pourquoi Audigier?" *Amour, mariage et transgressions au moyen âge*, ed. Danielle Buschinger and André Crépin (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1984) 283-90.

31. A further parallel is thus established between Gautier and the *chevalier* in remarkably similar terms: "Car je ne sai queus menestreus / A keval pria d'amer ore / Marotain . . ." (255-57). This is the only other time that the word *menestreus* is used in the play.

32. For a similar kind of (male) author/(female) protagonist configuration, see Kevin Brownlee, "Discourse as *Proueces* in *Aucassin et Nicolette*," *Yale French Studies* 70 (1986): 167-82.