Don Amor's Economy of Love: Time and Money in Matrimonial and Extra-Matrimonial Affairs

Quintanar, Abraham
The *Libro de buen amor*, a 14th-century Spanish text, talks of the amorous exploits of an inept Archpriest. After several of the Archpriest's frustrated attempts at love, Don Amor visits him while in a deep sleep. Don Amor's attempt to instruct the Archpriest on the finer points of love includes several anecdotes, among which is the tale of Pitas Payas, a Breton painter who abandons his recently married wife and heads off on a business venture. Although Don Amor relates the Pitas Payas tale directly to the Archpriest, critics tend not to notice that this tale forms part of Don Amor's response to the Archpriest's accusations that he, Don Amor, leads man astray by promising much and delivering little, thereby causing man to remain mired in his own lust. Seldom is the tale contextualized within Don Amor's extensive monologue and this makes it difficult to see how the tale informs Don Amor's opinion on the nature of love: that money and time are essential to matrimonial as well as extra-matrimonial relations.

Don Amor uses the Pitas Payas tale to exemplify the practical role that money and time play in solidifying the holy sacrament of marriage. Inattentive to this principle, Pitas Payas has a hand in his own undoing by leaving his new bride to carry out a business venture abroad, revealing his preference for money over time spent at home, time required for satisfying his spouse's physical needs. Upon parting for Flanders, Pitas—a painter by trade—paints a lamb below his wife's navel as a reminder of their recently celebrated nuptials; yet it is this very painting that invites extramarital pleasures, because, as we shall see, the painted lamb evokes both the image found on protective medallions and the face seen on minted coinage that was in vogue in 13th- and 14th-century southern France. This symbol of matrimony can be read as one of sexual pleasure at a price, as Don Amor illustrates through this tale while he exculpates himself of the Archpriest's accusations.
In light of the Archpriest's accusations, Don Amor's justification for his conduct begins when he asks the Archpriest to refrain from speaking ill of him. He then points out that although the Archpriest believes himself a great and sophisticated lover, in truth, he has not yet proved himself to be more than an inept novice when it comes to the wiles of love (423-27). Don Amor concludes that the Archpriest is a victim of his own failures.

Generous with his advice, Don Amor informs the Archpriest that women are not equally created and that a potential suitor must determine which kind of woman suits him best. With that, Don Amor cites the work of one of his past disciples, Ovid, and referring to *Pamphilus de amore*, points to where the Archpriest may find profitable instruction for procuring a female lover (428-29).

Don Amor then gives the Archpriest a description of 1) the physical type of woman he should look for, 2) the procurement agent he is to employ in securing such a woman, and 3) the type of information this agent must gather. He also cites Ovid, his devotee, as the authoritative source for advice on acquiring an appropriate lover (430-46), while at all times speaking about woman in practical terms: she is but a commodity of material value.

Along with the idealized physical characteristics referred to above, the woman's temperament must be that of a lady disposed to seek and make love (449). One must note, however, that Don Amor is prescribing the specific type of woman the Archpriest should seek, and though the latter is an "everyman" of sorts, this type of woman may not be fit for all men.

Keeping such a woman, Don Amor underscores, requires service. The Archpriest must serve her in every way, especially in love, for the type of woman who is easy to make love to must be serviced in both word and deed (450). The Archpriest should also give her jewels and other costly accoutrements, and if he cannot afford them or if he wishes not to give them, it is enough to promise the world, for with a promise she will do whatever he desires (451). Everything this woman does for him should be rewarded by his magnanimous appreciation, as he should regard her every action with the highest esteem. Under no
circumstances should he try to bargain for favors, nor should he disagree with anything she might say (453).

The Archpriest should constantly ask of her all that he wants, have no fear regardless of how many times he desires her, shamelessly imploring no matter the time or place; above all, he should not be slothful in demanding of her whenever he has good occasion to ask (454-55). This is the economy of love: good loving above all yields profitable sensual goods.

It is within this framework that Don Amor interpolates the Pitas Payas tale, a tale reminiscent of the fabliaux and featuring a macaronic dialogue, a mix of French, Castilian, Old Occitan, and Aragonese linguistic traits. Louise O. Vasvári sees the importance of this macaronic discourse as lying primarily in the "ridiculous effects often achieved in carnivalesque genres by the inappropriate use of a technical register" ("Pitas" 145). Although Vasvári downplays the semantic significance of the discourse, she emphasizes that "[t]he couple both speak in macaronic Spanish and address each other in an inappropriate courtly style"; the intent is to underscore the ludicrous nature of the couple's speech (145-46). Because for Vasvári what foreign language Pitas speaks is of little consequence, for foreignness is an instrument of ridicule in the Middle Ages (143), she holds little stock in Corominas's observations that the language in this tale, starting with stanza 474, is a macaronic Catalan-Occitan-Aragones-Spanish.5

While I agree with Vasvári that the phonotactic register of the characters' dialogue is in itself ludicrous and humorous and that nothing more is needed to evoke laughter, the Pitas Payas tale may be read on different levels that include various registers, some of which may not be available to all its hearers. It may be profitable to explore some troubadouresque terms that appear immediately before the Pitas Payas tale and that continue throughout the tale and after it. There are many nuances informed by definitions in some of the languages that Corominas points out, since Don Amor himself, the teller of the tale, documents his source for his prefatory remarks to the Pitas Payas fabliaus as advice composed by troubadours: "trobador lo compuso" (472d).6 And though Don Amor may be referring synonymously to "poet," we cannot ignore the Occitan origin of the term trobador and
that Don Amor’s source, fictitious or not, may be a tale from the land of Oc about a Breton painter.\textsuperscript{7}

Before the tale begins, Don Amor introduces such language to the discourse when he admonishes the Archpriest to avoid distractions and not to put aside the “dueña,” or lady, since all women, like mills and orchards, require constant care and a great deal of use: “grand uso” (472ab). The pun emphasized here is on “usar,” in Occitan, \textit{uzatge} ‘usage,’ for once a woman loses her shyness, she will want to be put to use, to be enjoyed, and, as we shall see, Pitas Payas’s forlorn new bride suffers precisely from disuse because of improper husbanding.\textsuperscript{8} So the message to the Archpriest is clear: a successful enterprise observes three principles:

\begin{quote}
Cierta cosa es ésta: molino andando gana,
huerta mejor labrada da mejor manzana,
muger mucho seguida siempre anda locomita:
do estas tres guardadas non es tu obra vana. (473a-d)
\end{quote}

[“... a mill profit’s only when [grinding]; the best tilled orchard yields the best apples; a woman who is greatly sought after is always lively”]\textsuperscript{9}

While Vasvári rightfully comments that these proverbs “are centered around eroticized semantic fields,” such as rhythmic activities associated with domestic endeavors (“Pitas” 138), these activities are instructive in that by these Don Amor focuses on a practical economy for properly utilizing the resources of a well managed household.\textsuperscript{10} In Don Amor’s domestic economy, \textit{andar “locomita”} referring to a woman who entices pursuit, includes husbanding an excitable woman’s sexual drive, which as a resource is profitably done by putting it to good use.

Pitas Payas has an eye for a sexually desirable beautiful woman—as Don Amor would say: he “sabe primeramente la muger escoger” [knows, above all, how to choose the woman] (430d)—as evidenced by the fact that once abandoned she remedies her desuetude by taking an “entendedor” (478c). The newly wed Pitas Payas, before leaving for Flanders, had arduously served his young wife, finding “pleasure in
having a consort" with her (474d). Evidently, Pitas Payas was neither lazy nor neglectful in courting and has not fallen into the vice of sloth that Don Amor warns about in his "Ensienplo de los dos perezosos que querfan casar con un dueña" ["Fable of the two sluggards who wanted to marry one woman"] (Ruiz, LBA Joset 249-55). As we shall see, in the end, Pitas Payas proves to be too industrious, too monetarily ambitious, which leads him to discontinue his ardent service to his newly wedded wife and so, to disregard the profitable maintenance of his household's economy.

Don Amor now illustrates the point he has made about the importance of faithful duty with a tale about a neglectful painter from Brittany whose young bride cherished marital companionship (474). Not a month had passed since their nuptials when Pitas Payas told his new wife that he wished to go to Flanders, from where he would procure many gifts (475ab). Presumably, the gifts were to be at least in part for his new bride, but she replied: "you are welcome to go, sir, but do not forget about your home or about my person" (475d). While there is a tendency to read "no olvides ... la mia persona" (475d) as "do not forget [about] me," as Willis translates, Raynouard documents Occitan usage of persona as meaning "body," likewise, widely used in the Iberian Peninsula in the same manner: "se toma tambien por el cuerpo" ["taken also to mean body"] (Terreros y Pando). Pitas Payas's wife's admonition then would be twofold: he should neglect neither his home nor his new wife's sexual and physical well being.

Wishing to inscribe upon his spouse an adorning figure so that she may be kept from licentious acts, Don Amor declared: "Dona de hermosura, / volo fer en vos una bona figura / por que seades guardada de toda altra locura" (476a-c). Although most readings of this text imply that Pitas Payas informs his young wife he is "to paint" a lovely figure upon her, as Willis and Drayson MacDonald translate, both in Occitan and Old Spanish fer simply means "to make," a sense which in Pitas Payas's discourse seems more appropriate. I would argue that Pitas Payas's intent on "making" an indelible mark or symbol on his spouse's intimate parts is more than a testament that would serve as a mnemonic devise to assist her in remembering her chastity.
Quintanar

In his book *The Production of Presence*, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht explains that the sacrament of the Eucharist was the core ritual of medieval culture; it was the “production of God’s Real Presence on earth and among humans.” Celebrating the mass commemorated “Christ’s Last Supper,” but more importantly it was a “ritual through which the ‘real’ Last Supper and Christ’s body could ‘really’ be made present again” (28). For Gumbrect, the word “present” means above all that “Christ’s body and Christ’s blood would become [literal] substances in the forms of bread and wine ... with the bread being the ‘form’ that made the ‘substantial presence’ of Christ’s body perceptible” (28-29). I would argue that this “production of presence” is extendable to all sacraments, and as I hope to show below, the “bona figura” that Pitas Payas makes, would be intended to produce a figure that would make present, make anew, the holy sacrament of marriage; the figure would be the “form” that would make the “substantial presence” of the holy sacrament of matrimony along with all its “presence effects” including the power to “[keep] his new spouse from all deeds of folly” (Willis 474bc). Pitas Payas truly believes that the ritual of inscribing the figure will literally “produce the presence” of Sacred Matrimony within his young wife’s body, but as we shall see it turns out to be as foolish as any act that she may have committed, and in the end becomes a symbol of his naivété.

The Pitas Payas episode takes up one of the *LBA’s* recurring themes, that of misunderstanding in human nature, and applies it to a misunderstanding between man and wife. We might ask, how did Pitas Payas’s new bride understand his remarks? On the eve of his parting, if she takes her husband to mean, “I wish to make in you [‘en vos’] a beautiful person [‘figura’] so that you will be kept from all other foolishness,” she probably looked forward to a night of passionate lovemaking, expected between husband and wife, so passionate as to insure conception of a beautiful child [‘bona figura’] within her body, the purpose of matrimony and in keeping with a healthy household economy. So it is not surprising that she replied: “Mon sefer, fazet vostra mesura” (476d). While on the one hand, “fazet vostra mesura” certainly means “do as you see fit” (Willis), on the other, she would hope that her husband exercise some care in what he does, for in regard
to love mezura implies a wisdom or judgment that distinguishes
honorable comportment when serving his lady, and in the case of a
married couple such care might result in pregnancy if the husband
properly performs his duty. This young bride does not seem in
complete agreement with her new husband’s departure, but she seems
willing to accept such a consoling protection plan.

Don Amor, then, narrates how Pitas Payas executed his plan to
protect his new spouse by, as I argue, attempting to “make present” the
holy sacrament of Matrimony:

Pintól so el onbligo un pequeño cordero,
Fuese Don Pitas Payas a ser novo mercadero. (477ab)

Although it is generally but rightfully understood that a picture of a
lamb was painted below the new bride’s navel, the discourse on the
economy of love that frames this tale and Pitas Payas’s novice—or
novel, that is, “not previously imagined or thought of”—merchant
role evokes an allusion to a different field of reference with this same
iconography. Both Emil Levi and François-Just-Marie Raynouard, for
instance, document a coin that is commonly referred to as a “lamb,” in
Old Occitan anhels, which on the face bears the Agnus Dei, the Lamb
of God, or in Spanish, “el cordero de Dios.” Emil Levy also
documents the interchangeability of “cordier” with “anhels” for
“lamb,” as does Joan Coromines, who widens the field to include the
interchangeability of terms in Old Spanish, “añel / corder[o],” as well
as in Old Catalan, “anyell / corder.” Would then, the religious
iconography represented by a small, young lamb brought together with
the world of merchandizing in lines 477ab of the LBA bring to mind a
coin of such a mint?

The pictorial representation in the Pitas Payas tale becomes part of
the dramatic structure seen in terms of the characters, the situations in
which they find themselves, and the image of the lamb that is related to
specific religio-cultural practices and socio-economic and historical
contexts. Examining what Pitas Payas painted within these contexts
and practices opens up the possibility of interpretations of images or
allusions to images of sheep in various manifestations that may shed light on Don Amor's message.

One image represented in monetary terms that may lead to an interpretation of the pictorial representation of the "corder" in the Pitas Payas tale is the image on *Agnus Dei* coins that became immensely popular during the fourteenth century and that continued through the latter half of the fifteenth century in northern and southern France. The minting of these coins was a result of societal upheaval in western Europe. As José María de Francisco Olmos explains, thirteenth-century western Europe saw a change in society in the strengthening of monarchic power. The monarchy was intent on establishing a direct relationship with God by circumventing any intermediaries, meaning the Church. The western European kingdoms were to confront the Roman pontifical theocracy, which they eventually overcame (159).

This new concept of a relationship between the monarchic and the divine took root especially in France where Philippe IV (1285-1314) risked a frontal challenge with Boniface VIII, defender of papal power, and Philippe's victory led to the consolidation of the monarch's total power over the Church in France (159). Philippe IV continued the tradition instituted by his grandfather Louis IX of using monetary religious legends in minting coins, and in January 1311 Philippe introduced a new gold coin, the *Agnel*, stamped with the *Agnus Dei*, the Lamb of God, as well as with an inscription that explained the principal figure on the face of the coin: "*Agnvs Dei qui tollis pecata MVND MISERE NOBIS*" (Figure 1). This would become one of the coins with the largest number of direct descendants (O'Neill 5). The political significance of this French gold coin made it immensely popular and would later come to be denominated the *Mouton* with the redesigning of Jean II, le Bon, in 1354 (Figure 2), and would continue in mint until the reign of Charles VII (1422-61). The *agnel d'or* would become one of the principal currencies of exchange in the Low Middle Ages (Francisco Olmos 159). That a coin of this significance would be afloat in the Iberian Peninsula during the fourteenth century when the *LBA* made its appearance would be hard to document, but I argue here that given the long history of intermarriage between aristocratic families of southern France and of
the northern Iberian Peninsula, the French marital rituals were probably well known among the clergy in the Peninsula and that the LBA would not be above poking fun at them.

Already in the thirteen-century we see Lemosine medallions made of stamped thin leaf metal named *Agnus Dei*, no doubt from their analogy with the small images in wax, blessed by Popes, bearing a lamb’s imprint. These were distributed to the people to commemorate solemn religious occasions, celebrations of baptism, marriage, etc., a practice also found among cardinals and other prelates. In addition to *Agnus Dei* in wax, the image was stamped on other material such as paper or thin leaf metal (Ardant 160), suggesting the ritual’s popularization.

Documented also in the thirteenth century—and the centuries that follow—was the custom in which thirteen coins of either gold or silver would be given by the bridegroom to the bride during the wedding ceremony called the *treizain* as a pledge of the marriage contract (Blanchet 192-93)—and in Spain these monetary gifts are known as *arras* and continue to be in practice today. These tended to be attractive and symbolic coins, and the gold *Agne/ would certainly qualify, as it is known as the “chef-d’oeuvre de l’art monétaire du moyen âge” (“the masterpiece of monetary art of the Middle Ages”; qtd. in O’Neill 5).

Taking into account the fact that the Pitas Payas tale is set in Brittany, we might ask: With what memorable image of a lamb or sheep would a painter from this region adorn his new bride’s body? For Vasvári, to guard his wife’s chastity during his absence, the Breton painter paints a “sheep,” the image symbolically representing her chastity (“Pitas” 136). Zahareas and Pereira concur with Vasvári that the “pequeno cordero” is, ironically, “símbolo de inocencia y castidad sobre el pecado natural” (149). Zahareas and Pereira further observe that “casi blasfemamente, se trata quizá de una colocación risqué del llamado ‘cordero de Dios’ que es Jesucristo como encarnación de la castidad o el buen amor [:] ‘He aqui el cordero de Dios, que quia el pecado del mundo,’ Juan 1, 29” (149-50), John the Baptist’s words coincidentally inscribed on *agnels* or *Agnus Dei* coins. (Zahareas and Pereira do not pursue this line of thought).
A more probing question might be: Why would the painter adorn his new bride with such an image? How could this image, as Vasvári would say, guard her chastity? Coromine's observations of Berceo's *Sacrificio de la Misas* and the term *añel* (annel) / *carnero* that appears in the Biblical story of the seventh plague sent by the hand of God on the land of the Pharaoh so that he would let the Israelites go perhaps deserves a closer look:

Mandóles Moisés... que matassen cordero,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandóles Moisés...</th>
<th>que matassen cordero,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Celebrase su pascua</td>
<td>pueblo de Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assando lo comiessen,</td>
<td>non cocho el añel;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feziessen de la sangre</td>
<td>tāú con un pinzel,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non passarié la puerta</td>
<td>essi ángel cruel. (148-49,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emphasis mine)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pedro Catedra defines *añel* in this context as "cordero de pascua, de un año," citing Exodus 8:9 (Berceo 994); he agrees with Coromines about the interchangeability of both terms; the term *cordero de pascua* can refer to the paschal lamb in Exodus, though it is more commonly associated with the paschal lamb's blood shed for the sins of the world, as the *Agnus Dei* symbolizes. As Berceo indicates, with artist's brush, "pinzel," the Israelites paint the Hebrew letter "tāú"—that visually represents the lintel and side posts of the entrances to guard against the angel of death from penetrating the sanctity of the home. Berceo then exposits how this same saving grace is "made present" in Christ's sacrifice: "Jhesú fue est cordero" ["Jesus was this Lamb"] (153). This symbolism extends to the *Agnus Dei* sacramental that is "associated with the lamb [and] suggests the idea of a victim offered in sacrifice, [that is Christ], as the blood of the paschal lamb of old protected each household from the destroying angel, so the purpose of the [Agnus Dei] medallions is to protect those who wear them or possess them from all malign influences." This kind of protection would motivate Pitas Payas to render the image on his spouse's midriff.

The language in Berceo's passage quoted above is quite similar to that used in the Pitas Payas tale and serves for this analogy: as the
children of Israel paint with a brush the [liquid] blood of the lamb, so does Pitas Payas paint a representation of the symbolic “Blood of the Lamb” of the *Agnus Dei*. With the image of a paschal lamb, Pitas Payas’ bride would be “guardada de toda otra locura” (476c).

Feeling the solemnity of the circumstance in leaving his new spouse, and aware of the redeeming and protective power of “Blood of the Lamb,” Pitas Payas would paint a “pequeño cordero,” or an *Agnus Dei*, “making present” the sacrament of Holy Matrimony and symbolically serving as a reminder of the blessed union. For Pitas this image would function as a protector against all “malign influences” much in the same way as a medallion would, a medallion which apparently he is unable to provide for his new bride, much like the Archpriest, who also never seems to deliver a promised gift to the pretended lady.

There seems to be a complete break between what has just transpired and Pitas Payas’s next action: “Fue se don Pitas Payas a ser novo mercadero” (477b). Zahareas and Pereira note the incongruity: “No se explica el cambio de la profesión de pintor a mercadero, si no es para explicar los dos actos de Pitas Payas” (150). If indeed Pitas Payas changed profession, Don Amor’s telling of the tale becomes problematic for he continuously refers to Pitas Payas as a painter by profession as he narrates his bride’s apprehension when she “oyó que venia el pintor” (479a). However, by reading line 477a as “And so Pitas Payas became a merchant as well,”—meaning in addition to his profession as a painter—we may surmise that he may have been commissioned to paint in Flanders, which would provide a motive for his absence.

In such a reading, Pitas Payas may have inadvertently become a merchant as well as a painter in more than one sense, since the image decorating his new bride’s midriff would easily be the image of the precious *agnel d’or*, or an *Agnus Dei* coin that commemorated the marriage. Painted below the young bride’s navel, the coin could be taken as an advertisement of an entrance fee, or the price of admittance. Remiss in exercising the *mesura* his wife requested, Pitas Payas would have unknowingly advertised for, even incited, precisely what he wished to avoid. A more modest damsel might outright protest, as does
Quintanar

the shepherdess in Marcabru's first pastorella, who in a similar situation says,

... but I, for a small entrance fee, do not wish to exchange my maidenhood for the title of a whore. (68-70)

However, for the newly married young woman in Don Amor's tale, who finds herself with no husband to satisfy her needs, such is not the case; months drag on like years, and Pitas Payas absents himself for twenty-four months (477cd-478ab).

So she takes a lover and populates the inn—"tomo' entendedor y poblo' la posada" (478c). It is not quite clear if she takes a lover who has previously pursued her, or if she takes a new lover, since entendedor usually refers to a suitor who may speak to and compose lyrics for a lady but who does not have all the rights and privileges, including consumating his love, that a complete lover, drutz, would (Cropp). In that sense, the text implies that her husband's absence makes possible her taking a lover who may have already been in pursuit. Moreover, we must agree with Vasvári that the expression "poblo' la posada"—'populated the inn'—is an "obscene description of [Pitas Payas's] wife's activities during his absence" ("Pitas"l43). However, not even Vasvári ventures to allude to continuous comings and goings as she might have had she read "corder" as the advertised fee and "posada" as an "inn," not a home, since the passage reads that she "tomó un entendedor" and that she "pobló la posada" in a sexual sense (478c). The text does not indicate a change in subject for the second action, suggesting that it is she who populates the lodge, that she lodges the "entendedor" in Pitas Payas's stead.

As the "posada"—hearth and home—becomes a lodging with wider public access, the sacrificial lamb suffers a slaughter by attrition: ongoing activity causes the "corder" to rub off her belly so that not a trace remains (478d). Zahareas and Pereira comment that the porno-erotic graphic is topped off with the triple image of the lamb and the ingenious suggestion of orgy in the expression "del no fincit nada" ("of it [the lamb] nothing remained; 150). With the physical disappearance of the image—slaughter of the lamb—comes also the
undoing of the intended saving and protective grace of the "Blood of the Lamb" that has deteriorated into excessive sexual indulgence. The image suffers an irreverent transposition not just of terminology, but of the religio-cultural practice of the institution of marriage, making it an example of what Vasvári would call parodia sacra to be added to the list drawn from the LBA that she compiles ("Example" 195-96). 31

Don Amor further develops the parody by narrating that upon hearing of her husband's return, the now not-so-new bride urgently sends for her "entendedor" and asks him to paint in the exact same place a "corder menor" (479). The "corder menor" indicates a lamb appropriate for sacrifice, one of less than a year, of the type depicted in the Agnus Dei. The "entendedor," though, in his great haste instead paints a fully grown ram, "carnero", endowed with the appropriate instruments of a ram—horns (480).

After his arrival, and having his no longer new bride in his chambers, Pitas Payas says to her:

"Madona si voz plaz,
Mostratme la figura e ajam buen solatz." (482ab)

Although "figura" most often is read as the painting he expects to find on her midriff, it could be read as "show me your body and we will enjoy restful pleasure," figura meaning 'body,' and solatz having long designated the rest that comes with the pleasures of love, sensual pleasure (Cropp 330). In the context of these events, Pitas Payas, at last alone with his wife, seeks his pleasure as well as evidence of his wife's constancy, which is apparent in her response:

"Mon señor, vós mesmo la catad,
fey y ardidamente todo lo que vollaz." (482 cd)

Obviously understanding "figura" to mean her body, the not-so-modest wife tells him to see it for himself, and passionately, ardently, to do in it all which he desires. Though these are the joys destined for a husband, stated in these terms they are also the joys that he who previously had been well lodged in the husband's absence had also enjoyed.

85
Don Amor then narrates what Pitas saw painted on the aforementioned place: a grand ram, "carnero," endowed with worthy arms, "armas de prestar" (483ab). It is reasonable to assume that when the "entendedor" was mistakenly painting a ram, the comely wife should have easily seen the difference between the lamb she had requested, a yearling, and that of a full-grown ram. However, in urgent haste, she may not have noticed the details in the painting she thought was a medallion or coin, the protective Agnus Dei, since a frontal portrait of a well-endowed head of a lamb would have the same general shape as a coin or a medallion.

Nonetheless, Don Amor's description of a "carnero," or a ram, with "armas de prestar" leads us to question what is meant. We see the expression "de prestar" as "worthy" associated with bellic endeavors, for instance "omnes de prestar" (Libro de Alexandre 205lb) 'worthy men,' or "fecho de prestar" (255b) 'worthy feat.' The Libro de Alexandre refers to worthy arms in much the same manner:

Escudo nin loriga non le prestaron nada;
Metiòle la cuchiella por medio la corada. (709ab, emphasis mine)

Arms in this context are of no "worth," of no "avail." In the Pitas Payas tale, "Carnero con armas de prestar" could doubly refer to a battering ram as a worthy arm (weapon), as Francisco Gago-Jover's Vocabulario militar castellano would indicate a war engine with which to batter walls:

Carnero: Máquina militar para batir murallas. Era una viga larga y muy pesada, uno de cuyos extremos estaba reforzado con una pieza de hierro o bronce.

Such a war engine would consist of a large and heavy wooden beam with an iron or bronze head of a ram—carnero—affixed at that end, also known as an ariete after Aries, whose sign is the ram. Don Amor's commentary suggests that what was now painted on the young
Quintanar

wife's midriff was something like the striking head of a battering ram—worthy arms indeed.

The implications go beyond the symbolic image of horns that pokes fun at the cuckold husband or as a trace left by another lover (Zahareas and Pereira 150-51), a more virile lover than Pitas Payas, or what Vasvári identifies as a battle of paintbrushes and technique as phallic representations ("Festive" 104). The phallic discourse, as Vasvári would say, that associates the adornment that the young wife now bears on her midriff with what can be emblematically a war engine’s powerful striking head, suggests the head of an erect penis and its satisfying ravishment, which she has sought, unaccomplishable by a single man. From her "posada poblada," she has summoned her "entendedor" to re-adorn her body; yet while "carnero" depicts violence, being rammed has sated her, in spite of the damage the Pitas Payas family home has suffered. The home and its economy have been battered and compromised and its most prized, though neglected, possession has been ravaged and pilfered because it has not been profitably maintained nor protected by the husband, whose responsibilities include the proper management of his household or establishment and those who reside therein. 35

The phallic implications of the freshly painted battering ram’s head figure, carnero, are not lost on Pitas Payas, prompting him to question:

"¿Cómo es esto, m'adona? ¡O! ¿Cómo pode estar que you pinté corder e trobo este manjar?" (483cd)

"What is this, Madame? How can it be that I painted a lamb, and (now) I find this (manjar)"

Zahareas and Pereira observe that the dishonored husband clearly alludes to the painted "horns" of the "carnero" but does not speak of them directly, that is, does not dare to refer to his own shame (151), and as suggestive as might be reading "manjar" as "to eat, devour," or as Vasvári would have it "a piece of meat," such interpretations alone flow awkwardly within the context of the poem. It might be more profitable to examine some Old Occitan meanings of manjar.
Quintanar

documented by Levi, such as “to devour, to ruin,” and as a noun “something devoured” or “ruined”—as it would be if it were subjected to a battering ram or a phallus. If in this macaronic verse “manjar” stands in for “manjaria” truncated for the purpose of rhyme, then the reading would flow seamlessly with the context of the speech, since manjaria as a feminine noun means “debauchery” and offers a merry double entendre fitting for this situation. Quick of wit, the jaded young wife delivers the punch line: “¿Cómo, mon señor, / de dos años petit corder no se fazed carner? / Vós veniessedes tenprano e trobarlades corder” (“How, M’sieur, do you expect a petit lamb in two years not to become a ram? Had you come back sooner, you would have found a lamb”; 484cd), leaving Pitas Payas gaping for words for his no-longer-new wife has coupled together the “manjar”—something debauched/ruined—with the term carner, a battering ram’s head, the badge of conquest the “entendedor” has left.

Urging the Archpriest not be a “Pitas Payas,” Don Amor explains the tale’s three-fold moral: 1) do not abandon the woman you seek, and once you have her, put her to good use, for if you do not someone else surely will; 2) once a woman tastes love, she will indulge herself every time she can arrange to do so; and 3) above all, husband a woman well if you want her love, keeping in mind that material things will surely win her over, and that for money she will do all your bidding. Managing money and time are underscored as factors of loving well, as they are the controlling metaphors in this story of bartered betrayal.

Don Amor’s elucidations on the wiles of love permit him to segue into a detailed discourse on the pitfalls and the power of money in the “Enxiemplo de la propiedat qu’el dinero ha” (Ruiz, Joser 490-527), which directly follows the Pitas Payas tale. As Zahareas explains, Don Amor’s point would be that rather than a “natural dupe,” Pitas Payas is an “unsuccessful lover” who is more concerned with obtaining an income than “maintaining the integrity of his household” (88). Pitas Payas “violates one of the first laws of nature by leaving alone a young woman recently married” (88), and falls victim to the powers of money, for the Breton Pitas Payas opts for business abroad over domestic pleasure. This decision and the ensuing two year absence prevent him
from investing himself, his time, and money in the home; he ends up mismanaging his household resources.

In this section of the *LBA*, Don Amor's discourse continues well beyond the interpolated “Pitas Payas” tale, but begins well before it with the description of the ideal physical attributes an appropriate spouse must possess. The tale itself begins to unfold as Pitas Payas leaves for Flanders and, wishing to insure his most prized possession, his new bride, he paints an *Angus Dei*, the “Lamb of God,” upon her midriff, intending to “make present,” renew, the holy sacrament of matrimony and thereby protect his wife’s body from all intruders. As a Christological sign, the Lamb stands in for saving grace and is analogous to the Old Testament saving grace afforded by God when the Israelites paint the lintel over the entrance of the home with the blood of the Pascal lamb, a sign to prevent death from entering therein.

In both cases, the act of painting—in one case with the metonymic blood of the Lamb and in the other with literally the blood of a lamb—over an entrance is done in hopes of protecting against devastation. In the Israelites’ case, the blood of a lamb stays the avenging angel from devastating the home; unfortunately, in Pitas Payas’s case, while golden *Angus Dei* coins validate the sacrament of holy matrimony commemorated during the wedding ceremony, the *Angus Dei* is also literally a coin minted for monetary exchange. What for Pitas Payas is a symbolic reenactment that can “make present” the protection implied in the holy sacrament of marriage, for someone else, that same image painted on his wife’s midriff advertizes an entrance to pleasurable lodging. In this reading, Pitas Payas would compound this mistake with another, that of having failed to invest the time required to satiating his wife’s appetite for sexual attention. This eventually leads to the disastrous situation related at the tale’s end.

Indeed, while Pitas Payas is away, the young wife enjoys a lover who comfortably lodges in his stead. So regardless of any monetary success Pitas Payas may have had in his ventures abroad, he returns to find the household in disarray, for his most valuable resource, the means of reproduction—and the principle function of medieval marriage—has become someone else’s pilfered booty. Warning against neglecting one’s spouse as well as warning about prioritizing financial
Quintanar

gain, the tale exemplifies the consequences brought upon the economy of love of a poorly husbanded home and elucidates why love, Don Amor incarnate, cannot be blamed for man’s ineptitude in managing time and money in his household and matrimonial affairs.

Dickinson College
Quintanar

Agnus Dei Coins from the
Fitzwilliam Museum Coins and Medals Collection

Figure 1
Agnel d’or minted by Philip IV (1285-1314) of France
Figure 2
*Mouton d’or* minted by Jean II, *Le Bon* (1350-64), of France

92
Quintanar

Figure 3
Blanca "Agnus Dei" minted by Juan I (1379-90) of Castile-Leon
A version of this article was presented on May 6, 2004, at the 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo MI. I would like to thank George Greenia for his insights and encouragement and Mark Aldrich for reading the final draft of this essay and offering useful suggestions.

1 Although Hugh of St Victor had already spoken of the sacramentum of marriage in the twelfth century (Duby 17), the II Council of Lyons, 1274, firmly established marriage as the seventh sacrament (Neusner and Dupuis 20).

2 Gybon-Monypenny notes that while the Ars amatoria does offer a description of how to court a woman that concords with the Archpriest’s text, it does not provide an explicit description of the woman, since to Ovid all women are worthy and it is a matter of individual taste, and of knowing just where to find one (cited in his edition of the LBA 202).

3 “exigir[:] que en esta demanda que sos parientes fizieron a rebecca. Que si querie yr con eliezer pora ysaac. & les respondio ella que farie lo que ellos mandassen. que fue requerido primera mientre el consentimiento dela muger en el casamiento” (“Requirir,” def. 2, Kasten and Nitti).

4 Bleuca reads verse 454d: “perezoso non seas ad6 buena azina vieres” as “no seas perezoso donde Buena ocasión vieres” (120).

5 Corominas disregards Lecoy’s observation that the jargon of the exchanges between Pitas Payas and his bride are a sort of Franco-Spanish (200), though it is fair to say that Lecoy is speaking generally of French languages that would include Occitan (158-60).

6 Although Joset concedes that the troubadour mentioned here may allude to the anonymous author of “Pitas Payas,” he asserts that since 1974 he has suggested that it may very well refer to the author of the series of refrains in stanzas 472-73 (252), an assumption worth considering but beyond the scope of this article.
I would not speculate as to the genealogy of this tale, an endeavor beyond the scope of this article. For reviews of the scholarship on possible origins of this tale see Cesped, McGrady, and Moffatt.

"Economical and thrifty use (of anything); the action of saving or storing up; Mating with a husband" ("Husbanding," def. 2, 3 OED).

I quote throughout from Willis's English translation; in places I make some adjustments. The primary text I quote from throughout is Joset's very accessible yet rigorous edition. When another edition is quoted, it is cited by the editor's name.

"The manner in which a household, or a person's private expenditure is ordered" ("Economy," def. 1b, OED).

"portare muyta dona" (475ab); in this case, portare would mean: "to bring home" ("Portar," Levi), and dona would mean "gift" but in a collective sense ("Dona," Levi).

"individu, corps," that is, "an individual, a body" ("Persona," Raynouard), as seen in: "et ieu, qu' en pert lo cor e la persona" ("and I who have lost both my heart and my body"; Raimbaud 1.8). In all Romance languages, as well as in English, person can refer contextually and specifically to the human body. (See also the definitions of persona in Terreros y Pando and Autoridades.)

Other Occitan forms of the verb far and fer for fazer, ("Faire," Levi), are well documented in Old Spanish texts. (For a description of the competing Spanish forms see Penny 189-90).

"... constitue vis-a-vis de l'amour une contrainte qui distingue le comportement honorable de l'amoureux" ("Constitutes, with regards to love, a constraint that distinguishes the honorable comportment of the [male] lover"; Cropp 422).

"Of a new kind of nature; esp. interestingly new or unusual" ("Novel," def. 2 OED); We see the same sense in Catalan ("NOU, nova, novell," Corominas).

"sorte de monnaire à l'empreinte d'un agneau" ("a type of currency [coin] imprinted with a lamb", "Anhels," Levi); "Pièce de monnaie" ("a coin"), as in: "Anhels que fes lo dit rey, e liegon: Agnus Dei, etc." ("Aghels which was made [minted] by said king, upon which read: Agnus Dei"; "Agnel," Raynouard).
Quintanar

17 Corominas documents this usage in early-13th-century Spain, citing Berceo's *Sacrificio de la misa* ("Cordero"; "Anyell") Although in his etymological dictionary of the Catalan language Conomines documents this usage of "añel" as Riojan dialect, he does not document this usage nor does he have an entry for "anyell" in his Spanish *Diccionario Etimológico* even though Berceo's text is in Old Spanish. In this dictionary, though, Corominas documents the shared semantic field of derivatives from CORDUS and AGNUS in Spanish as well as Catalan "Cordero"). This shared semantic field seems natural enough as seen the interchangeability in *Sacrificio de la misa*: for instance, "... la Pascua cabdalera, / que cordero matases, maslo, ca non cordera" (146cd), set against: "Celebrase su pascua pueblo de Israël, / asado lo comiesen, non cocho, el añel" (149ab), añel apparently from 'anye/l' Catalan origin ("Anel," Kasten and Cody). In Berceo's text, both "cordero" and "añel" refer to the very same sacrificed lamb.

18 The victory led to the election of various French Popes, the transfer of the pontifical see to Avignon, and the disbandment of the Order of the Templar which was subjected to monarchical French justice (159).

19 A phrase recited during Mass at the moment of the Breaking of the Bread; also, a phrase from the Gospel of St. John 1:29: John the Baptist while preaching by the Jordan sees Jesus approach and says: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sin of the world."

20 Seven images of various mintings of these coins are found at Cambridge University's Fitzwilliam Museum online catalogue. These coins are very well, though not completely, documented in Ciani plates V-XVIII.

21 As a testament to its importance and its diffusion, this coin, more accurately the *Mouton* minted by Charles VI (1380-1422), would serve as the model for the well-known Castilian coin, the famous *Agnus Dei blanca* minted by Juan I (1379-90) (159). This was the first minting of an *Agnus Dei* coin in the Peninsula (figure 3), and it would not yet be available when the *LBA* was written. We find examples and descriptions of coins of several mintings in *blanca* and *half blanca* denominations catalogued by Vidals Quadras, Alvarez Burgos, and
Quintanar

Heis. Twelve images of various mintings of these coins are found at Cambridge University's Fitzwilliam Museum online catalogue.

22 Ardant documents an industry by workers in precious metals, gold and silver, that produced commemorative treizains or "deniers de mariage" stamped on thin foils of metal to serve in marriage ceremonies (163), presumably for those who could not afford minted coins.

23 ("Agnus Dei," Catholic Encyclopedia.)

24 Despite the fact that the tale does not indicate what instrument Pitas Payas used to paint, the shape of an artist's paint brush—pincel—is so suggestive that it prompts Vasvári to comment on the paint brush as an unsatisfying phallus used by the painter, Pitas Payas, on his young wife ("Pitas" 143; "Festive" 103-04). Vasvári may have in mind that peniculus means "painters brush" and is the diminutive of "penis," though she does not comment on the Latin form.

25 This does not seem to be much of a problem because the distinction between artisan and merchant was not hard and fast in the Middle Ages; artisans had to sell their products or at least their services. In this case, Don Amor does not refer to Pitas Payas as a merchant.

26 (Pintól so el ombligo un pequeñito cordero. / Fueses Don Pitas Payas a ser nuevo mercadero.) We read "novo" as "significa asimismo lo que sobreviene ó se añade á otra cosa que habla antes" ("means also something unforeseen or something that is added to what existed before"; "Nuevo," Autoridades).

27 Simon Gaunt's translation of "mais ieu per pauc d'intratge / non voil s mon pieuzelatge / chamjar per nom de putana."

29 Corominas points out the indecent double entendre in the usage of "pobló la posada" because verse 479b (LBA) shows that the "entendedor" was not living with her since she sends for him when it is time to restore Pitas Payas painting.

30 This is more consistent with the definition of posada ("Posada," Kasten and Cody).
Quintanar

31 Vasvári defines parodia sacra as “parodic versions of all rites of the Church [that] were performed and recited in public spectacles in the carnivalesque atmosphere of the marketplace (and sometimes in the Church itself)” (195). Here, I extend her observations to include also the religio-cultural practices that have to do with personal and sexual relationships including marriage, for this seems to be a personal, non-institutionalized “ritual,” quite different from those discussed in the article cited.

32 Although ram’s head coins date from ancient Greece to present-day Australia, I have been unable to document a twelfth- or thirteenth-century ram’s head coin from either France or northern Spain with which to make a comparison.

33 “To strike with repeated blows of an instrument or weapon, or with frequent missiles; to beat continuously and violently so as to bruise or shatter, (Also with complemental about, down, in)” (“Batter,” def. 1, OED).

34 (“Ariete,” Autoridades; Kasten and Nitti).

35 “One who manages his household, or his affairs or business in general, well or ill, profitably or wastefully, etc. Most commonly good husband: One who manages his affairs with skill and thrift; a saving, frugal, or provident man; an economist” (“Husband,” def. 5a, OED, emphasis mine).

36 Courtesy of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. I thank Dr. Martin Allen of the Department of Coins and Medals for making these images available for this essay.
Quintanar

Works Cited


99
Quintanar


100
Quintanar


John II (1350-64) of France. Mouton d’or. [PG.2554 (1), (2)]. The Fitzwilliam Museum.


101

Olmos, José María de Francisco. “La aparición de leyendas cristianas en las monedas de los reinos del occidente medieval (siglos XII-XIII).” *Documenta & Instrumenta* 1 (2004): 139-60.


102
Quintanar


