

Le Chateau d'amour. Proposals for a new edition



Bodleian Library MS. Douce 132; fol. 022v-023a recto

Le Chateau d'amour is an Anglo-Norman poem of the 13th century by Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln between 1235-1253. The treatise, which is composed of 884 couplets of rhymed octosyllables, found great fortune during the Middle Ages. Indeed, the work is transmitted by 18 manuscripts, ranging in date from the 13th to the 15th century, and it was translated into English in verse and prose (Weymouth 1864, Cooke 1852), while a portion of the text - the Jewish allegory of *Four Daughters*- found further employments independent from the poem, in particular in the William Le Clerc's *Vie de Tobie* or e.g. as in the rediscover Codex Ashmole 61 (Shuffelton 2008).

After a descriptive prologue, a Latin preface or a brief account in French, the treatise proposes a notable and composite portrayal of Christ's figure, that is fixed in a frame that from Genesis reaches up to the Day of Judgement. The allegorical image of the Immaculate Virgin as "Castle of Love", which has given to the poem its modern name, is rooted in the allusion to Luke 10, 38 («Factum est autem, dum irent, et ipse intravit in *quoddam castellum*»), but also in the Pauline image of the individual as a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinzi 6:19), which would be taken up in the Medieval context by Aelredo of Rievaulx (*Sermo* 19).

The present PhD project proposes a new critical edition of the Grosseteste's treatise in order to develop and explore the philological characteristics of the work, through a review of the whole tradition which will examine carefully the linguistic and paleographic peculiarities of the manuscripts, but also many aspects of textual interest related to a revision of the biblical, philosophical and literary sources of the treatise, that will be discussed. Finally, great attention will be agreed to the composite manuscripts, to their structure and text collections in relation to the Grosseteste's poem, and to the author's vocabulary too.

These preliminary aspects are linked to the object of a wide reevaluation of the historical-literary context of the poem within the numerous Anglo-Norman compilations of the 13th century, that used to be a support to the practice of preaching but also a promotion of a new mode of education and cultural transposition, that was able to mark significantly the passage of theological-scholastic contents of Latin tradition into the vernacular language.