

The Power of Gower

EARLY EDITION: A newly acquired, rare copy of the influential 14th-century English poet John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* is on exhibit through January at the Rossell Hope Robbins Library, part of the River Campus Libraries. Gower completed the work, which was dedicated to Richard II and Geoffrey Chaucer, in 1390; after this 1554 edition, the poem was not reprinted again until the 19th century. Consequently, centuries of readers and writers—including William Shakespeare, Sir Philip Sidney, and John Dryden—encountered Gower primarily through this edition. Home to one of the most extensive medieval studies collections in North America and a longtime center of Gower studies, the library marks its 30th anniversary this year. PHOTOGRAPH BY J. ADAM FENSTER



LIBER

all the worlde ne maie suffice
 ranche of pride the reysse,
 pride is the head of all sinne,
 pride wasteth all, and maie not winne.
 pride is of every misse the pricke,
 pride is the worst of all wicke,
 and costeth most, and lest is woorth,
 in place where he hath his foorth.
 Thus haue I saide, that I woll saie
 Of myn answer, and to you prai
 My liege lorde of your office,
 That ye suche grace, and suche iustice
 Ordeine for my father here,
 That after this, when men it here,
 The worlde therof maie speake good.
 The kynge, which reason vnderstode,
 And hath all herde howe she hath said,
 Was inly gladd, and so well payde,
 That all his wrauth is ouer go,
 And he beganne to loke tho
 Upon this maiden in the face:
 In whiche he fonde so mochel grace,
 That all his price on hir he leide,
 In audience, and thus he saide.
 My faire maiden well ye bee,
 Of thyn answer, and eke of thee

was late falle into his honde,
 Unto this knight, with rente and londe,
 Hath you, and with his chartre sealed.
 And thus was all the noispe appealed.
 This maiden, whiche late on hir knees
 Tofoze the kynges charitees
 Commendeth, and saith enermoze,
 My tiege lorde right nowe tofoze
 Ye saide, and it is of recorde,
 That if my father were a lorde,
 And pere vnto these other great,
 Ye wolden for nought elles lette,
 That I ne shulde be your wife.
 And thus wote every woorthy life,
 A kynges worde mote nede be holde,
 For thy my lorde, if that ye wolde
 So great a charitee fulfill,
 God wote it were well my toll.
 For he whiche was a bachlere,
 My father is nowe made a pere,
 So whene as euer that I cam
 An erles daughter now I am.
 This yonge kyng, whiche periled all
 Hir beautee, and hir witte withall,
 As he, whiche was with loue bent,
 Anone therto yafe his assente.
 He might not the place asterte,

PR
 Confessor.
 To now my soune, as thou might he
 Of all this thing to my mattere.
 But one I take, and that is prai
 To whom he felle out of his prai
 In heuen no grace maie betide.
 And Paradiis him was forbede
 The good men in erthe him ha
 So that to helle he mote alga
 Where every vice be reisei
 And every vice be reisei
 What humbleste is all oth
 whiche most is woorth,
 It taketh stant in
 If any thing stant in
 With humble speche
 Thus was this
 The whiche I sp
 His father's life
 And wanne wi
 For thy my so
 It sitte the v
 And take
 The moze

IMVS.

Invidia culpa magis est attrita dolore,
 Quo gaudet alij, doler ille, nec vnus amicus
 Est, cui de puro commoda velle facit.
 Proximitatis honor sua corda veretur, & ois
 Est sibi læticia sic aliena dolor,
 Hoc etenim vitium quã saepe repugnat amãti,
 Non sibi, sed reliquis, dũ fauet ipsa Venus.
 Est amor ex propria motu fantasticus, & quæ
 Gaudia fert aliis credit obesse sibi.

¶ Hic in secundo libro tractat de invidia, et eius
 species, quarum dolor alterius gaudij primus
 nuncupatur, cuius conditione, secundum Aristoteli
 fessos primus describens amãti, quatenus amor
 rem concernit, super eodem consequenter opponit.

¶ Incipit Liber Secundus.



¶ Two after prude the seconde
 There is, whiche many a
 wofull stounde
 Towardes other beareth
 about
 Within him selfe, and not without.
 For in his thought he brenneth ever
 Whan that he wote an other leuer,
 Or more vertuos than hee:
 Whiche passeth him in his degree,
 Therof he taketh his maladie,
 That vice is cleped hotte ennie.
 For thy my soune if it be so,
 Thou arte, or hast ben one of tho,
 As for to speke in lones cas,
 If ever yet thyn hert was
 Sicke of an other mans hele:
 ¶ So god auance my quarele
 My fater ye a thousande sith,
 Whan I haue sene another bliche
 Of loue, and had a goodly there,
 I haue had a thousande sith,
 I thought so hote as I
 Within brenneth,
 I haue had a thousande sith,
 I thought so hote as I
 Within brenneth,

Ennie

er wise,
 and no repise
 te and faire
 ontraire,
 it is redressed.
 yonge maide blessed,
 like of noble tofore:
 he gatte therfore,
 th all the kynges loue,
 me, if thou wolt loue,
 well to leane pryde,
 humbleste on thy side,
 of grace thou shalt gete.
 Amans.
 father I wolt not sozpete
 is that ye haue tolde me here,
 if that any suche manere
 humble poste maie loue appape,
 afterwarde I thinke assape.
 sooth ouer I befeche,
 my shyfte seche.