

Le *lovendrins* :

un bouquet francophone du XII^e siècle

Brîndușa GRIGORIU

Abstract: An emblem of the French-speaking world of the Middle Ages, the love potion of Tristan and Ysolt is a literary nexus of sensations ; in Bérout's Norman romance of the twelfth century, it fuses the powers of wine, of fire, but also of unnameable plants, in a magic proportion meant to last for three years of erotic addiction. The present article aims at analysing the main colours, odours and tastes associated with this fusional experience, as they punctuate the heroes' evolution from courtly personalities to obscure exiles. The red of criminal blood and of punitive fire, the green of the omnipresent vegetal background, the white of Ysolt's face in the sunlight, melt into the salty scents and savours of the sea, in a world where water is a landmark as well as a junction of signs. Involuntary natural secretions are relevant to the language of love and fear. It is only when the love drink loses its efficiency that the protagonists recover their free will and decide to leave their oasis of overwhelming natural sensations and invest the cultural environment of the court.

Keywords: French romance, twelfth century, love drink, senses, recovered soberness.