

JOHN GOWER
Poems on Contemporary Events

The English poet John Gower (ca. 1330–1408) wrote important Latin poems witnessing the two crucial political events of his day: the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 and in 1399 the deposition of Richard II, in the *Visio Anglie* (*A Vision of England*) and *Cronica tripertita* (*A Chronicle in Three Parts*), respectively. Both poems, usually transmitted with Gower's major Latin work, *Vox clamantis*, are key primary sources for the historical record, as well as marking culminating points in the development of English literature. The earlier *Visio Anglie* is verbally derivative of numerous, varied sources, by way of its literary allusions, but is also highly original in its invention and disposition. On the other hand, the *Cronica tripertita*'s organization, even in details, is highly derivative, and from a single source, but its verbal texture is all invented.

This volume includes Latin texts of these poems of Gower, newly established from the manuscripts, with commentary on Gower's relation with the rest of the contemporary historical record and with his literary forebears and contemporaries, including Ovid, Virgil, Peter Riga, Nigel Witeker, and Godfrey of Viterbo. This volume also includes Modern English verse translations of the two poems, which are at once critically accurate and enjoyably accessible.

BRITISH WRITERS OF THE MIDDLE AGES
AND THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD 2

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JOHN GOWER

Poems on Contemporary Events

The Visio Anglie (1381) and
Cronica tripertita (1400)

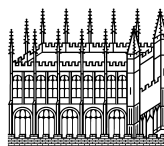
Edited by DAVID R. CARLSON

With a verse translation by A. G. RIGG



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Acknowledgments

The present work began with the translations into English verse of John Gower's *Visio Anglie* (*Vox clamantis* 1) and *Cronica tripartita* by A. G. Rigg, who also translated the 'Jack Straw' verses (appended) and contributed remarks on the translations for the introduction. Responsibility for the verse translations is his. The remainder, including the translations of Gower's prose and of other incidentally quoted Latin, was largely the doing of David R. Carlson to begin with, though at innumerable points the product is a result of collaboration.

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