

### A Note on Rutebeuf and *Simon de Pouille*

Rival hypotheses for the source of a Rutebeuf toponym invite restudy of the problem. Does the name Terre de Lincorinde (: Ynde) in the Dit de l'herberie represent the island of Ceylon, an alternative to a possible figment of Rutebeuf's imagination, as proposed by E.B. Ham<sup>1</sup> or was it borrowed, as Jeanne Baroin wondered,<sup>2</sup> from a woman's name in the epic Simon de Pouille?<sup>3</sup>

Baroin realized that her case depends on chronology and she regretted not having established it conclusively; still, she obviously considered her hypothesis superior to Ham's. Each one, no more cogent than the other, provokes further observations.

She neglects to consider implications of certain data. Stating that the forms Licorinde and Lincorinde are both found in SdeP's MS C, Baroin fails to reveal<sup>4</sup> the fact that the latter spelling occurs, out of thirty cases, only three times (they are successive, immediately after the first occurrence of her name) and that therefore it is surely an aberrant form with initial-syllable intrusive n anticipating the final syllable n. MS A exhibits only Licoride (suffix influenced by that of Alexandreïde?), MS B only Licorinde, none of which occur in rhyme. Hence the dominant SdeP form (Licorinde) differs from Rutebeuf's unchanging Lincorinde. Greater obfuscation occurs, however, when Baroin labels L (p. 319) as "unique héritière [de] Jonas, admiral de Persie," although the trimanuscript divergent texts nowhere state that she benefitted from

<sup>1</sup>"The Rutebeuf Guide for Mediaeval Salescraft," St. in Phil., 47 (1950), 20-34.

<sup>2</sup>"Rutebeuf et la Terre Lincorinde," Romania, 95 (1974), 317-328. She refers to Rutebeuf's Oeuvres complètes, par E. Faral et Julia Bastin (2nd ed., Paris, 1969).

<sup>3</sup>Edition J. Baroin (Geneva, 1968), on MS A only; she is preparing a separate edition on BC. In her Romania article (see n. 2 above), her localization (p. 324) of C's quotation in fol. 32 agrees with her edition in advancing the foliation of this MS by four: read C fol. 28; Puille (for Prusse) ; Esclavonnie; B preerie; Que (for Qui); Puille an (for P. et a.); A 1088 (for 1087; and preceding Licorinde = Licoride, as always in A.

<sup>4</sup>This, in itself, is not serious, but it does serve to prejudice the case from the beginning.

her apparent status. When Synados explains why he will not renounce his new-found belief in Christianity, she says

". . . je ne vos faudrai por paor de tormant.  
 For amor Damidé prendrai baticzemant;  
 A seignor vos prandroi, se Deus lo me consant."  
 Sa foi l'en a plevie et Synados l'em prant,  
 Et il li a la soe doneië enssamant.

(13th/14th-century MS A, vv. 1002-6)

"Volontiers la [loi païene] guerpise se por mon pere osasse  
 A seignor vos preïse et si me baptisase.  
 Mes peres n'a point d'oir, ce rene vos donase. . ."

(Mid 14th-century MS B, fols. 148c-d)

"Voulientiers la guerpisse se pour mon pere osasse  
 Et la loy payennie voulientiers renunçasse.  
 A seigneur vous prenissee et vous me baptisasse.  
 Mon pere n'a plus d'oir, cest regne vous donnasse. . ."

(15th-century MS C, fol. 27d)

As these quotations show, only in the two later MSS (which Rutebeuf could not possibly have known) is any reference made to an heir. It represents no doubt a later addition<sup>5</sup> which ignores mention in version A of the rulers' brother Jorant, who figures in BC only as a Saracen. A son of the "admiral" is referred to, in BC, as Maloré or Macaire; he is not presented in A because of its acephalous nature. So the tradition did provide Jonas with male relations to whom he could have left his empire. Whether permanent succession by male or female line was possible among these non-Christians is unimportant for no French writer of the Middle Ages would have considered female inheritance as other than a trust for a male relative, especially a husband. Licorinde says she would give the empire [if she had it] to Synados whom she promises to marry. She does marry him later in France, thus alienating herself further from her father, who is still alive at the story's end, or rather his demise is not reported even in MS C which boasts an explicit, yet there is no mention of her dowry.<sup>6</sup> At her marriage she assumes a

<sup>5</sup>Prompted by accounts of the death, in ABC, of Jonas' male kin: nephew Faramont (Firamont), and brother Matant, in [A]BC.

<sup>6</sup>Her husband (now called Girard or Thierry "le pongneur")  
 . . . avoit tel dignitez  
 Que de toute la terre Jonas li amirez

Christian name (Florence), a commonplace act in French epics. Why then, would anyone refer even in jest to a vague Mesopotamian land as Lincorinde's Land? One seeks in vain epic reference to any other land identified by a woman's name: Patriarchal Europe hardly permitted this.<sup>7</sup> Although she is the only female to function in the epic of *SdeP*,<sup>8</sup> Licorinde is an hors d'oeuvre easily dispensed with, for she provides only a slight love interest to appeal to romanesque tastes and influences the action but superficially.

Concentrating on name correspondence, Baroin ignores Rutebeuf's description [it may be non-serious, as Jubinal long ago remarked] of the land in question, which serves as Ham's point of departure. Rutebeuf was, as she demonstrates, widely familiar with epics; he did have an interest in Pouille (Apulia); he might possibly have known *SdeP*, deriving therefrom the personal name of *Lincorinde* to rhyme with *Ynde*, and even (less) possibly the widely known (see Langlois, Table . . .) *Abilent* (for the dit) and *fol-s'y-fie* (for his *Voie de Paradis*), but it is equally possible that "La terre de Lincorinde" = the isle of Ceylon.

Ham's equation, is based on Rutebeuf's statement: I bring you precious stones and herbs "des dezers d'Ynde / Et de la terre Lincorinde / Qui siet seur l'onde / Els quatre parties dou monde / Si com il tient a la raonde." This land is still closer to India than the land of Jason (not his daughter's—Li(n)corinde's). According to medieval textual illustration (*Imago mundi*), the globe was divided into four quarters and one of these circular quarters encompassed the inhabited world which was itself divided into four parts. Consultation of such a map leads one to the close vicinity of Ceylon, also called Lanka by certain medieval geographers, an island famous for precious stones. Ham did not push the possible etymology (fully cognizant of the phonetic difficulties) beyond suggesting for the record *Linco(rinde)* < Lanka (Ceylon), at the center of

Estoit entre payens seigneur sur lui [Jonas ?] clamez  
Et avoit en son feu et chasteaulx et citez  
Et tours et forterescs et aultres fermetez  
Qu'il [Synados, Jonas ?] a toutes guerpies et François deliverez  
Notre droit etuperiere lui a le don greez  
Qu'il soit seneschal de France le regnez . . .  
(MS *C*, fol. 38c)

<sup>7</sup>In MS *C* alone, Simon de Pouille says to Sorbarré, as a reward for past aid and for carrying a message to Charlemagne: "je te don[rail] ma fille Clarissant a moller / et après moi avrois Calabre a justicier" (vv. 1748-9).

<sup>8</sup>See my study, "Simon de Pouille," in *Olifant*, 2(1975).

the inhabited world [+ ? Arin, mythical city situated at the center of the entire world and which certain medieval geographers confused with Lanka].

Baroin-Faral-Bastin misunderstood the location or overlooked the key word inhabited and reacted with meaningless generalities: "Dire qu'il s'agit de l'île de Ceylan, considéré comme le centre du monde, c'est alléguer, une notion certainement étrangère à l'esprit de Rutebeuf et d'ailleurs à toute tradition assurée." Ceylon was often placed on the equator, that is to say, from Arab definition, at the center of the world; the island was known, by some name or other, to the medieval West (Isidore, Orosius, Solinus),<sup>9</sup> and it is not demonstrated that Rutebeuf did not have some knowledge of world geography.

It is true, as B-F-B claimed, that Lincorinde does exist as an epic's anthroponym and nowhere as a sure geographical entity, but, considering the usual fate of proper names in oral transmission especially, it is not inappropriate to mention for a possible Rutebeuf source Lincoln (in England and therefore far removed from India) + Corindre cited by Langlois, Table . . . s.v. Torin for Aimeri de Narbonne and Girart de Rossillon or even (Li) Cord(r)e(s) (Spanish Córdoba). Would it be too fanciful to suggest Li-cor[n]-[d']-inde? All describers of Ceylon remark upon its curious shape (heart, lotus flower, pearl), but I have discovered no reference to it as the Horn (protuberance) of India which, if found for mid-thirteenth century France, would bolster Ham's geographical suggestion, a theory still valid.

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