

Article Abstracts and Reviews

Jean Flori. "Qu'est-ce qu'un *bachelor*? Etude historique de vocabulaire dans les chansons de geste du XII^e siècle." *Romania*, 96 (1975), 289-314.

The term *bachelor* does not occur with noticeable frequency in the twelfth-century chansons de geste. The fifteen *chansons* examined for the purpose of this article (over 75,000 lines of text) yield only 102 cases. The first examples are encountered in the *Chanson de Roland* (vv. 113, 3020, 3197). The best endowed text is the *Charroi, de Nîmes* with eleven occurrences in its 1486 lines.

Is the *bachelor* young? Is he married? Is he a *chevalier*? Is he noble? Does he possess a fief? To all these and other questions the present author provides a coherent and satisfying response. As is so often the case with studies of this nature, which examine all the examples found in a given text and compare them with a substantial number of examples from other contemporary or near contemporary texts, the inadequacy or inaccuracy of dictionary definitions and those provided by editors is clearly revealed. The *bachelor*, concludes M. Flori, is almost always young, probably an adolescent in many cases, designated as such when his beard begins to appear (cf. *Prise d'Orange*, v. 625: "Un bachelor juene de barbe prime"). He is often therefore a novice, a beginner, but certainly not always a "jeune homme non encore adoubé chevalier" (D. McMillan, glossary to his edition of the *Charroi*.'). Some *bachelers* are knights (e.g., "En sa compaignie quarante bachelor, . . . Chevalier furent de novel adoubé," *Charroi*, vv. 23, 25; "N'ot que vii.xx, a tant les puis esmer, / De cevaliers, ki tuit sont baceler," *Aliscans*, vv. 4234-35), others are not and never will be. It is in fact impossible to limit precisely the social background of the *bachelor*, to define him, for example, as a member of the impoverished lower nobility. In addition to knights, *écuyers*, abbots and bishops, we find *sergents*, *jongleurs*, and cooks called *bachelers*. But poor knights are certainly included in the ranks of twelfth-century *bachelers* (cf. *Charroi*, vv. 641-7, 649-56). Often *bachelers* are those who live in a lord's household, either as a knight or as a servant, totally dependent upon their master.

Bachelers, even when knights, are not always awaiting a fief (*non chasé*) and they are not always unmarried. In *Raoul*, Bernier is called a *bachelor* by Guerri's daughter, who seeks his hand in marriage, in spite of the fact that he possesses lands (vv. 5736-7). After the marriage she continues to call him a *bachelor* (vv. 6227-9, cf. also the *Siège de Barbastre*, vv. 3212, 3222, etc.). In short, the frequently held view that a *bachelor* is a young unmarried noble awaiting a fief is untenable. But although the term *bachelor* has no "sens social, juridique ou professionnel," it may, in the present author's opinion, reflect an ideology, an ideology of youth with the attendant virtues of dynamism, valour, enthusiasm, impetuosity, generosity. The task and ideal of the *bachelor* is to impose himself, to gain the esteem of the court (cf. *Aspremont*, vv. 104-5: "Gentix hom fu et juvenes baceler / Et a mervelles se fait a cort amer," where the reference is to an archbishop). The means at the disposal of the *bachelor* is the exhibition of his virtues, the aim social promotion best achieved by the

possession of lands and by a good marriage. The aspirations of *bachelers* are in fact seen as the fundamental theme of the chansons de geste: "Les chansons de geste nous semblent traduire les craintes, les angoisses ou les rêves de ces jeunes qui entrent dans une société en voie de stabilisation au cours du XII^e siècle, et qui redoutent de ne pas y trouver leur place" (pp. 308-9).

The interest of M. Flori's analysis of the ideological implications of the term *bachelor* is considerable, but I do not think that on this point his researches carry complete conviction. The view that Roland is the "incarnation des vertus du *bachelor*" (p. 309, note) is not borne out by the text in which Roland is not specifically designated as a *bachelor*. The ideology of which the author speaks is more applicable perhaps to the *chevalier* or the *vassal*. Roland is, in my view, the incarnation of the *vassal*, a term which is used with reference to him on a number of occasions (vv. 545, 558, 1123, 1777, 1870, etc.). Roland himself declares that he wishes to be remembered as a "noble vassal" (v. 1123).

The corrections made to the general understanding of the semantic field of *bachelor* are confirmed by a study of texts other than chansons de geste. Marie de France used the word only twice, once with reference to a porter (*Milun*, v. 191), once to the lover in *Laüstic* who is also called a *chevalier* (vv. 9, 141) and a *barun* (v. 11). The *bachelor* in *Laüstic* appears to be a man of some substance, owning property (v. 10) and possessing a certain affluence ("Mut turnèot e despendeit / E bien donot ceo qu'il aveit," vv. 21-2). In *Cligés* (ed. Micha) there is a case of a *bachelor* who is also a knight: "Avint c'uns chevaliers de Trace, / Bachelers juvenes, anvoisiez, / De chevaliers prisiez," vv. 6346-8. For further study of the term I add from my own reading the following references: Wace, *Brut* (ed. Arnold), vv. 4347, 4492, 5373, 5409, 6816, 10139, 10591, 11298, 11678, 14318; *Yvain* (ed. Reid), vv. 676, 2355; *Perceval* (ed. Roach), vv. 5034, 5065; *Eracle* (ed. Löseth), v. 1936 ("Bachelers est et feme vueut"); *Aimeri de Narbonne* (ed. Demaison), vv. 766, 806, 824, 1060, 1598; *Simon de Pouille* (ed. Baroin), v. 2175; *Floovent* (ed. Bateson), vv. 50, 2469; *Elucidation* (ed. Thompson), v. 198; Benoît de Ste. Maure, *Chronique des ducs de Normandie* (ed. Fahlín), vv. 689, 1839, 3144; *Lai du Mantel* (ed. Bennett), v. 14; *Richeut* (ed. I. C. Lecompte), v. 394; *Les Vers de Thibaut de Marly* (ed. Stone), v. 819; *Guernes de Pont-Sainte-Maxence*, *La Vie de saint Thomas Becket* (ed. Walberg), vv. 2020, 5201, 5391; *Le Petit Plet* (ed. Merrilees), v. 1410; *Gui de Cambrai*, *Le Vengement Alixandre* (ed. Edwards), vv. 220, 240, 289, 301, 327, 361, 696; *Li Quatre Livre des Reis* (ed. Curtius), Book I: VIII, v. 16; XIV, v. 54; XVII, vv. 34, 58; XXV, vv. 5, 9; XXX, v. 17; Book II: I, v. 13; II, v. 21; XII, vv. 4, 14; XIX, v. 7; Book III: XII, vv. 8, 10, 14; Book IV: V, vv. 22, 24; VIII, v. 12; XXV, v. 5. One item which could have been included in the notes is J. M. W. Bean, "Bachelor and Retainer," *Medievalia et Humanistica*, New Series, 3 (1972), 117-32.

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Bernard Guidot. "Le Combat épique: permanence et évolution." *Marche romane*, 25 (1975) 1-2, pp. 49-69.

France has consistently produced new groups of distinguished medievalists. M. Guidot, an example of the latest generation, is an assistant at the University of Nancy and is writing his dissertation on the development of the *geste* of Garin de Monglane, under the very capable direction of André Lanly. This article, subtitled "Comparaison du combat Guillaume-Corsolt dans le *Couronnement de Louis* et du combat Garin-Narquillus dans les *Enfances Garin de Monglane*," provides us with an impressive sample of what we can expect.

For the basis of his comparison, M. Guidot chose an important single combat scene in the *Couronnement de Louis*, one of the best known poems in the cycle, and another in the *Enfances Garin de Monglane*, chronologically one of the last poems of the cycle, despite the fact that it deals with the youthful exploits of the great grandfather of Guillaume, the protagonist of the *Couronnement*. Approximately a century and a half separate the two works, the former dating from the first half of the twelfth century, and the latter from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century.

The element of permanence is immediately evident: "Dans les deux cas, nous avons affaire au choc des représentants de deux civilisations. L'affrontement a lieu sans trêve ni merci. Le vaincu entraînera irrémédiablement son camp dans la défaite: combat à la forte intensité dramatique et au résultat lourd de conséquences." A close analysis, however, reveals an important difference of emphasis in these two epic works. In order to draw attention to the distinctive emphases, M. Guidot has divided his comparative study into three parts: (1) the relative importance of each episode to the work as a whole, (2) those personages who play an active rôle, and (3) the unfolding of the combat itself.

Epic works in general reflect the society in which they are created. It is important to remember, however, that the late epics also had to take into consideration the particular tradition to which they belonged. The *Enfances Garin*, therefore, is a reflection of the contemporary interests and of the multiple poems of the *geste* which preceded it, including perhaps the *Couronnement de Louis*.

For the first division, the results are as follows: "Le combat épique a d'abord eu un caractère rituel. Thématiquement annoncé et préparé, il s'insérait dans un contexte narratif qui lui convenait parfaitement. Dans les *Enf. Garin*, il intervient alors que la chanson s'est longuement attachée à peindre des penchants amoureux dans une atmosphère de sentimentalité un peu fade. Le combat est comme dénaturé, même si au premier abord, il semble n'avoir pas changé à cause de ses nombreuses péripéties et de son résultat aux conséquences capitales."

In the *Enfances Garin*, romantic interests determine the conduct of both Christian knights and Pagan giants: "Les contrastes conventionnels entre les deux protagonistes ont été maintenus mais les dominantes modifiées: la saine vigueur de Guillaume a été remplacée par l'élégance et les bonnes manières de Garin qui cherche avant tout à imposer sa personnalité et non pas à défendre le monde chrétien. La fantaisie romanesque rend

Narquillus moins dangereux que Corsolt, bien que la chanson ait brossé de lui un portrait aux détails effrayants."

Concerning the singular epic combat as a topos, M. Guidot comes to the general conclusion that: "Le combat épique, peut-être conservé par un respect tout formel pour les conventions les plus anciennes du genre, trouve difficilement sa place dans une chanson de la fin du treizième siècle ou du début du quatorzième siècle."

The detailed analysis contained in this study offers important specific distinctions for dealing with the framework and the concepts to be found in the chanson de geste as it evolves as a *genre*.

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André Pézard. "En Roland naît la peur ..." *Mélanges E. R. Labande* (Poitiers: C.E.S.C.M., 1974), 595-602.

M. Pézard, using passages in the *Carmen de prodicione Guenonis*, *La Chanson de Roland* (Oxford) and the Provençal *Ronsasvals*, shows how the latter two works elucidate what at first appears to be an inconsistent statement in the former about the hero: *Rollandum subit interea timor, horror et ardor*. Pézard sees this line as an isolated element of Roland's *prière du plus grand péril* in the Digby 23 and *Ronsasvals* texts. This rejection of the idea that physical death is worse than a shameful act is then related by Pézard to Aristotle. Christians simply substitute sin for shame, but Pézard sees in *Ronsasvals* an accord of the Greek and Christian moralities: after the hero has spoken his prayer, a noble Saracen saves the unconscious Roland from shameful death by another Saracen. For Pézard, this scene is the work of an enlightened trouvère, who show that pagans and Christians have a common moral ground.

Although there are problems in Pézard's analysis of the passages and works, his use of an aesthetic approach, even if negative, is welcome and hopefully will be followed by other *Roland* scholars.

The rôle of fear and shame in these diverse works is not, however, as simple as Pézard makes it appear in his lucid article. In the Oxford *Roland*, as well as in the "lowly" *Carmen*, the decision to blow the olifant is part of a complex substructure of death and shame that underlies the whole of these works.

When Pézard evaluates a quotation from the second horn debate of the Oxford manuscript (vv. 1694-99, no edition specified), he discusses the hero's sudden perception of death,¹ *amite meurtrie*, as one aspect of the

¹Up to the battle of Rencesvals, the Christians have been relatively untouched by war. It is mainly the pagans who have suffered death and destruction (cf. *laisses* I, II, and VIII for contrasting pagan and Christian situations; all references here are to the Bédier edition). Ganelon is the only one concerned about general Christian death (v. 227).

situation. Yet this is subsequently ignored in Pézard's final analysis of the section: "La conclusion sera l'appel du cor (1702 ss) , dramatique signal à quoi Roland se refusait jusqu'alors parce qu'il n'avait point combattu de toutes ses forces" (p. 595). While this revelation of the simplicity of Roland's motives may be welcome to many critics, I find it a disturbing denial of the rich complex structure that the Oxford *Roland* shows at every level.

The distinction between those who fear death and/or shame, and those who do not, is part of an apparent moral binarism that pervades the entire Oxford manuscript.² This fear is first linked to the pagans through Marsile (vv. 20-21, 437-8), and then to the Christian Ganelon,³ who seems to fear death more than shame. It becomes a primary articulation of the epic when Ganelon, in an effort to control death, turns its force and focus to Roland.⁴

Within the structure of the betrayal scene, Ganelon himself defends Charlemagne from pagan insults by emphasizing the emperor's courage, especially as long as Roland lives (see *laissez* XL and XLII). The emperor and his nephew are differentiated from Ganelon and the pagans by their attitudes towards death and shame. When Ganelon names Roland to the rearguard, Roland stresses the mortal aspect of Ganelon's motivation as well as the evil, usually emphasized by critics:

Si li ad dit: Vos estes vifs diables.
El cors vos est entree mortel rage.
(vv. 745-6)

Ganelon's rage is deadly, and its source is a fear of his own demise.

In agreeing with Ganelon, Naimés speaks only of the Christian duty of mercy before a defeated foe (vv. 235-242). Roland's reference to the deaths of the Christian messengers, Basan and Basile, as a major reason that the war must continue only confirms the limits of the Christian losses (vv. 196-213). Turpin mentions the sufferings of the Christians in Spain but not their deaths (vv. 265-7).

²On the moral binarism of epic structure, see Paul Zumthor, *Essai d'une Poétique Médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), p. 326 and Larry S. Crist, "Deep Structures in the Chansons de geste: Hypotheses for a Taxonomy," *Olifant*, 3 (October 1975) 1, 3-35.

³V. 227, *laissez* XX-XXVII. These passages show the fury of Ganelon in terms of his fear of death. Note especially vv. 329-30 and 359 for keys to the source of his anger. The correctness, however, of Ganelon's analysis of the message's effect is evident in *laisse* XXXVII.

⁴See *laissez* XXIX, XXXI, XLIII-XLV; see also the pagan incantation of death to Roland in *laissez* LXIX-LXXVIII paralleled by Roland's incantation of death to the pagans in *laissez* LXXXIII-LXXXV. There is then a substructure of death in which both sides attempt to control its direction.

In the first horn scene, Oliver's objections are not based on any such qualms over his own life,⁵ but his protests are at variance with the disregard of death shown by Roland and the others who think only of duty and shame.⁶ Since Oliver's courage in battle is presented as equal to that of Roland (vv. 1094-7), the former's attitude is clearly based on *sagesse* rather than fear (v. 1093). Oliver thus occupies a neutral position in relation to the Charlemagne-Roland-Christian army and Marsile-Ganelon-Pagan army poles of fear (death and shame) structure.

The general absolution which Turpin pronounces on the Christians before battle shows the religious source of this non-fear of death (*laisse* LXXXIX) which Pézard rightly emphasizes (pp. 598-601). Later, in his exhortation to the French troops at the entry of Marsile's main army, Turpin links the religious guarantees (*laisse* CXV) with what Pézard sees as an essentially Aristotelian preference of death to shame. This preference is also an important aspect of the *Roland's* normative structure, but Pézard discusses this with reference only to *Ronsasvals*, thus giving the impression that it does not occur in the former.

The death and shame relationship is, however, itself the *mobile* of each horn debate in the Oxford *Roland*. In the first confrontation, Roland's fear of shame overcomes Oliver's desire to avoid unnecessary death. The second horn scene hinges on Roland's perception of the reality of physical death, if not fear of it, and Oliver's fear of shame. The different position of death in the two series is evident in the reasons Turpin gives as he resolves both debates. In the first, he follows Roland's emphasis on shame. In the second, Turpin is similarly concerned with death, as seen by his advice that Charlemagne be called so that unclean animals, pigs, and dogs, do not desecrate their *dead* bodies.

Since Pézard acknowledges, however briefly, this perception of the physical reality of death in the second horn debate, it is surprising that he does not mention the fear registered by Roland in the *Carmen* (vv. 361-372), equally the result of such a realization but on a much more intensely physical level. Despite M. Pézard's scorn, the *Carmen* author has developed well the physical horror of battle in the lines leading up to this comment on Roland's emotions.⁷ The *Carmen* follows the same general story as the *Roland* but shows Roland first recoiling in fear and horror before the hideousness of war and then continuing to fight because that fulfills the clerical author's homiletic intent.

⁵See *laisse* LXXIX-LXXXVII, as Oliver stresses the inequality of forces and the need for help to avoid death. Though Oliver says this obliquely in vv. 1102-5, Roland articulates the death shame nature of the debate most clearly in v. 1191. Cf. Ganelon's behavior noted above.

⁶Roland responds to Oliver's warnings and accusations with an emphasis on duty and shame: vv. 1008-16, 1026-7, 1053-8, 1062-69, 1073-81, 1088-92, 1106-9, 1113-23. The army echoes Roland in vv. 1047-48.

⁷Raoul Mortier, ed., *Les Textes de la Chanson de Roland*, vol. III (Paris: Editions de la Geste Francor, 1941), p. 114, vv. 339-60.

If the *Carmen* is to be seen comparatively, it would be more appropriate to look at Roland's fear in conjunction with the *Pseudo-Turpin* and Livre IV of *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*.⁸ In these homiletic works, fear is a moral weakness to which some Christians, though not Roland, yield.⁹ Given this perspective, what Pézard interprets as a contradictory declaration of Roland's courage in the *Carmen* (Pézard, p. 599; *Carmen*, vv. 229-30, 239-40), actually demonstrates *hubris* on the part of the hero. Roland is integrated into the structure of fear that pervades the *Carmen*: he passes from a position of proud courage through the horrors of war to fear and then stoic bravery.¹⁰ Since he continues to fight and neither flees like the pagans or betrays like Ganelon, Roland remains the moral hero (vv. 44102, 455-6), despite his moment of panic and humiliation. Certainly the necessity of Roland's act is ambiguous (cf. vv. 369-70), but there is a clear development of a fear structure in the work and there is a definite confrontation of Roland with the horrors of war. Pézard focuses on important problems in the expansion and contraction of formulaic matter when he suggests that the *timor* passage of the *Carmen* is but an isolated element of the *prière du plus grand péril*, as developed in the Oxford *Roland* and in the *Ronsasvals* (p. 599). He is unconvincing, however, in his reliance on the aesthetic nullity of the *Carmen*.

Typical of his oversimplification are his remarks on the nature of heroism (p. 597), which ignore the long history of criticism on "Roland's guilt" and the "heroic flaw." In a recent essay, Greimas has shown the complexity of the relationship of the archetypal hero to fear. Greimas also shares Pézard's opinion that the hero cannot be flawed.¹¹

While Pézard underlines the implausibility that different versions of the *Roland* would present opposing characteristics of the hero (p. 597), Claude Lévi-Strauss has shown that the structure of traditional material depends on a stable range of variation; a person who is fearless in one version of a story may well be fearful in another.¹² Pézard's insistence

⁸Ibid., pp. 1-104.

⁹For example, see pp. 30-33, 40-41, and 68-69. Roland's prayer here resembles that in the Oxford *Roland* and in *Ronsasvals*, pp. 70-73.

¹⁰References to fear as a pagan vice and also as the vice motivating Ganelon are found in vv. 70-74, 78-82, 133-4, 161-2, 213-6, 227-30, 239-40 (these last two important for mention of fear, which integrates them into the fear structure), 273-8, 279-34, 289-90, 293-4, 295-301. The structure reaches its peak intensity when the anti-fear of Roland turns to fear before the spectacle of the horror of war.

¹¹A. J. Greimas, "La Quête de la peur: réflexions sur un groupe de contes populaires," *Du Sens* (Paris: Larousse, 1970), 231-47, esp. p. 235.

¹²Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Mythologiques: Le Cru et Le Cuit* (Paris: Plon, 1964), p. 205. See also his *Mythologiques: Du Miel aux Cendres*

on the fixity of Roland's character, then, has to be eclectic since, of course, Roland's literary embodiments in Italy show the hero as Lévi-Strauss predicts rather than in accordance Pézard's theory of absolute invariability. Essentially, there is no one "true" version of any given legend, only versions more aesthetically satisfying from the point of view of a given culture.

As far as *Ronsasvals* is concerned, Professor Pézard's correction of Raoul Mortier's note is a good one (p. 598), for Roland's fear of death here is clearly spiritual. The rapprochement of the *prière du plus grand péril* to biblical and traditional Christian material (p. 601) is also just, but the remarks on Aristotle, while pertinent, are oversimplified (p. 601). It is difficult to accept that the allusions to shame being worse than death must be traced back to him. Since the author of the fantasy-tinged *Ronsasvals* was not working in the homiletic style of the *Carmen* or the *Chroniques*, Pézard's suggestion that the *Ronsasvals* author may have blended ancient and Christian morality is a strange interpretation.

It is unfair, however, to say more about the *Ronsasvals* section of this article, since M. Pézard states his analysis excludes a more extended consideration, to appear soon in *Romania*..

"En Roland naît la peur . . ." is a valuable study. Its faults are mainly the product of limited space and far-reaching ideas. One hopes that at some future date Professor Pézard will give a full-scale analysis of all the works he has referred to here.

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John S. Miletich. "The Quest for the 'Formula': A Comparative Reappraisal." *Modern Philology*, 74 (November 1976) 2, 111-123.

Les buts de J. S. Miletich dans cet article sont 1) de donner un exposé détaillé des principes fondamentaux de la théorie Parry-Lord sur le caractère oral ou non-oral de certains textes, théorie qu'il considère comme un point de départ pour l'étude de plusieurs problèmes, même de poétique générale; de cette théorie, il examine notamment ce qui concerne l'analyse de la technique formulaire; 2) de se fonder pour cela sur un examen attentif des éléments de cette théorie (dans son ensemble) concernant le côté formel et sur une discussion des applications effectuées par certains érudits; 3a) de suggérer des principes pour une application rigoureuse, 3b) de mettre en évidence certaines limites de cette théorie telles qu'elles apparaissent au cours de cette application, 3c) d'indiquer quelques aspects qui mériteraient d'être approfondis. C'est notamment sur les

(Paris: Plon, 1966), p. 32, where the qualities of man and jaguar interchange in the S₁ and S₃ myths, a typical occurrence while the general structure of the myths remains the same. In the midst of Lévi-Strauss's insistence on the maintenance of structural relationships, qualitative chiasmus is nonetheless a continuous feature.

points 1), 2) et 3a) que Miletich a voulu insister.

Miletich part de la notion d'"analyse quantitative" appliquée à l'étude des "formules" et des "expressions formulaires," c'est-à-dire à des éléments qui font l'objet, aussi bien que celui de "thème," d'une définition rigoureuse dans la théorie de Parry-Lord; il rappelle que, selon cette théorie, on doit toujours se reporter à deux assertions de base: A) tandis que chaque performance d'un texte narratif oral par un chanteur peut changer, la composition du récit et la succession des épisodes sont des constantes; B) cette stabilité relative provient d'une tradition, parfois très ancienne, de "formules," "expressions formulaires," "thèmes." Après avoir mentionné les distinctions ultérieures faites par A. Lord à l'intérieur des deux grands groupes de textes "oraux" et "écrits," Miletich remarque que cette rigueur, qui est caractéristique de Lord, s'affaiblit, dans certains cas, au cours des applications faites par d'autres savants; cela arrive notamment lorsqu'il s'agit de domaines historiques différents de ceux qui ont fourni les matériaux pour la construction de la théorie. En effet, dans ces cas il est souvent nécessaire de reconsidérer d'une façon adéquate les formulations fondamentales, justement dans le but de ne pas les trahir. Miletich examine, entre autres, des études de R. S. Spry-car, de P. Arant, et de A. C. Watts, etc. Dans les cas de textes qui présentent des difficultés à l'application des "règles" de la théorie dont il s'agit, à cause de leur organisation métrique—cf. le *Cantar de mio Cid*—Miletich propose qu'on isole des constantes métriques et qu'on s'en tienne à celles-ci. Mais enfin, comme le fait remarquer Miletich, ce qui a fait défaut jusqu'ici à la théorie Parry-Lord ce sont des dépouillements systématiques et exhaustifs de textes entiers, enregistrés directement à partir des performances.

Pour ce qui est de l'épique médiévale romane, Miletich examine des études de R. Webber sur le fragment de *Roncesvalles*, de J. M. Aguirre, F. M. Waltman, E. de Chasca sur le *Cid* et l'épopée castillane, de B. A. Beatie sur le *Romancero* (XVI^e siècle), de J. J. Duggan sur le *Roland* et encore sur le *Cid*. C'est justement dans ces études que les auteurs ont dû reconsidérer les principes de Parry-Lord, et que la différenciation des principes fondamentaux infirme la valeur des comparaisons reposant sur des données statistiques; c'est pourquoi Miletich peut remarquer, à propos de l'importante étude rolandienne déjà mentionnée, que "on the basis of Lord's statistical criteria of a predominance of 'formulas', the *Song of Roland* is not an oral composition as Duggan suggests, but a learned work similar to the 'conventional style' or *na narodnu* text" (p. 120).

L'étude des textes caractérisés par une technique formulaire demande tout d'abord la connaissance de plusieurs langues (grec ancien et byzantin, latin, langues slaves, germaniques, romanes . . .), et Miletich paraît extrêmement doué de ce point de vue; tout aussi solide apparaît, dans cet article, son érudition. En conclusion, le discours de Miletich, en même temps qu'il nous fait saisir encore une fois comment, au fur et à mesure que nous nous éloignons d'un modèle, il est de plus en plus facile pour nous d'oublier tel ou tel élément essentiel, nous invite à nous demander si, dans l'étude des phénomènes littéraires, il faut élargir au maximum le *corpus* des textes, même au prix de formalisations très génériques, ou s'il ne faudrait pas fixer en même temps des limites de caractère histori-

que et culturel; on sait que la considération comparative de l'épopée homérique et de l'épopée rolandienne (et de l'épopée serbe, etc.) a donné lieu à des éclaircissements aussi bien qu'à des malentendus. On peut aussi se demander si l'étude de la technique formulaire ne s'est pas trop éloignée d'autres éléments de la technique littéraire, en se transformant, d'une façon pour ainsi dire abusive, en une sorte de petite discipline autonome (cf. les remarques de A. Varvaro, *Dalla storia alla poesia epica: Alvar Fañez*, in *Studi* . . . S. Pellegrini [Padova, 1971], p. 665).

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The Thirtieth Annual Kentucky Foreign Language Conference will take place this year at the University of Kentucky, April 28-30. The Medieval French Literature section will have one paper on the epic: "*Galién le Restauré, La Chanson de Roland*, and the Bibliothèque Bleue," by Hans E. Keller (Ohio State University). Other papers in that section will be presented by Joseph J. Duggan, William W. Kibler, Larry S. Crist, and Brewster E. Fitz. The Medieval Spanish Literature section will have papers by Brian Dutton, John Walsh, Olga T. Impey, Harlan G. Sturm, Harvey L. Sharrer and Anna Chisman.