

The Art of Repetition in the Short Cycle of *William of Orange* (The Printed AB Version)+

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Repetition in the *chanson de geste* extends from the recurrence of clusters of verses or hemistichs at widely varying intervals (as well as in different poems), through widely varying plays of grammatical and lexical patterns in groups of successive verses, to the low-level, metric repetition; indeed the art of repetition in the genre is a metric art. I have outlined recently the interrelations of the varied parts of this esthetic system, demonstrating, I believe, remarkable potential for artistry ("On the Metric Artistry," *Art métrique*); detailed study of the forms taken by that art would seem to be in order,² particularly appreciation of whole poems, as Boutet has done for *Jehan de Lanson*. It is already clear that the poems, indeed many of the various versions of those poems, differ not only in the way they use the resources offered by epic versification, but also in their success. Simply to give an idea of the impact of this metric art, let me state that I believe the *Charroi* surpasses the *Chanson de Roland* for sheer brilliance of composition.

A few points of reference are perhaps in order. Metric art, as the term implies, is an art based on measuring. The strong rhythms which mark the epic (do)decasyllable derive from what we might crudely describe as an "inchworm" counting off of syllables, hemistichs, verses, and laisses. In part, this counting is a simple matter of syllables in a word, hemistichs in a sentence, verses in a laisse, and so on, that is to say length: length of a word, of a clause, of an incident. The implications of measurement, however, extend further.

It is worth insisting on an observation made by Paul Zumthor nearly thirty years ago ("Vers") and the pertinence of which to the *chanson de geste* I have frequently mentioned. The effect of Old French epic versification is a marriage of rhythm with meaning: meaning has rhythm, and rhythm *means*.

The meaning of length is fairly self-evident: degree of amplification suggests degree of relative importance. Beyond the simple matter of length, however, measurement entails position

(beginning and end points for measurement), internal cohesion (the very fact of measuring implies some sort of unity in the thing or things measured), and thrust from one metric unit to the next, that is to say the various kinds of cohesion between successive units (in its simplest terms, one might think of the cohesion of a first hemistich to the second hemistich of the same verse and then of the cohesion of that second hemistich to the following first hemistich). Length, position, internal cohesion, and thrust are the semantic components of this metric art which I propose to outline in the three poems of the short William cycle.

Two further precisions are useful. First, I analyze repetition from three different perspectives: meter, language, and content; a metric thread, a discursive one, and a narrative or referential one. The matching of threads produces effects of reinforcement, like sympathetic vibrations, and the mismatch can produce effects similar to those of enjambment. Second, echoes take a variety of forms: the abstract, metric echo of hemistich, verse, and *laisse*; the recurrence of some pattern in a sequence of consecutive verses; the echo of a short passage across intervals of varied lengths within a poem; and the use of an apparently standardized choice of phrasing in different poems.

We are still only beginning to grasp the implications of Rychner's insight into the art of the *chanson de geste*.³ We must analyze the use of length, position, cohesion, and thrust in a large number of texts. Not all the extant texts are masterpieces, nor are they uniformly soporific. Having some familiarity with the short William cycle, I should like to make a tentative synthesis of the way in which these three poems⁴ exploit the possibilities of *laisse* and echo.

Crudely ranking the three according to what I believe may prove to be their relative artistic merits, I would say that the *Couronnement* is an interesting piece of composition, showing some real merit, but perhaps falling short of brilliance; the *Prise* is an extraordinary piece which raises the art of comic composition to a very high level; and the *Charroi* is quite simply a work of genius.⁵

Let us begin with the *Prise d'Orange* because of the relative simplicity of its metric skein. The *laisse* in the *Prise* is simple and

cohesive: it rarely relates more than one fairly straightforward incident, matching the metric and narrative skeins in the way Rychner, and indeed most critics, understand the *laisse* to function, at least ideally. The *laisse* varies in length from the eight verses of *laisse* II, the ten of *laisse* XXXVI, the nine of *laisse* XLVII, or the three of the final *laisse* to sixty in *laisse* XVI, sixty-nine in *laisse* XLII, sixty-five in *laisse* LVII, and the extreme of ninety-five in *laisse* LX (see the graph of *laisse* lengths in Appendix 1A), but with only two exceptions it is a fairly easy matter to identify a single predominating incident which defines the *laisse* as a single moment in the narrative.

The two exceptions are instructive, the two longest *laises* in the poem, XLII (69 verses) and LX (95 verses). The only two "composite" *laises* stand out from the rest of the poem by their length, their accumulation of more or less disparate incidents, and their irrelevance to the essentials of the story.

In *laisse* XLII Aragon sends for help across the sea to his father Tibaut, who in turn sets out with a vast fleet, of which we hear nothing more. The lost fleet, about which Bédier made some rather ironic comments (*Lég. ép.*, I: 319-20), probably inspired the composition of the *Siège d'Orange* fragment, and Régnier and Tyssens disagree as to whether this *laisse* would be better situated as it is in ms D,⁶ but perhaps this intrusion, emphasized by its disproportionate length (the ten *laises* on either side of it average 22.3 verses in length and range from a maximum of thirty-six to a minimum of nine) is simply comic: all that emphasis bears on an expedition to nowhere.

And *laisse* LX, as I have observed on more than one occasion, accumulates virtually all of the properly heroic activity of the poem in a flurry of scene shifts, as if the narrator is rapidly tying up unimportant loose ends after having lingered over the important part of the story, namely William's propensity for getting into trouble.

In contrast to the simplicity of the *laisse* in the *Prise*, the play of echo is complex, with variation affecting both word choice and relation to the *laisse* (metric status): position within the *laisse* and the degree of realization of the echo, that is both the absolute number of verses and the relative importance within the *laisse* in question.

Let us take a relatively simple case, the description of the beautiful Saracen princess Orable (Appendix 1B), which, after all,

motivates the action in the story by inspiring William to seek out the princess and capture her city. In its first occurrences this element of the story is closely bound to the description of the city and to William's reaction (themselves playing a complex role as echoes), but we isolate it for the purpose of analysis.

The first description of Orable's beauty (echo 1 in the Appendix) appears toward the end of *laisse* VII, at the end of what we might call Part 1 of Guillebert's narrative of his own story, a narrative which occupies both *laises* VII and VIII. The description constitutes the next to last narrative component of the *laisse*, being followed immediately by William's exclamation that he must see such marvels for himself; the description occupies the penultimate position of the *laisse*.

After *laisse* VIII concludes Guillebert's narrative, William opens *laisse* IX with a request that his guest repeat that part of the story which has captured his imagination, the description of the city. Guillebert complies, answering the unspoken request as well by passing once again from the city to the lady in an amplified recurrence (echo 2) which comprises roughly half of his description, that is to say roughly half of the *laisse*. Again William reacts with vigour, closing off the *laisse* with the declaration that he will have both the city and the lady. The description has risen in importance, passing from half of a *laisse* conclusion to half of a *laisse*.⁷

The third occurrence appears in *laisse* X (echo 3), which is largely parallel to IX but shows distinctly different proportions. William's reaction expands to nearly half the *laisse* and ceases to occupy final position, which is taken over by Guillebert's response that he must be mad to even think of such a thing. The description of the city and princess shrink proportionately; Orable has been reduced to one half of the first half of the *laisse*.

These three occurrences use much the same language in much the same arrangement, and the echoes are quite evident. That their metric status varies, however, is perhaps not so obvious, at least until we become accustomed to reading these texts with an eye to the metric status of details of the narrative. With the next occurrence, on the other hand, we come face to face with both the issue of metric status and an art which we are not accustomed to perceiving in the *chanson de geste*. Indeed, although I have been finding this kind of evidence in the

Charroi de Nîmes for nearly two years and have now begun to discover it in the *Prise*, I am still unsure of the conclusions to draw. In *laisse* XVII, the three French heroes have entered the city of Orange. Prodded by his nephew's taunts, William interrupts the conversion with their Saracen hosts and asks to see the queen, and Aragon scarcely breaks stride to acknowledge the question before returning to important matters, namely the urgent need that his father return. In this brief acknowledgment of William's question about the queen, Aragon slips in a single hemistich (v. 530) which echoes the three preceding descriptions of Orable (echo 4). The line seems entirely out of place in Aragon's speech: not only does he dislike his stepmother, he is clearly uninterested here in such frivolous topics as women. But as a coy reminder from the narrator to the listener the line sets bells ringing. Is this another one of those instances in which the poet has dropped an almost banal hemistich, all by itself, into the text in reference to other passages where it belongs to a fully developed echo? Although I am inclined to treat this hemistich as a fugitive echo, we cannot be certain until we have examined more evidence. What is certain is that metric status is an essential component of this effect: an element which first appeared as half of an extended *laisse* conclusion and then as half of the subject matter of a *laisse* shrinks here to a single hemistich.

The description of Orable continues to occur after this tantalizing, will-o'-the-wisp appearance. In *laisse* XXI (echo 5), the narrator's extended description, which sets William's blood to tingling, is one of the three ample segments evoking the sensual delights of Gloriete which constitute the principal subject of the *laisse*, and the description recurs as part of the extended introduction to *laisse* XXII (echo 6). By now the theme is sufficiently well established that the phrasing in these two occurrences can vary considerably from that of the earlier descriptions and still have the effect of recalling them.

Further along, in *laisse* XXIX, when the three Frenchmen are besieged in the palace, William despairs of ever seeing his family again, and his nephew taunts him by reminding him that he is with the beautiful princess whom he came to see (echo 7); note in particular the hemistich *Il n'a si bele* in v. 913. Here, unlike the occurrence in Aragon's mouth in *laisse* XVII, the echo is strengthened by the occurrence in the near context of the verb *veoir* (*vez* in v. 912).

And the description occurs at least once more, in similar circumstances: William and his nephew are imprisoned with Orable in

laisse LV, William is again lamenting his fate, and once more Guélin reminds him that he at least can take solace in Orable (echo 8). Here the base hemistich of the echo is much transformed, and it is the introductory hemistich, *Vez (la, ci) Orable*, which constitutes the strongly marked part of the echo.

In both of these last occurrences the echo represents a minor component in the action of the *laisse*, and consequently the variation of metric status does not enter into the play of variation. It is the wording which varies, and echo 8 is indeed quite far removed from the earlier occurrences. Thus in the first set of descriptions of Orable's beauty wording is relatively constant and position and importance in the *laisse* are the main variables; after a middle set based on new wording, the last set emphasizes wording as the variable.

This hasty sketch of a single echo must suffice here. To appreciate the echo properly, we would have to see it in conjunction with the other echoes, equally complex, which intertwine themselves with it. Echo in the printed *AB* version of the *Prise* weaves an intricate web against the relative simplicity of the narrative and metric skeins.

The *Couronnement de Louis*, likewise the printed text of the *AB* version, appears to make rather simpler use of echo, but it uses a far more complicated *laisse* than that of the *Prise*. In very simple terms, the graphs of Appendices 1A and 2A show a wider range in the length of the *laisse* in the *Couronnement* than occurs in the *Prise*.

The *Couronnement* offers more *laises* than does the *Prise* in the range of ten verses or fewer as well as more in the range of seventy or more. Two segments stand out in Appendix 2A: in the first dozen *laises*, which contain the prologue and the scene of the coronation, short *laises* predominate and three *laises* stand out by their considerably greater length; and the last dozen *laises*, narrating the rebellious behaviour of the Norman barons and the second trip to Rome, are predominantly long.

In the current state of my knowledge, I prefer not to attempt situating these observations in a broader appreciation of the text, but some lines of reflection do present themselves. In the vicinity of *laises* XIII-XIV, for example, we observe an alternation of relatively long and

short *laises* running from *laisse* XI to *laisse* XVI, a rhythmic fact which may bear some relation to the predominance of short *laises* in the first episode and of long ones in the following episode. And I note, without pursuing the question, that a series of fairly short *laises* (XLVI-XLIX, which run to 9, 5, 5, and 13 verses in length) summarize the three years during which William travels around the country suppressing rebellion, after which *laises* L-LIV, alternately long and short (L 63, LI 19, LII 40, LIII 14, LIV 27), narrate William's encounter with the Norman barons; this rhythmic change may bear some relation to the concluding episodes of the poem, which, with the exception of the penultimate *laisse*, are narrated in *laises* the shortest of which runs to forty-eight verses. Certainly it appears that we should look into the rhythm of long and short *laises* as an element of narrative organization in the *Couronnement*.⁸

Let us take the transition from the first episode to the second, *laises* XIII-XIV (vv. 251-327), as a sample of the poem's technique. To begin with, the very choice of passage I make here is a measure of that technique: the boundary between the two episodes is not at all obvious. Langlois, for example, puts it between vv. 227 and 228 of his CFMA edition (p. iv), that is, somewhat more than halfway through his *laisse* XIII,⁹ while Frappier, in his *Chansons de geste du cycle de Guillaume d'Orange* (vol. 2, pp. 68 and 78), puts it between vv. 271 and 272, between Langlois' *laises* XIV and XV.¹⁰

The transition is in fact quite complex. At the end of *laisse* XII (the last *laisse* of its episode), William takes leave of Charlemagne (Appendix 2B, echo 1). The intonation of *laisse* XIII, the first of the two transition *laises*, echoes the leave taking (echo 2), and then the *laisse* carries on with subject matter decidedly belonging to the first episode: Louis begs William for help and William promises to be on the scene in time of need. The *laisse* concludes with a brief relation of the voyage to Rome (echo 3) which will be reprised in the intonation of *laisse* XIV (echo 4). This *laisse*, too, looks both forward and back. In addition to the bridge built with echoes 3 and 4, when William arrives in Rome he has an anticipatory dream which the narrator interprets for us here (echo 5), an interpretation which messengers, whose arrival forms the bridge from *laises* XIV to XV (echoes 6 and 7), will confirm in *laisse* XV (echo 7) and which the pope himself will confirm in *laisse* XVI (echo 8). *Laisse* XIII looks backward, *laisse* XIV looks forward, and the two are bound together; thus we arrive at the recognition that they form a unit by themselves, namely the transition between episodes.

Further the departure verse, *Vet s'en*, appears in echo 2 (v. 255 at the beginning of laisse XIII) as well as in the bridge from laisses XIII-XIV. Likewise, the insistence on William's being in monasteries ties echo 2, at the beginning of laisse XII, to echoes 6 and 7, forming bridge from laisses XIV to XV). A strong cluster of echoes marks the entire transition and ties the two transition laisses to the laisse concluding the first episode and to the two opening the next episode.

The art of repetition in the *Couronnement de Louis*, as I perceive it today, offers much for reflection. In the case of the *Charroi de Nîmes*, on the other hand, that art is strikingly, brilliantly evident. We can take almost any passage at random to see that art at work. The *Charroi* varies the length and internal cohesion of the laisse and plays echo independently against the laisse. Whereas the *Prise* plays echo independently against a fairly uniform laisse, the *Charroi* plays it against a variable laisse, creating far more complex effects. The *Couronnement* uses a similarly variable laisse and makes considerable use of echo, but it remains to be seen whether the use of metric status as a component of variation is more than an occasional device.¹¹

Elaborate design characterizes the *Charroi* throughout. Let us just mention the elements of the reproach scene (laisses III-X), many of which I have detailed elsewhere ("Measuring Units of Discourse," "Art métrique . . . exemple réussi"). A pair of relatively short laisses frames the scene at either end (III-IV, IX-X), and the heart of the scene is related in relatively longer laisses (V-VIII). Although the two introductory laisses of the scene contain themes which recur, they do not show verbal repetition; the concluding laisses on the other hand, are almost entirely composed of verbal echoes of themes. The heart of the scene, the list of services which William has rendered to the king and for which he has received no recompense, is an elaborately constructed play of the narrative, metric, and verbal threads; I would mention here only the echoes which tie the opening of V to laisse I and the conclusion of V to a segment of IX, and the bridge joining the end of VIII to the beginning of IX. The passage shows straightforward symmetry, in the balance of short laisses at either end of the scene, counterbalanced by an elaborate mix of symmetry and asymmetry in the echoes marking its articulations. This intricacy of composition yields to a considerably simpler rhythm matching all three skeins in laisses XI-

XV, where the king recognizes his own ingratitude and attempts futilely to come up with a satisfactory fief to offer William, and to yet another set of rhythms in laisses XVI-XXVIII, in which he grants the hero fiefs in Saracen territory.

Let us look at a passage which I have not yet commented in print, laisses XXXIII-XXXIX, the encounter with a peasant and the construction of the barrels in which the heroes will hide in order to enter the city of Nîmes.

The first observation to impose itself is the rhythm of the passage as expressed by the length of the laisse (Appendix 3A): the first three laisses, XXXIII-XXXV, are noticeably longer (60, 28, and 25 verses) than the remaining four (9, 10, 4, and 4). The two groups form, in fact, two narrative segments, the inspiration and the action, a rhythmic division compounded by the play of echo. We shall look at the more complicated echoes of the first segment after a rapid survey of the relatively straightforward parallelism of laisses which organizes the second segment

The first verse of laisse XXXVI (echo 15) belongs to the most complex web of echoes in the passage, linking not only to the intonation of the preceding laisse (echo 14) but also to that of laisse XXXI (echo 13): it joins therefore the two boundary laisses, XXXV and XXXVI, of segments which form a larger narrative unit as well as establishing a connection to an earlier narrative segment (XXXI).

The second verse of the laisse opens a simpler echo, the bridge between laisses XXXV and XXXVI, echoes 16 and 17. After the mild intricacy of this intonation, which joins together two different echoes, the remainder of the laisse introduces no further echoes, and, to use Rychner's terms, this half of the laisse tends toward the narrative rather than the lyric.

The following three laisses, on the other hand, tend distinctly toward the lyric. Laisse XXXVII opens with an echo which connects it to the introduction of laisse XL, the beginning of the next narrative segment (echoes 18 and 19), and it closes with the first of the three occurrences in echo 18; it is entirely composed of echoes. Further, the structure which we see here, of laisse conclusion followed by two recurrences filling in each case the entire laisse, echoes the structure concluding the Paris episode, laisses XXVI-XXVIII (echo 20), a

reference reinforced by the hemistich *Quant il venront*, which marks within the echo a transition between the action related and the purpose of that action; it is thus both a verbal echo and a structural one.

In this segment the play of echo is structural and predominant. Tying the passage together as well as linking its articulations to those of other segments, it covers nearly the entire segment, and it is closely bound to the contours of the *laisse*. In the preceding segment, *laises* XXXIII-XXXV, echo works quite differently.

In addition to internal echo, there may be external ones, as in the heavy dose of warlike preparations which occupies the first half of *laisse* XXXIII.¹² Whatever we may decide about reference to a traditional "motif" in this instance, it certainly provides an element of comedy here, for, after all the preparations in anticipation of encountering the enemy, they meet up with nothing more dangerous than a pagan peasant and his three children (*Il n'orent mie .iiii. liues alé/ Qu'an mi la voie ont un vilain trové*; vv. 874-5).

The first hemistich of v. 875 may be one of many of a kind in this poem: hemistichs occurring, like this instance, in isolation, that is without the support of further verbal echo in the immediate vicinity, but recalling other occurrences of the hemistich in association with fully developed echoes.¹³ Here the fleeting allusion bears on William's two earlier encounters with his nephew Bertrand, in *laises* I and XVI (echoes 4-6). I am beginning to suspect that the seemingly awkward recurrence of the verse (*Et/Les) .iii. enfanz que il ot engendré* at five verses' interval (echo 7: vv. 878, 883) is in fact a part of the joke, insisting on the lack of danger presented by this encounter with the enemy as well as contrasting this preposterous meeting to two previous encounters where the heroes spoke of the serious matter of royal ingratitude.

Let us just mention the vanguard in vv. 868-70, which will recur in rather ludicrous situations later on (echoes 1-3). This echo consistently takes the metric status of relatively minor element within the *laisse*, another of the fleeting details although more strongly emphasized than the isolated hemistichs.

The remainder of *laisse* XXXIII (vv. 887ff) and the first half of *laisse* XXXIV relate the *quiproquo* questioning of the peasant, marked

off by the slight doses of repetition in echoes 8-10. Echo 11, concluding *laisse* XXXIV, constitutes the central incident of *laisse* XXXV (echo 12) and thereby emphasizes metric status as a variable.

This segment contains an intricate mixture of echoes: fleeting internal and possibly external allusions as well as clearly marked pieces, minor details passed over in the flow of the *laisse* as well as elements belonging to the framework of the *laisse*, elements, like the intonation of *laisse* XXXV (echo 15), which tend to set off the *laisse* as an independent unit, and elements like the interrogation of the peasant (echoes 8-10), which tend rather to bind *laises* together in a larger narrative unit. The complex structure of the segment stands in striking contrast to the starkly defined outlines of the *laisse* in its companion segment, *laises* XXXVI-XXXIX. And this ever-varying play of rhythms seems more and more to characterize the extraordinary art of the printed text of the *AB* version of the *Charroi de Nîmes*.

The three poems of the short William cycle show distinctly different artistic personalities in their exploitation of *laisse* and repetition. The *Couronnement* and the *Charroi* use a highly variable *laisse*, both in length and in cohesiveness, as opposed to the simplicity of the *Prise*. All three poems make extensive use of echo, but, to judge from my current grasp of the texts, the *Charroi* and the *Prise* can be said to use echo as the standard form of discourse, against which non-repeating passages stand in striking contrast, whereas the *Couronnement* seems to use echo as a flourish, highlighting particular elements of the narrative, some of them at articulations, as in the passage examined here, but others in less marked positions in the narrative.

The description presented here is far from definitive. I have a fairly thorough analysis of the *Charroi* in progress; I have some sample analyses of the *Prise*; and I have notes on the *Couronnement*. The difference of technique perceptible on this basis seems sufficiently interesting to merit presentation before analysis of the poems is complete.

Any analysis pretending to a measure of thoroughness must go beyond the printed texts. The printed *AB* versions diverge from the versions discernable in the variant apparatus, both from the separate

A and B versions and from their probable model; the C version appears to have cut echoes out of the text as if they were so many redundancies; and the mechanical use of echo in the D version, commonly attributed to writing from memory (see for example Tyssens 115), is worth close examination for what it reveals about the device of echo. A complete study of the printed texts would, however, be a preliminary step in refining our grasp of the art of repetition in each of these versions.

Beyond these three poems lies the evolution of the genre. The Oxford *Roland* is not the point of reference for the art of the *chanson de geste*; it represents an avenue of development which certainly led to a masterpiece, but the printed *Charroi* shows us a different avenue, which led to dazzling use of the same resources. I trust I have shown the composition of these three texts to be masterful; I certainly consider the printed *Charroi* to surpass the Oxford *Roland* for sheer brilliance of composition. It remains therefore to be seen to what extent other poems, in their various versions, reach similar heights.

Notes

1. The present article is a slightly revised version of the paper by the same title given to the American-Canadian Branch of the Société Rencesvals at the 1993 meeting of the MLA (Toronto, December 27-30, 1993).

2. For analysis of two relatively limited aspects of the art in the *Charroi de Nîmes*, see "Le jeu d'échos ... *Non ferai sire...*" and "The Peculiar Echo in Laisse XXV ..." A preliminary attempt at synthesis appears in "Art métrique ... un exemple particulièrement réussi..."

3. It is somewhat beside the point at hand that I think Rychner was led astray by the lure of oral composition and that I argue that the phenomena of this metric art are as perceptible to the ear as to the eye. Rychner's insights laid the foundations, and we need not postulate orality in order to appreciate the esthetic qualities of the poems.

4. More precisely, the AB version of the three as they appear in the Lepage, McMillan, and Régnier editions.

5. I have enough confidence in this ranking to put it in print, but only accompanied by the observation that it also happens to match the degree to which I have grasped the composition of the three poems.

6. Régnier, *Rédactions en vers* 26-7; Tyssens, *Geste de Guillaume*, 134-6. See Régnier 86-8 and Tyssens 142-51 and 436, n. 1 on the probability that the earlier and lost version of the poem included a siege of Orange.

7. Although metric status involves the number of verses relating a narrative element, it is not a simple matter of counting. Laisse DC comprises an introduction

(William's question) and a conclusion (his reaction); it happens that the description of the city occupies ten and a half verses and the description of Orable ten, but the precise count is largely irrelevant to the effect: the two topics each constitute roughly one half of what Guillebert says in the *laisse*, and together they form the central narrative element of the *laisse*.

8. See *Art métrique* 144-8, on the alternation of long and short *laisse*s in the combat of champions between William and Corsolt.

9. Vv. 229-230 in Lepage, *laisse* XII.

10. Vv. 273-274, *laisse*s XIII-XIV in Lepage.

11. Striking use occurs in the "royal duties" echo: / VI-VII-VIII/-IX-XI-XII/; see also m. A less elaborate construction describes the repression of rebellion /XLV-XLVI, etc. (see Kent, "Fidelity and Treachery").

12. See also the meal served to the peasant in the first half of *laisse* XXXV (932-935), very similar in expression to the meal served to Gillebert in the opening of the *Prise* (*laisse* VI, vv. 172-176). Martin lists "Repas réparateur" in his index of rhetorical motifs (III.E.8). Is the reference made to the passage in the *Prise* or to the traditional narrative component?

13. Other such hemistichs: *Encor ne sai* (*laisse*s 1-II and v. 260, *laisse* IX); *Non feroiz sire* (v. 607 in *laisse* XXIV); *Mes (un petit / d'une chose)* (vv. 61, *laisse* I; 468, *laisse* XVIII; 715 and 731, *laisse* XXVI; examined in "L'art métrique... Un exemple particulièrement réussi"); see also the two occurrences of *Par tel vertu* (vv. 55 in *laisse* I and 126 in *laisse* V).

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Appendix 1: The *Prise d'Orange*

1A: Length of the Laisse

Laisse	Number of verses
I	30 *****
II	8 *****
III	35 *****
IV	31 *****
V	26 *****
VI	48 *****
VII	33 *****
VIII	27 *****
IX	28 *****
X	32 *****
XI	18 *****
XII	16 *****
XIII	38 *****
XIV	39 *****
XV	53 *****
XXVI	60 *****
XXVII	35 *****
XXVIII	24 *****
XIX	46 *****
XX	20 *****
XXI	45 *****
XXII	39 *****
XXIII	19 *****
XXIV	53 *****
XXV	34 *****
XXVI	40 *****
XXVII	14 *****
XXVIII	20 *****
XXIX	24 *****
XXX	37 *****
XXXI	27 *****
XXXII	37 *****
XXXIII	22 *****
XXXIV	24 *****
XXXV	49 *****
XXXVI	10 *****

XXXVII	29	*****
XXXVIII	15	*****
XXXIX	18	*****
XL	28	*****
XLI	36	*****
XLII	69	*****
XLIII	18	*****
XLIV	18	*****
XLV	27	*****
XLVI	25	*****
XLVII	9	*****
XLVIII	18	*****
XLIX	28	*****
L	21	*****
LI	12	*****
l π	19	*****
l m	24	*****
LIV	23	*****
LV	44	*****
LVI	30	*****
LVII	65	*****
LVIII	22	*****
LIX	40	*****
LX	95	*****
LXI	24	*****
LXII	3	**

1B: The Beauty of Orable

1) Laisse VII

Et dame Orable	une roïne gente
II n'a si bele	desi en Oriente
Bel a le cors	eschevie est et gente
Blanche la char	comme la flor en l'ente
Dex mar i fu	ses cors et sa jovente
Quant Dex ne croit	le pere omnipotente

2) Laisse IX

La porriez	dame Orable aviser	252
Ce est la feme	a dant Tiebaut l'Escler	
Il n'a si bele	en la crestienté	
N'en païenie	qu'en i sache trover	
Bel a le cors	eschevi et mollé	256
Et vairs les eulz	comme faucon mué	
Tant mar i fu	la seue grant beauté	
Quant Deu ne croit	et la seue bonté	
Uns gentils hom	s'en peüst deporter	260
Bien i fust sauve	sel vosist creanter	

3) Laisse X

La dedenz est	Orable la roïne	
Ce est la feme	au roi Tiebaut d'Aufrique	276
Il n'a si bele	en tote païenie	
Bel a le col	s'est gresle et eschevie	
Blanche a la char	comme est la flor d'espine	
Vairs eulz et clers	qui tot adés li rient	280
Tant mar i fu	la seue gaillardie	
Quant Deu ne croit	le filz sainte Marie	
...		

4) Laisse XVII

Rois Arragon	l'en a mis a reson	
Dedenz Aufrique	quant fustes vos baron	
Beau sire chiers	.II. mois a et plus non	
Voïstes vos	roi Tiebaut l'Arragon	524
Oïl beau sire	a la cit de Vaudon	
Il nos besa	si vos mande par nos	
Que vos gardez	sa cité et s'onor	
Ou est sa feme	la nos mosterez vos	528
Oïl seignor	dist li rois Arragon	
Il n'a plus bele	trusqu'as nues d'amont	
Baron dist il	de mon pere ai besoing	
François nos tolent	noz palés et noz tors	532

5) Laisse XXI

La sist Orable	la dame d'Aufriquant	660
Ele ot vestu	un paile escarinant	
Estroit lacié	par le cors qu'ele ot gent	
De riche soie	cousue par les pans	
Et Rosiane	la niece Rubiant	664
Le vent li fist	a un platel d'argent	
Ele est plus blanche	que la noif qui respient	
Et plus vermeille	que la rose flerant	

6) Laisse XXII

La sist Orable	la dame o le cler vis	
Ele est vestue	d'un peliçon hermin	684
Et par desoz	d'un bliaut de samit	
Estroit a laz	par le cors qui bien sist	

7) Laisse XXIX

Oncle Guillelmes	vos parlez de néant	
Par amistiez	entrastes vos ceanz	
Vez la Orable	la dame d'Aufriquant	912
Il n'a si bele	en cest siecle vivant	
Alez seoir	delez li sor cel banc	

8) Laisse LV

Oncle Guillelmes	dist Guielin le fier	
Lessier ester	que ice n'a mestier	1580
Vez ci Orable	la cortoise moillier	
Bien la poëz	acoler et besier	
Plus bele dame	ne demant ne ne quier	
...		

Appendix 2: The Couronnement de Louis

2A: Length of the Laisse in the Couronnement de Louis

Laisse	Number of verses
I	10
II	10
III	7
IV	12
V	6
VI	26
VII	8
VIII	70
IX	10
X	6
XI	8
XII	77
XIII	23
XIV	54
XV	18
XVI	35
XVII	117
XVIII	120
XIX	22
XX	47
XXI	149
XXII	44
XXIII	53
XXIV	26
XXV	107
XXVI	24
XXVII	97
XXVIII	56
XXIX	75
XXX	18
XXXI	26
XXXII	52
XXXIII	20
XXXIV	51
XXXV	56
XXXVI	43

XXXVII	29
XXXVIII	37
XXXIX	58
XL	33
XLI	17
XLII	61
XLIII	72
XLIV	21
XLV	78
XLVI	9
XLVII	5
XLVIII	5
XLIX	13
L	63
LI	19
LII	40
LIII	14
LIV	77
LV	79
LVI	74
LVII	73
LVIII	75
LIX	52
LX	79
LXI	7
LXII	48

2B: The Transition between Episodes 1 and 2

1) Laisse XII

Il li jura	230	sor les sainz del moustier
Ja n'en avra		vaillant .iiii. deniers
Ne n'en tendra		plain doi ne demi pié
S'il ne li done		de gré et volentiers
Lors vint a Challe		qu'il ne volt delaier
Devant le roi		se vet ajenoillier
Droiz empereres		je vos demant congié
Le roi li done		correceus et iriez
Si li charja		.xl. chevaliers

D'or et d'argent trosse .xxx. sommiers 240
 Au départir se corurent besier

2) Laisse XIII

Au moustier fu Guillelmes Fierebrace
 Congié demande a l'emperëor Challe
 Et il li charge .xl. homes a armes
 D'or et d'argent .xxx. sommiers li baille
 Vet s'en li quens de néant ne se targe 255
 Et Looÿs le convoie grant masse

3) Laisse XIII

Ja ne leré por nul home que sache
 Ne vos secore o mon riche barnage
 Vet s'en li quens de néant ne se targe 270
 De ses jornees ne sai que vos contasse
 Mongieu trespasse qui durement le lasse
 Desi a Rome n'aresta Fierebrace

4) Laisse XIV

Vet s'en Guillelmes li gentix et le ber
 Et Guëlin et Bertran l'alosé 275
 Desoz les chapés orent les branz letrez
 Et neporquant si orent il trossez
 Les bons hauberz et les hiaumes dorez
 Li escuier furent forment lassé
 Des forz escuz et des espiez porter 280
 De lor jornees ne vos sai aconter
 Mongieu trespasent qui mout les a lassez
 Par Romenie se sont acheminez
 Desi a Rome ne sont mie aresté

5) Laisse XIV

Après mengier sont alé reposer
 Li quens se dort qui mout par fu lassez 290
 Sonja un songe dont mout fu effreez
 Li quens s'esveille si se commande a Dé 300

Onques mes songes ne fu si averé
 Quar Sarrazin exploitierent d'aler
 Li rois Galaffres et li rois Tenebrez
 Li rois Cremus et Corsuls l'amirez 305
 Pris ont de Chapres les mestres fermetez
 Li rois Gaifiers i est emprisonnez
 Il et sa fille sa fame a grant beautez
 Et .xxx.m. de chetis encombrez
 Qui tuit eüssent les chiés des buz sevez

6) Laisse XIV

Li quens Guillelmes s'est par matin levez
 Au mostier vet le servise escouter
 Totes ses armes fet metre sus l'autel 320
 De l'or d'Arrabe les volt puis rachater
 Et l'apostoiles fu mout gentix et ber
 Qui se revest por la messe chanter
 Quant le servise fu dit et définé
 Ez .ii. messages poignant toz abrivez 325
 Ja conteront unes noveles tiex
 Dont mainz frans hom fu le jor aïrez

7) Laisse XV

Au mostier fu Guillelmes Fierebrace
 Messe ot chantée li apostoiles sages
 Quant il l'ôt dite si vient dui message 330
 Qui li aportent unes noveles apres
 Que Sarrazin li font mout grant damage
 Prise ont par force la fort cité de Chapres
 Pris ont Gaifier de Police le sage
 Et .xxx.m. de chéris c'uns que autres 335
 S'il n'ont secors qui tuit morront a glaive

8) Laisse XVI

Li quens Guillelmes	se dreca sor ses piez	
Et l'apostoiles	l'en prist a aresnier	
Hé gentils hom	por Dieu le droiturier	
Et quar me dites	se me porroiz aidier	
Ja nos requierent	païen et aversier	350
Li rois Galafres	qui des autres est chiés	
Cil est destroiz	qui nos souloit aidier	
Pris est nar force	le riche roi Gaïfier	
Il et sa fille	et sa franche moillier	
Et .xxx.m.	de chetis prisonniers	355
S'il n'ont secors	qui tuit perdront les chiés	
...		

XXI	11	*****
XXII	26	*****
XXIII	42	*****
XXIV	55	*****
XXV	??	*****
XXVI	113	*****
XXVII	5	****
XXVIII	7	****
XXIX	6	****
XXX	43	*****
XXXI	5	****
XXXII	6	****
XXXIII	60	*****
XXXIV	28	*****
XXXV	25	*****
XXXVI	9	*****
XXXVII	10	*****
XXXVIII	4	***
XXXIX	4	***
XL	54	*****
XLI	11	*****
XLII	23	*****
XLIII	15	*****
XLIV	16	*****
XLV	11	*****
XLVI	42	*****
XLVII	31	*****
XLVIII	20	*****
XLIX	110	*****
L	12	*****
LI	17	*****
LII	8	*****
LIII	35	*****
LIV	16	*****
LV	28	*****
LVI	10	*****
LVII	14	*****
LVIII	8	*****
LIX	24	*****

Appendix 3: The Charroi de Nîmes

3A: Length of the Laisse

Laisse	Number of Verses	
I	87	*****
II	6	****
III	12	*****
IV	9	*****
V	38	*****
VI	29	*****
VII	38	*****
VIII	36	*****
IX	16	*****
X	6	****
XI	16	*****
XII	6	****
XIII	15	*****
XIV	13	*****
XV	76	*****
XVI	24	*****
XVII	16	*****
XVIII	46	*****
XIX	4	***
XX	7	*****

11) Laisse XXXIV

Sire fet il	se Dex me beneie	
Qui avroit ore	.M. tonneaus de tel guise	
Conme cele est	qui el char est assise	
Et les eüst	de chevaliers emplies	925
Ses conduisist	tot le chemin de Nymes	
Sifetement	porroit prendre la vile	
Et dit Guillelmes	par mon chief voir en dites	
Ge le feré	sel loe mes enpires	

12) Laisse XXXV

Baron dist il	envers moi entendez	
Qui avroit ore	.M. tonneaus ancrenez	940
Conme cil est	que en cel char veez	
Et fussent plain	de chevaliers armez	
Ses conduisist	tot le chemin ferré	
Tot droit a Nymes	cele bone cité	
Sifaitement	porroit dedenz entrer	945
Ja n'i avroit	ne lancié ne rüé	
Et cil responnent	vos dites vérité	

...

13) Laisse XXXI

Par le conseil	que lor done Guillelmes	831
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14) Laisse XXXV

Par le conseil	que celui a doné	930
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15) Laisse XXXVI

Par le conseil	que li preudon lor done	955
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16) Laisse XXXV

Faites voz genz	arriere retourner	951
Par Ricordane	ou nos somes passé	
Si faites prendre	les bués par poesté	
Et dit Guillelmes	si en ert bien pensé	

17) Laisse XXXVI

Li quens Guillelmes	fist retourner ses homes	956
Par Ricordane	.XIII. liues longues	
Prennent les chars	et les bués et les tonnes	

18) Laisse XXXVII

Qui dont veüst	les durs vilains errer	
Et doleoires	et coignies porter	965
Tonneaus loier	et toz renoveler	
Chars et charretes	chevillier et barrer	
Dedenz les tonnes	les chevaliers entrer	
De grant barnage	li peüst remembrer	

19) Laisse XL

Li quens se haste	del charroi arrester	
Qui dont veüst	les vilains del régné	
Tonneaus loier	refere et enfonser	
Et cez granz chars	retorner et verser	985
Dedenz les tonnes	les chevaliers entrer	
De grant barnage	li peüst remembrer	

20) Laises XXVI-XXVIII

Bien vos sai dire	que porte li premiers	765
Calices d'or	et messeaus et sautiers	
Chapes de paile	et croiz et encensiers	
Quant il venront	enz el regne essillié	
Serviront tuit	Damedieu tot premier	

XXVII

Bien vos sai dire	que reporte li autres	770
Vesseaus d'or fin	messeus et breviaire	
Et crucefis	et molt riches toailles	
Quant il venront	enz el regne sauvage	
S'en serviront	Jhesu l'esperitable	

XXVIII

Bien vos sai dire	que reporte li tierz	775
Poz et paielles	chauderon et trepiez	
Et croz aguz	tenailles et andiers	
Quant il venront	enz el regne essillié	
Que bien en puissent	atorner a mengier	
S'en serviront	Guillelme le guerrier	780
Et enaprès	trestoz ses chevaliers	

21) Laisses XXXVII-XXXIX

A chascun font	un grant mail apoter	970
Quant il venront	a Nymes la cité	
Et il orront	le mestre cor soner	
Nostre François	se puissent aïdier	

XXXVIII

Es autres tonnes	si sont mises les lances	
Et en chascune	font fere .II. ensaignes	975
Quant il venront	entre la gent grifaigne	
N'i entrepaingnent	li soldoier de France	

XXXIX

En autre tonne	furent li escu mis	
En chascun fonz	font fere .II. escrins	
Quant il venront	entre les Sarrazins	980
Nostre François	ne soient entrepris	