Thibaut de Champagne and Lyric *Auctoritas* in Paris, BnF fr. 12615

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Abstract

Medieval composers and audiences alike took great stock in the cultural value of auctoritas, *the notion that new compositions should closely follow the patterns set by previously accepted authors. The present study examines the concept as it applies to the composition of a particular manuscript: Paris, BnF fr. 12615. The codex underwent at least two, and most likely three, stages of compilation. Strategies of* compilatio *and* ordinatio *are examined to demonstrate how the compiler uses earlier songbooks dedicated to Thibaut de Champagne (d. 1253) to shape his own songbook and gradually move his anthology from aristocratic to urban, Artesian notions of auctoritas. Subsequent additions to 12615 enhance the original compiler's scheme.*

Medieval audiences did not appreciate sudden changes in aesthetic taste. On the contrary, they expected to recognize most of what they heard, delighted in borrowings, parodies, and allusions, and admired subtle differences among performances of the same texts. This mentality stands in stark contrast to the cult of originality that marks modern art. The fact of the matter is the people of the Middle Ages placed high value on the cultural notion of *auctoritas*, i.e., following in the footsteps of the poets and authors who came before, and so poetic forms and trends evolved slowly, even glacially when compared to the dizzying speed with which twenty-first century cultural trends morph. Troubadours, trouvères, or minnesingers strove not to think "outside the box", for too bold of a departure from prevailing tastes could render a composition utterly incomprehensible. Composers introduced subtle changes to existing traditions and, over time, as these small departures from the norm accumulated, poetic trends would become transformed and result in compositions that sounded worlds different from the works in which they found inspiration. Each step, though, was *authorized* because its immediate inspiration could be detected in a previous poet's *auctoritas*, and it was only with hindsight over time could two apparently dissimilar works be seen to relate to each other.

A medieval manuscript, Paris, BnF fr. 12615, provides an excellent illustration of *auctoritas*. Likely begun around 1280 in a workshop around Arras, 12615 is a diverse collection of texts, mostly songs, and mainly attributed to poets from the Artesian area.[1] In order to showcase the talent of these poets culled from the petty nobility and bourgeois of Arras, the compiler first establishes their work firmly upon a royal foundation: the songs of Thibaut de Champagne, king of Navarre. Slowly, as the reader turns the pages of the manuscript, the compiler's choices in regard to *compilatio*—the sequencing of texts—and *ordinatio*—page layout—suggest an awareness of how taking regular small steps away from an established pattern helps position Artesian poets as the rightful inheritors of a prestigious, aristocratic poetic tradition. Subsequent additions were made to 12615, but those who added to the original codex seem to have comprehended the aim of the first compiler, as they serve the purpose of the original compiler to turn aristocratic traditions to establish newer, urban models of literary production as the new *auctoritas* for subsequent writers.

Roger Berger divides 12615 into three principal parts with several smaller divisions: (1) the "original" songbook or *chansonnier* (cc. 1–178); (2) a section preserving 54 stanzas of Robert le Clerc's *Vers de la Mort* (cc. 218–22); and (3) another songbook preserving 33 compositions attributed to Adam de la Halle (cc. 224–34) (Berger 1981, 17–18).[2] Berger breaks down the large *chansonnier* as follows:

1. fifty-five songs attributed to Thibaut de Champagne plus a poem interpolated in the fifteenth century (cc. 1–22);
2. a compendium of hundreds of trouvère songs, mostly from the thirteenth century, plus another two other texts interpolated in the fifteenth century (cc. 23–178);
3. a collection of 98 motets and a selection of twenty-four songs and narrative poems celebrating Arras (cc. 179–217).

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1. I rely on the dating of 12615 and other Old French manuscripts given in Haines 2004, 21. Earlier but less precise attempts to date the manuscript and more bibliographical information can be found in Raynaud 1844, 153–72; Jeanroy 1918, 10; Wallensköld 1925, xxxiii; Linker 1979, 32; and Berger 1981, 17–19. The Gallica site of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France maintains digital facsimiles of its important manuscripts linked to regularly updated descriptions.
2. More scattered but acute observations on 12615 are made in Huot 1987, 50, 57, 66, and 67.

Though copied in several hands, this portion of 12615 is laid out uniformly enough for Berger to hypothesize that it was produced in a workshop: "A en juger d'après l'écriture et le style des très nombreuses lettres ornées, tous les éléments qui forment cette partie du manuscrit [cc. 1–217] sont contemporains. Peut-être copiés dans le même atelier, ils paraissent avoir été décorés par un seul enlumineur" (Berger 1981: 18). Because his interests lie primarily in the Artesian texts preserved in cc. 197–216, he omits much detail. The study below incorporates more information obtained *in situ* and teases out a much more complex compilational strategy at work in the construction of this, the largest part of 12615, and beyond into the subsequent portions of the manuscript.

Establishing Thibaut's Auctoritas

Unsurprisingly, Thibaut de Champagne, a major political figure and poet in thirteenth-century France, graces the first gatherings of 12615. Born to Thibaut III, count of Champagne, and Blanche de Navarre, he inherited the county of Champagne, and thanks to the untimely death of Sancho VII of Navarre, a maternal uncle with no sons, was proclaimed king of Navarre in 1234. Thibaut was also the grandson of Guilhem IX, often called the first troubadour, and came of age within social circles cultivated by literary patrons such as Eleanor of Aquitaine and Marie de Champagne, Thibaut's grandmother. The great poet, Gace Brulé, may have in fact been Thibaut's poetic mentor.[3]

If the *Grandes Chroniques de France* can be believed, Thibaut helped organize the preservation of his lyrics shortly before his death in 1253. Even if Thibaut did not personally contribute, it is noteworthy that the earliest and most complete manuscript witnesses, including MSS Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal 5198 (trouvère MS *K*, c. 1260), Paris, BnF fr. 845 (trouvère *N*, c. 1280), and Paris, BnF NAF 1050 (trouvère MS *X*, 1280) Paris, BnF fr. 24406 (trouvère MS *V*, c. 1270*)* and the Thibaut songbook interpolated in Paris, BnF fr. 844 (trouvère MS *Mt*, c. 1260), not only place Thibaut first in their

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3. Gace is evoked in the *Grandes Chronqiues de France* in association with Thibaut: "Si fist entre lui et Gace Brulé les plus belles chançons et les plus delitables et melodieuses qui onques feussent oïes en chançon ne en viele" (Viard 1932 cited in Bellenger and Quéruel 1987). For persuasive comparative textual evidence that Thibaut knew Gace's poetry very well, thereby intimating that a close personal relationship was indeed possible, see Grossel 1987, especially 112–14. See also Callahan 2014, elsewhere in this volume of *Textual Cultures*.

collections, but they preserve his songs in a similar order.[4] The opening sequence in all these manuscripts is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Opening sequence of Thibaut songs in MSS *KNMtVX*

RS #1[5]	Incipit	Genre
1268	*Amors me fet commencer*	Love song
6	*Seigneurs, sachiez, qui or ne s'en ira*	Crusade song
342	*J'aloie l'autrier errant*	*Pastourelle*
1397	*En chantant vueil ma dolor descouvrir*	Love song
339	*L'autre nuit en mon dormant*	Debate song

Emmanuèle Baumgartner was among the first to note how this sequence—a love song, a crusade song, a *pastourelle*, another love song, and a debate song—highlights Thibaut's generic breadth. Over the next chartae, love songs are clustered into short series, and debate songs are treated similarly. In between these clusters, we find songs from those and other genres (Baumgartner 1987, 39–40).[6] This compilational strategy shows Thibaut's prowess in composing within the most aristocratic of song traditions—the *grand chant courtois* or love song. However, it also points to his hand in developing newer Old French traditions like debate songs, a trend that took root in the decades in which Thibaut was active and that would become wildly popular in the late thirteenth-century Arras.[7]

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4. In Paris, BnF fr. 844, the space first allotted to Thibaut's songs was modest, but if John Haines is correct, the opening quires of the codex were turned inside out in order to create space for an interpolated and extensive collection of Thibaut's songs (Haines 2002, 13–21; 2013, 73–75). The interpolated collection of Thibaut's songs has been traditionally named MS M*t* in order to distinguish it from the manuscript M as it was first planned.

5. The RS number designates the number assigned to the song originally in the bibliography published in Raynaud in 1844 and updated in Spanke 1955.

6. A notable exception comes in Paris, BnF fr. 20050 (trouvère MS U) that can be dated more accurately to 1231. This is the earliest collection of trouvère songs to survive, and only nine of Thibaut's extant songs are recorded here, and they are scattered in the codex, not arranged as in the manuscripts under discussion here. Obviously, the king had not yet composed many of his songs, and if he did indeed have a hand in ordering his *oeuvre* for future generations, he undertook that effort after 1231.

7. Samuel N. Rosenberg writes of the *jeu-parti*, "The earliest are due to Thibaut de Champagne, whose renown no doubt contributed to the genre's success among the poet-musicians of Arras, especially Jehan Bretel and Adam de la Halle"

Illustrations adorning the first chartae of these collections bolster Thibaut's *auctoritas* by making plain his noble character.[8] In MS *K*, the first charta places Thibaut in a very courtly setting: the image, with a gilt edge and blue background, features a tripartite architectural gesture that encloses several figures. A lady is seated to the left arch, an audience of listeners stands to the right, and, in between is Thibaut who raises his left hand in song while a viele player accompanies him. Similarly, on the first charta of MS *N*, Thibaut sits between his lady and a viele player, and an audience stands to the right of the frame. The opening illustration on c. 8r of MS *X* paints a more intimate tableau: Thibaut and a lady sit opposite each other, this time alone, and their hand gestures convey the affection they share.[9]

The compiler of Paris, BnF French 12615 must have been familiar with these compositional schemes; perhaps they had derived some measure of *auctoritas* among manuscript compilers by the time he began work on 12615. The compiler of 12615 does not dismiss these precedents, but he does introduce several innovations. The first charta of the Thibaut section of 12615 (cc. 1r–20r) also opens with a large illustration (80 × 102 mm on pages with a writing space ruled at 140 × 218 mm) illustrating Thibaut's courtly character. However, instead of depicting him in performance or engaged in an intimate tête-à-tête with a lady, the artist shows Thibaut fully armored on horseback, wielding a sword. Knights were expected to speak well and banter in the company of ladies and courtiers, but the bond with their lord was essentially military. Nonnoble trouvères and even professional singers could sing in court and chat up ladies, but only aristocratic knights owned armor, horses, and a sword. The compiler of 12615 clearly

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(1995, 495). For a more complete analysis of Thibaut's debate songs in their manuscript context, see O'SULLIVAN, forthcoming. GALLY 1987 discusses the thematic overlap between Thibaut's debate songs and his love songs, while GALLY 2004 explores the genre in detail as it developed in Arras.

8. HUOT 1987, 53–64 provides a useful overview of trouvère iconography in medieval *chansonniers*.

9. Other manuscripts from the early years of Thibaut's distribution might not transmit as many songs as MSS *KNX* do, but his role is undeniably significant. MSS Arras, Bibliothèque Municipale 657 (trouvère MS *A*) and Rome, BAV Reg. Christ. 1490 (trouvère MS *a*), open with smaller collections of Thibaut's work, which still endow the collections with *auctoritas*: by paying homage to the king and trouvère.

wishes to strike an unmistakably aristocratic note on the first charta of his collection.[10]

The compiler of 12615 divides his 55-song collection into two groupings of 27 songs with Thibaut's *lai lyrique* at the center. The compiler retains the same five-song sequence used by previous compilers to showcase Thibaut's generic diversity; however, here it finds itself slightly displaced. Table 2 lists the songs in the first half of the Thibaut section of 12615 by RS number, incipit, and genre.

Table 2. First half of Thibaut section of 12615 [with genre noted, if not a love song, and initial five-song sequence of other manuscripts shaded]

RS no.	Incipit	
1516	*Dame, li vostres fins amis*	
1800	*Je ne puis pas bien metre en nonchaloir*	
996	*Pour çou se d'amer me duel*	
1268	**Amours me fait commencier**	
6	**Signour, saciés ki or ne s'en ira**	**[crusade song]**
342	**J'aloie l'autre ier errant**	**[pastourelle]**
1397	**En chantant voel ma dolour descouvrir**	
339	**L'autre nuit en mon dormant**	**[debate song]**
1620	*Contre le tans ki devise*	
1865	*Pour froidure ne pour yver felon*	
237	*Pour conforter ma pesance*	
1521	*A envis sent mal ki ne l'a apris*	
1467	*De ma dame souvenir*	
1596	*Chançon ferai, que talans m'en est pris*	
906	*Tout autresi con fraint nois et ivers*	
884	*Nus hom ne puet ami reconforter*	
714	*Douce dame, tout autre pensement*	
1002	*Une chançon encor voil*	
2126	*De grant joie me sui tous esmeüs*	
315	*Je ne voi mais nului qui geut ne chant*	
523	*Pour mal tans ne pour gelee*	
757	*Dame, ensi est k'il m'en covient aler*	[crusade song]
808	*De novel m'estuet chanter*	
1469	*Li dols pensers et li dols sovenirs*	

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10. Perhaps a similar warlike illustration appeared in MS M, but most miniatures in that manuscript have been excised. See Haines 2013 for a complete overview of the manuscript's compilation.

275	*De tous maus n'est nus plaisans*
1476	*Chanter m'estuet ke ne m'en puis tenir*
360	*Li rosignols chante tant*

The five-song sequence that opens other manuscripts is indeed here in 12615, but it comes after a short sequence of love songs and is then followed by a longer sequence of love songs. Clearly, the compiler wishes to highlight first and foremost Thibaut's love songs. Moreover, if another crusade song, "Dame, ensi est k'il m'en covient aler" (RS 757) finds its way into this section, it is a song that focuses not on smiting the infidel, but rather on the crusader's sorrow upon leaving his beloved. It is very much like a love song.

The choice of putting Thibaut's *lai lyrique*, RS 84, "Comencerai a faire un lai", at the center of the collection obviously derives from its highly complex musical character. That character manifests itself visually on the page as the reader turns from the rubric on the bottom of [c. 9]*v* to the song itself on [c. 10]*r*. Instead of musical notation covering a portion of the page followed by text only, here musical staves (empty, however, as the musical scribe did not finish notating the collection) completely fills the space of the *charta*. Its insertion here creates a pause between the first section that accentuates Thibaut's love songs and the second half of Thibaut's *oeuvre*.

The second 27-song sequence recalls the *compilatio* of earlier manuscripts, as it clusters together love songs and debates (Table 3).

Table 3. Songs from second part of Thibaut section of 12615 listed by genre and with debate song clusters in blue and love song clusters in red

RS no.	Incipit	Genre
84	*Comencerai a faire .i. lai*	*Lai lyrique*
741	*Mi grant desir et tuit mi grief torment*	Love song
1878	*Robert, vees de Perron*	Debate song[11]
1666	*Boins rois Thiebaut, sire, conselliés moi*	Debate song
294	*Bauduin, il sont doi amant*	Debate song
332	*Une chose, Bauduin, vous demanc*	Debate song

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11. Modern scholars often distinguish between two types of debate songs: the *jeu-parti* vs. the *débat. The former designates a song in which the initiator poses an either/or question to his or her debate partner, and that partner is free to choose one side over the other. The initiator takes up the other position. In the débat, the form is more free and the question can be open-ended rather than an either/or proposition. For early Old French poets like Thibaut, it does not seem as though the distinction held very hard or fast, so I choose to call all of these dialogic pieces "debate songs".*

1152	*Au tans plain de felonie*	Satirical song
906	*Tout autresi com l'ente fet fait venir*	Love song
1410	*Mauvais arbres ne puet florir*	Religious song
2075	***Ausi com unicorne sui***	**Love song**
1727	***Dame, on dist ke on muert bien de joie***	**Love song**
2095	***Qui plus aime, plus endure***	**Love song**
1843	*De grant travaill et de petit desploit*	Satirical song
529	*L'autrier par la matinée*	Pastourelle
1181	*Dou tres douc non a la virge Marie*	Religious song
2032	*Les douces dolours*	Love song
335	*Dame, merci, une riens vous demanc*	Debate song
273	*Dieus est ensi come li pelicans*	Satirical song
1440	***Bien me quidoie partir***	**Love song**
407	***De fine amor vient seance et biauté***	**Love song**
510	***Une dolors enossée***	**Love song**
324	***Foille ne flors ne vaut rien en chantant***	**Love song**
1475	***De chanter ne me puis tenir***	**Love song**
334	***Phelippe, je vous demanc (Dieu ami)***	**Debate song**
333	***Phelippe, je vous demanc (K'est devenue)***	**Debate song**
1111	***Par Dieu, sire de Champaigne et de Brie***	**Debate song**
1097	***Quens, je vous parc .i. gieu par ahaitie***	**Debate song**
1185	***Sire, ne me celés mie***	**Debate song**

As in MSS *KMtNX*, both generic identity and diversity are accentu-
ated. Love songs and debate songs are clustered together and, among these
groupings, we find satirical songs, religious songs, and a *pastourelle*. The
compiler of 12615 thereby follows in the footsteps of earlier compilers, but
he reserves that strategy for the second half of his collection. As a result,
the association between love songs and debate songs is even more keenly
felt than in earlier collections in which these clusters are spaced farther
apart.

To summarize, the compiler of 12615 places his codex on a firm aristo-
cratic foundation by reshaping the traditional Thibaut collection in impor-
tant ways. He keeps but displaces the opening sequence of earlier compilers
in order to assert the primacy of the love song, the most aristocratic of trou-
vère genres, which is in keeping with the opening illustration of Thibaut
on horseback, that is, a most aristocratic of poses. Using the *lai* as a signifi-
cant divider in the collection, the compiler displays Thibaut's generic range
in the second half of the collection by using a compilational strategy that
previous compilers use over their entire collections. The principle—the

clustering of love songs and debate songs — shows that Thibaut himself moved beyond the *grant chant courtois* and moved lyric in new directions, that the poets of Arras favored. The foundation now laid, the compiler is ready to erect his Artesian superstructure upon it.

Building upon Thibaut to Establish Artesian *Auctoritas*

In the subsequent gatherings of the *chansonnier* section, the compiler carefully observes the same techniques of *mise en page* so as to associate Thibaut's lyric *oeuvre* visually with subsequent poets' songs. For example, on the first charta of this section, c. 23r, attributions to the composer are in red; initials are decorated exactly the same way; songs are transcribed in a single-column format; and musical notation (or empty staves) accompany the texts of the first stanza with the rest of the text added below. The visual continuity from the previous section already endows the composition of these poets with authority: they follow Thibaut's poetic precedent and they are transcribed in ways to point to that sense of tradition.

Small but significant variations, however, are already working their way into this part of the collection. In the Thibaut section, it is always the same composer, even though the rubricator consistently notes "li rois de Navarre" before each and every song. Already on the first charta of the second section, the reader encounters the names of two trouvères: Jean de Braine and Colart le Boutellier. Over the course of the following chartae, the names of dozens of trouvères appear, and so already, the reader encounters not numerous works of one poet, but works of numerous poets. Second, just as the compiler in the second half of the Thibaut section freely mixed established aristocratic genres with examples from newer, less noble forms, the compiler now quietly mixes aristocratic poets like Jean de Braine, Count of Mâcon and Vienne, with less noble members of the poetic world: Colart le Boutellier may have come from a family of lesser nobility or from the Arras bourgeoisie (Karp 2001: 92). The number of nonnoble Artesian trouvères increases over this part of the *chansonnier*: we find works, mostly love songs and debate songs, by Guillaume le Vinier, Moniot d'Arras, and dozens of others, even one referred to simply as the Vilains d'Arras (c. 59v).

Just as Thibaut's *lai lyrique* divides his works into two parts, an entire section of *lais lyriques* comes towards the center of this part of the codex. On c. 61v, at the bottom of the page, the reader encounters a rubric: "Ci Commencent li lai Ernoul le Vielle de Gastinois et cis est de Nostre Dame". Upon turning his gaze on c. 62r, the reader is immediately struck by the

same impression of musical complexity encountered with Thibaut's *lai*. Whereas Thibaut's *lai* occupies only one full charta, Ernoul's *lai* goes on for several chartae (until c. 63*v*), and Ernoul's is not the only *lai* in this section: in fact, the following chartae contain "Li lais du kievrefoel", "Li lais de le [sic] rose", "Li lais d'Aelis", "Le lais des amans", and "Li lais des puceles". Ever faithful to the medieval principle of incremental variations, the compiler even takes the step to include two *lais* in Occitan: "Markiol" (c. 72*r*) and "Nompar" (c. 74*r*). The symmetry is not as neat as it was in the Thibaut sections — 27 songs, 1 *lai*, 27 songs — but the principle is the same: cc. 23–61 transmit trouvère songs, cc. 61*v*–76*v* are filled with *lais*, and then in cc. 76*v*–176*v* another collection of trouvère songs is transcribed.

After devoting 180 *chartae* to establish a pattern that alternates songs with *lais*, the compiler takes another small, innovative step when he inserts a collection of 98 vernacular motets on cc. 179r–197r.[12] The motet is a polyphonic form, requiring mensural notation in order to coordinate two or more voices. Yet, motets resemble trouvère songs and *lais* in terms of melodic range and contour, and they share similar themes and motifs, and both interweave refrains — often the same ones — into their textual fabric.[13] The inclusion of motets is not so great a leap as it would appear at first blush, and, once again, page layout aids the reader to make connections between these polyphonic compositions and the monody that precedes. The *mise en page* of the motets resembles that of the *lai*: the same initials and decoration adorn the page, and it is only the addition of the tenor, discretely added at the end of the upper voices that sets it apart visually from many of the *lais*. While most motets focus on love, others help maintain our focus trained on Arras. The motet on c. 180r gives us for the first time a particularly colorful glimpse of Artesian life:

> Hare! hare! hie!
> Goudalier ont fait awan
> D'Arras Escoterie
> Saint Andrie!
> Hare! hare! godeman
> Et hare! druerie,

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12. See Raynaud 1881, 68–91 for an early edition of most motets of this manuscript comes. A more up to date list comes in the DIAMM description. Transcriptions are taken from the manuscript itself, and translations are my own.

13. See Everist 2004 for a complete study of the vernacular motet of thirteenth-century France, and especially 54–66 on refrains in motets.

Caritate crie;
Pour sainte Marie
Faites nous demie
De poumon et de fie!
Honie soit tel vie;
Mais le vin sour lie
Ne mespris je mie.
Or bevons a hie
De cest boin vin d'awan.

[Hooray! hooray! Hee hee!
Brewmasters have now made
a playground of Arras,
by Saint Andrew!
Hooray! hooray! Good man,
and hooray! Carousing,
Cry charity;
By Saint Mary
Should you do it with only half of
your breath and faith,
You should be ashamed!
But wine aged on the lees
I don't shun at all.
Now let's drink it quick
This good new wine.]

The poets of the preceding sections, though they hail from Arras, fol-
lowed in the footsteps of their noble forbears by maintaining the lofty reg-
ister of the *grant chant courtois*. Here, for the first time, we get an image of
the jubilant tavern life for which Arras was so famed.[14] But it is only the
first taste of the local color that would become part of the manuscript's
content.

The Artesian tone of the manuscript becomes more acute with the sec-
tion that begins on c. 197r. On these *chartae*, a series of texts that openly
thematize life in Arras appear. Literary historians find in them a veritable
treasure trove of proper names and information on local customs and social

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14. The tavern as a locus of action in Artesian plays and texts is well documented.
    See Symes 2007, especially chapter 1 on the *Jeu de Saint Nicolas*, for discussions
    and a complete bibliography.

debates. Berger edits the texts in their historical and literary context and notes how they are explicitly linked to the preceding motets: "Ces poèmes, dont le premier semble se rattacher à ce qui précède puisqu'il célèbre les *motets* d'Arras, forment un ensemble cohérent par leur origine et leur objet" (Berger 1981, 18). In point of fact, the motet section concludes in the top third of <u>c. 197</u>r, and the first piece, *Arras est escole de tous biens entendre* (RS 630) follows immediately in the same hand, with staffs for melody, and the same page decoration. So while the first Artesian piece to which Berger alludes makes mention of the motets of Arras, they also find themselves in physical proximity on the page. Table 4 lists the compositions of this section:

Table 4. List of songs in the "Artesian section" of Paris, BnF French 12615 (cc. 197r–216r)

Incipit	RS# or Dit
1. *Arras est escole de tous biens entendre*	RS 630
2. *De canter ne me puis tenir*	RS 1474
3. *Arras ki ja fus*	RS 2127
4. *Certes c'est laide cose*	RS 1938
5. *Il n'est miracle ki rataigne*	Dit
6. *Signeur, je vif de trufoier*	Dit
7. *Bien ait marïages ounis*	Dit
8. *Quant envïex son voisin voit*	Dit
9. *Rikes hom viex, trop covoitex*	Dit
10. *Nostre sires li rois poissans*	Dit
11. *Pis ne puet nus estre emboés*	Dit
12. *Li sains recorde et velt prover*	Dit
13. *E! Arras, vile*	RS 1537
14. *Avoirs resanle le piloke*	Dit
15. *Signor, li sains recorde, et si est verités*	Dit
16. *Quant menestreus es lius repaire*	Dit
17. *Signor, noveles sont venues*	Dit
18. *De l'empereur, de l'apostole*	Dit
19. *Biau signeur, je ne sui ne sorciers ne devins*	Dit
20. *Li Camus, qui est nés d'Arras*	Dit
21. *Ki donroit .V. cens mars por Diu*	Dit
22. *Leurens Wagons a en covent*	Dit
23. *Siggeur, ore scoutés, que Dex vos sot amis*	Dit
24. *Au cuer trop de duel et d'ire ai*	Dit

The first four pieces directly address the literary and cultural reputation of Arras. The first piece, in fact, brags that God himself, seeking relief from sickness and worry, descends to Arras, calls the Prince du Puy and the poets around himself, and finds solace in their erudition. The second piece contains perhaps a nod to Thibaut de Champagne through its use of the same incipit as Thibaut's song (RS 1475) but rather than maintain a courtly register, the singer proceeds to decry the oppressive taxes and duties from which many suffer in Arras. The last two songs of this section prolong the critical tone: *Arras ke ja fus* laments how far the city has fallen from its once lofty apogee, and *Certes c'est laide cose*, though lighter in tone — it admonishes the old to leave love to the young, lest they appear foolish — remains moralistic enough to not clash too harshly with those songs that come before.

Perhaps the boldest move in terms of layout comes in the choice of a scribe or compiler to change abruptly from a single-column format to a double-column format on <u>c. 199</u>*r* when moving from lyric to narrative verse when presenting the first *dit* of the collection, *Il n'est miracle ki rataigne*. If the format switch is abrupt, it is important to keep in mind that the compiler takes such a step only after nearly 200 of carefully coordinated chartae in terms of *mise en page*, and this despite changes in poetic form, genre, and poets' background. The choice to put song and *dit* on the same page marks just another incremental step taken by the compiler. Moreover, the stark contrast in format on this particular charta economically signals differences in poetic form — and thus the diverse poetic life of Arras — while it establishes a solid link between song and spoken poetry because they are thematically so similar. The *dits* are all concerned with Artesian life: some tell of the tavern and its jolly company, recalling the motets of the preceding section, while others discuss the poetic *puys* and *confréries* of the region and still others delve into local politics and how échevins and other local officials are taxing members of the community too much.[15]

As if to balance out this rather disruptive change of layout in the *mise en page*, another song, RS 1537, *E! Arras, vile*, is written on <u>c. 204</u>*r* in the midst of these narrative poems in the two-column format that has been used up until now only for *dits*. The compiler's choice recalls earlier moments where *lais* were interpolated among songs but made to conform to the page through layout techniques. Just as sequences of songs followed those *lais*, this section is filled out with other *dits* in the two-column format, so as to

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15. A complete overview of the city and social structures of Arras can be found in Berger 1981, 25–88.

bring a sense of order and regularity where heterogeneity is most marked. As the section closes with a topical piece on the cultural and political situation in which Arras finds itself that Berger esteems above all other texts in the section (1981, 251). The final verses, on c. 216r, strike bitter tone, exclaiming that Arras has fallen, according to the author, on hard times: "Ore est li clapoire effondree/ Dont Arras est en le cendree" (239–40) [Now is the cage collapsed and Arras lies among cinders]. Although thoroughly pessimistic in tone, the final gesture rings with a finality, and in a way, the reader has completed the long journey from the courtly halls of famed aristocratic palaces to the urban landscape of Arras with its taverns, public squares, and counting houses.

Securing Artesian *Auctoritas* Through Expansion of 12615

The manuscript likely once ended there, and someone later decided to add Robert le Clerc's *Vers de la mort*.[16] Codicological and paleographic evidence points to a different workshop: the *Vers* begin on a new quire and also in a double-column format, but the *Vers* section is ruled at 39 verses per column, rather than the 36 per column in the narrative portion of the foregoing Artesian section. The hand is new to the codex: it is smaller and more angular. Finally, the decoration, especially the capitals, is different: for example, on the first charta of the poem, c. 218r, a large colored initial that opens the poem recalls the decoration of the preceding sections, but it is not identical, and then a series of smaller and more simple gold or blue capitals mark the opening of each subsequent stanza. Whether or not the section was purposely made for attachment to 12615 cannot be known: "Tout ce qu'on peut dire c'est que les deux premières [sections] se trouvaient jointes au plus tard dans le courant du 15e siècle, quand un amateur de poésie s'est employé à combler les vides des f°s 20–21, 177, 222–223" (Berger 1981, 19). Moreover, if the two sections were separate when someone decided to interpolate those songs in the fifteenth century and then bind them together or if they were already bound together when the late additions were made, we cannot know. The current binding dates from at least 1742 when Pierre-Alexandre Levesque de la Ravallière consulted

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16. See Berger and Brasseur 2009 for a recent and complete critical edition of Robert's text.

the codex in the library of Duke Adrien-Maurice de Noailles (Berger 1981, 19).

The author's biographical background and the poem's theme suggest the poem was not added by chance: whoever decided to add these gatherings obviously knew what the preceding sections contained. For one, Robert le Clerc was Artesian, so he is right at home in a collection of works praising the renowned citizens and institutions of that city. For another, a poem on death by an Artesian poet makes for a fitting ending to the collection, Inspired by Hélimont's work of the same title, Robert, with the *Vers*, elevates the moral tone of the previous section: rather than continue in the same sardonic vein of the other pieces, Robert offers a long meditation on death and muses on the meaning of life as well as the duty of all people to lead a good life in anticipation for the event and God's judgment. The poem is 3744 octosyllables broken into 312 12-verse stanzas in the form known as the *strophe héliandienne*. In the present manuscript, although only 54 stanzas are extant here. All signs point to the copy to be intended for completion, since the text ends towards the middle of the left column on c. 222r without any sign of an *explicit* or other sign of the copyist having finished his work.

Although the manuscript seems to come to an adequate close with the addition of Robert's text, someone adjoined yet another section. Did that someone believe that no compendium of Artesian poetry could be complete without including Adam de la Halle, the Artesian rock star of the late thirteenth century? Nowhere else in the collection does any of Adam's work appear. If 12615 provides an apt demonstration of how varied literary production was in Arras, Adam de la Halle provides ample testimony to the wide range of literary creation in one Artesian. Adam composed monophonic songs, polyphonic motets, plays, and narrative poems.[17] One manuscript, Paris, BnF fr. 25566 (trouvère MS *W*) includes almost all of Adam's attributed works in a specific order, which is glimpsed easily in a table of contents on c.1r.[18] Adam's wide poetry range would seem like a natural fit for a collection that displays for all the world the thematic, generic, and poetic diversity engendered in the cultural and literary center of Arras.

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17. See Badel 1995 for a recent critical edition as well as his bibliography for a list of past editions of Adam's work (35).

18. The discussion in Huot 1987, 64–74 remains one of the clearest and succinct of studies of Adam in this manuscript. The 1995 Badel edition is based on the text and *compilatio* of the manuscript, and so readers can consult that edition in order to derive an aesthetic feel as the reader moves from section to section and genre to genre.

As with the *Vers de la Mort* gatherings, we cannot know exactly when the Adam section was added. Scholars generally agree that the section is written in a fourteenth-century hand, and obviously the musical scribe failed to complete his work: music survives for the first songs, then there are only musical staffs, and then finally, there is only space left for staffs and notation (Berger 1981, 18). Most remarkable about the section is its single-column format, which, in the context of the codex, harkens the reader back to the long *chansonnier* section. Furthermore, even though the decoration differs from the earlier *chansonnier* gatherings, there are enough similarities between the two to make a visual rapprochement inevitable. Songs begin with large initials that are pen-flourished and alternate in color, though they alternate red and blue, not blue and gilt as in earlier sections.

What also reminds us of the earlier *chansonnier* section, specifically, the Thibaut section, is that 12615 preserves only Adam's love songs, specifically, 33 of 36 extant love songs (including two love songs to the Virgin Mary).[19] The rubric on c. 224r is quite specific as it reads, "Les chancons Adam li Bocus". Table 5 lists all of Adam's songs in 12615.

Table 5. Order of Adam de la Halle love songs in 12615, collated with RS # and position in Badel 1995 edition

Incipit where ♫ = music extant; [≡] = musical staff without notation; (to) = text only 1995	RS #	# in Badel
Or voi je bien qu'il souvient ♫	1247	26
Li jolis maus que je senc ne doit mie ♫	1186	2
Puis que je sui de l'amoureuse loi ♫	1661	27
Au repairier en la douce contree ♫	500	14
On demande mout souvent qu'est amours ♫	2024	13
Tant me plaist vivre en amoureus dangier ♫	1273	22
Je n'ai autre retenance ♫	248	3
Il ne muet pas de sans celui qui plaint ♫	152	4
Helas il n'est mais nus qui aint ♫	149	5
On me deffent que mon cuer pas ne croie ♫	1711	7
Pour quoi se plaint s'amours nus ♫	2128	6
Ki a droit veut amour servir ♫	1458	18
D'amoureus cuer weuil chanter [≡]	833	1

19. The three songs missing from MS *T* are RS 658, *Amours m'ont si doucement*; RS 1577, *De tant com plus aproime mon païs*; and RS 1599, *Onkes nus hom ne fu pris*.

Douz est li maus qui met la gent en voie [≡]	1771	30
Se li maus qu'amours envoie [≡]	1715	29
Helas il n'est mes ainz qui n'aint plus [≡]	148	6
Je sent en moi l'amour renouveler [≡]	888	8
Li douz maus mi renouvelle [≡]	612	10
Li maux d'amer me plaist mieus a sentir [≡]	1454	9
Merci amour de la douce doulour [≡]	1973	13
De chanter ai volenté curieuse [≡]	1018	16
Ma douce dame et amours [≡]	2025	17
Merveille est quel talent j'ai [≡][20]	52	19
Sans espoir d'avoir secours [≡]	2038	20
Je ne chant pas revelauz de merchi [≡]	1060	21
Dame vos hom vous estrine [≡]	1383	23
Mout plus se paine amours de moi esprendre (to)	632	24
Pour ce se je n'ai esté (to)	432	25
De cuer pensieu et desirrant (to)	336	32
Amours ne me veut ouir (to)	1438	31
Grant deduit a et savoureuse vie (to)	1237	35[21]
Qui a pucele ou dame amee (to)	495	34
Glorieuse vierge Marie (to)	1180	28

As the order found in Paris, BnF fr. 25566 served as the base manuscript for BADEL 1995, it is clear to see that the compiler of the 12615 section drew on a different tradition. The placement of the two Marian songs at the end of the gathering suggests a deliberate order to the songs, but it is very different from 25566, which also order Adam's *oeuvre* by genre. Perhaps the original idea was to append a collection of the Artesian's entire *oeuvre* to 12615.

Another hypothesis, as unknowable as it is enticing, presents itself: a later compiler decided to append a collection of Adam's love songs and only his love songs to the collection because, while it seems to reopen a collection that Robert's *Vers* bring to a close, the Adam collection brings a different kind of closure. It completes the circle of *auctoritas*. In both content and format, we have come full circle: collections of traditional love

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20. There is an empty musical stave at the bottom on 229v, but then at the top of 230r, the rest of the stanza is transcribed without reserving space for musical staves.
21. RS 1237 does not survive in MS W, Badel's base manuscript, and he takes his readings from 12615.

songs function like bookends to 12615. The first, Thibaut's collection, represented something of an apogee in Old French poetry — after all, Dante himself lauded Thibaut in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (c. 1302–1305) as the best representative of the trouvère art. Adam's love-song collection is an homage, an appeal to a tradition upon which his own *oeuvre* is founded, but to which it is not bound. By the time these love songs were written down in the fourteenth century and added to 12615, Adam embodied a new *auctoritas* in medieval poetry. Upon Adam's expertise luminaries like Guillaume de Machaut and the proponents of the *Ars Nova* would take Old French poetry to new heights in that century and beyond.

<div style="text-align: right">The University of Mississippi</div>

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Manuscripts

A   Arras, Bibl. Mun. 657
K   Paris, Arsenal 5198
Mt   Paris, BnF fr. 844 (later interpolated section on cc.
N   Paris, BnF fr. 845
V   Paris, BnF fr. 24406
W   Paris, BnF fr. 25566
X   Paris, BnF NAF 1050
a   Rome, BAV Reg. Lat. 1490