



Nafré sui [je], mais encor ne puis taire

(RS 190a)

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Philippe de Novare

*C'est la rime que sire Phelippe de Nevair fist quant
il fu nafré devant le chasteau de Deudamors, au
siege:*

I

Nafré sui [je], mais encor ne puis taire
de dan Renart et (de) s'autre compaignie,
qui pour luy est afamee et honie,
4 dedens Maucrois, ou il maint et repaire.
Mais se Renart a de son cors paour
que ont mesfait li autre vavassour
et ly sergent? Por quoi se laissent vendre?
8 Come bricons leur fait aucuns atendre.

II

Renart [en] sait plus de traïson faire
que Guenelon, dont France fu traïe.
A son eus a la tainere farsie.
12 Là seüs est pour maistrier la terre
et de la pais les chufle chascun jor.
Bien est honis qui sert tel traïtor:
pour luy servir le fait l'on sa hors pendre,
16 et il les fait là dedens les saus prendre.

*This is the rhyme which Sir Philippe de Novare
composed when he was wounded outside the castle
of Dieudamour, during the siege:*

I

I am wounded, but still I cannot be silent
concerning Sir Renart and the rest of his company,
which because of him is starving and dishonoured
inside Maupertuis, where he is taking refuge. But if
Renart is in fear for his life, what harm have the
other vavassors and the sergeants done? Why are
they allowing themselves to be sold? Someone is
keeping them waiting [for reinforcements] like
fools.

II

Renart knows more about treachery than Ganelon,
who betrayed France. He has stuffed his den full of
food: he has instated himself there to rule the land
and dupes them every day concerning peace.
Anyone who serves such a traitor is much
dishonoured: so he can be served he has him
hanged (risk his life fighting) here outside, but he
has those (the *baillis*?) flee inside.

Notes

- 1 Paris – Mas Latrie’s suppletion has been accepted by Kohler and Melani.
- 2 The author continues to identify the bailiff Aimery Barlais with the fox of the *Roman de Renart*.
- 4 *Maucreus* (or *Maupertuis*) is the fox’s refuge in the *Roman de Renart*.
- 5-7 These lines reveal Philippe de Novare’s strategy and anticipate the second stanza. His song serves on the one hand to let it be known that he is still alive, and on the other to insinuate doubts into the minds of the bailiff’s men that they have been exploited by their leaders for the sake of a selfish project that will bring them no benefit.
- 10 Aimery Barlais, always indicated by the satirical pseudonym *Renart*, and also compared with Ganelon, the more classical type of traitor in French literature.
- 13 The verb *chufler* (or *chifler* < sibilare or sifilare, probably via the form *sufilare) means “to mock, ridicule”.
- 16 See the commentary of Melani 1994, p. 290 n. 252. I understand these lines a little differently from Melani: the personal pronouns of v. 16 may refer to the bailiffs rather than those serving them; hence while the men are constrained to fight outside, risking their lives, the bailiffs take refuge swiftly inside the castle (see vv. 34-35 of RS 1990a and the relevant comment). For the expression *prendre un saut* in the sense of “to flee” see *TL*, 9, 223, 38-40 and *Renart* (Martin) XXIII, 1679.

Text

Luca Barbieri, 2014.

Mss.

(2). Turin, Biblioteca Reale, Varia 433, f. 39r (47r); Paris, BnF, n.a. fr. 6680 (modern copy of the Turin ms. made by Carlo Perrin and checked by Gaston Raynaud against the original), f. 47r. As usual it has been possible to follow the graphy and readings of the Turin ms., only correcting the hypometric vv. 1 and 9 and the hypermetric v. 2; the translation is that of Melani 1994 with a few modifications.

Versification and music

10a'b'b'a'ccd'd' (MW 1431,6 = Frank 577); 2 *coblas unissonans* ; rhyme a = -aire ; rhyme b = -ie ; rhyme c = -o(u)r ; rhyme d = -endre ; identical versification and rhymes in the “sirventes” RS 184a; one approximate rhyme in v. 12 (*terre* rhymes in -aire).

Previous editions

Raynaud 1887, 64; Paris – Mas Latrie 1906, 692; Kohler 1913, 39; Melani 1994, 126.

Analysis of the manuscript tradition

I follow the graphy and readings of the Turin ms., just correcting hypermetric lines (vv. 1, 22, 53) and a few minor scribal slips (vv. 4, 21, 53); the translation is that of Melani 1994 with a few modifications.

Historical context and dating

After the battle of Nicosia during the war for the control of Cyprus (14 July 1229; see the historical introductions to the Verse Letter and the song RS 184a), the five bailiffs fled with their men to castles in the uplands facing the northern coast: Aimery Barlais, Amaury of Bethsan and Hugh of Gibelet withdrew to Dieudamour (St. Hilarion), while Gauvain of Chenichy and his men went to Kantara. The author does not mention William of Rivet, who according to Bustrone withdrew to Buffavento (Mas Latrie 1884, p. 78). After the peace of Kyrenia, Philippe de Novare followed John of Ibelin and took part in the siege of the castle of Dieudamour, which he himself claims to have lasted about a year (see § 53, 9 of the chronicle), and on that occasion he was wounded in the arm (§ 53, 10-12); the *Estoire de Eracles* states more precisely that the siege lasted ten months (*Eracles* XXXIII, 11, p. 377). The song, written immediately after Philippe was wounded, is therefore likely to have been composed between the second half of July 1229 and the end of the siege in May-June 1230.