DOON AND *TYOLET*

TWO OLD FRENCH NARRATIVE LAYS

Edited and translated by

Glyn S. Burgess and Leslie C. Brook

Liverpool Online Series
Critical Editions of French Texts

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Timothy Unwin
Glyn S. Burgess

Series Editors

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General Introduction

Both *Doon* and *Tyolet* have come down to us in one version only, and in a single manuscript: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. fr. 1104. This manuscript contains a collection of twenty-four lays, presented in no discernible order; nine of them are lays normally attributed to Marie de France, most of the remainder being anonymous. *Tyolet* is the fourth lay in the sequence (f. 15v-20r), *Doon* the tenth (f. 33r-34v). The manuscript is written principally in Francien, the dialect which is the forerunner of Modern French, with some inherited Picard and Norman elements. It dates from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century, and all the lays appear to have been copied by a single scribe.[1]

The two poems chosen here for edition, translation and study form a sequel to our earlier edition of *Trot*, *Lecheor* and *Nabaret* in the same Online series. Although *Doon* and *Tyolet* are very different in many ways, they are linked by a quest on the part of their eponymous heroes for fulfilment through marriage. Having proved their exceptional abilities in the tests set for them (in both cases by a woman), the heroes achieve personal happiness and will seemingly become successful rulers of their respective domains. Society will benefit from the stability their success establishes, and in the case of Doon there is already a son to succeed him.[2] As for the female protagonists who set the marriage tests, the one initially does not want a husband (*Doon*), the other actively comes to court seeking one (*Tyolet*). There is also a further structural link between the two poems: from the perspective of the modern critic both can be clearly divided into two

[1] For a fuller account of the manuscript and its contents, see Gaston Paris, 'Lais inédits de *Tyolet*, de *Doon*, du *Lecheor* et du *Tydorel*', pp. 32-33, and Prudence M.O'H. Tobin, *Les Lais anonymes des XII^e^ et XIII^e^ siècles*, pp. 11-12. For full details of works cited, see the Bibliography.

[2] For a brief account of the nature and classification of the Old French anonymous lays, see the General Introduction to our edition and translation of *Trot*, *Lecheor* and *Nabaret*. On the question of the origin of the lay as a genre, see the Introduction to *Tyolet* below, pp. 52-53.

parts. This has led Donovan and others, unjustly in our view, to criticise the authors for lack of unity, or for amalgamating unskilfully two originally separate stories.[3]

Both poems have been edited afresh from the manuscript. This has enabled us either to make adjustments to the published editions or to confirm their readings. We have edited the texts conservatively, with scrupulous attention to spelling and a consistent resolution of scribal abbreviations. Particular care has been taken with the resolution of initial *q*, which has been transcribed as *qu* where there is a discernible bar over the letter, and left as *q* where there is not (compare, for example, *Doon*, vv. 86 and 87). Roman numerals have been left as such, thereby avoiding the need to guess at an appropriate spelling. Following other editors, hypometric lines have been modified in order to produce complete octosyllabics. For metrical reasons, too, the diaeresis has been used in some diphthongs, but we have tried to avoid overusing it, and in general have taken account of the recommendations concerning the use of accents found in *Romania*, 52 (1926), 243-49. In conformity with convention, any letters, syllables or words added have been supplied in square brackets, while any deleted letters have been placed in round brackets. Attention has been drawn in the Notes to readings of previous editions only where they offer alternative interpretations. An asterisk in the Old French text indicates that there is a rejected reading, and in the translations that there is a note on the relevant line or lines. The Old French texts have been translated line by line, using straightforward modern English and maintaining, as far as possible, the precise wording of the original. But Old French authors move back and forth repeatedly between present and past tenses; as this can appear awkward in English, the texts have been translated here using the past tense.

[3] Mortimer J. Donovan, *The Breton Lay: A Guide to Varieties*, pp. 73, 80. See below p. 26, n.36 and p. 72.

DOON

Introduction

Manuscript, Editions, Translations

The lay of *Doon* is preserved in a single manuscript: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. fr. 1104, f. 33r, col. 1 – 34v, col. 2. This manuscript, written largely in Francien with some Norman and Picard elements, dates from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. The lay of *Doon* was first edited by Gaston Paris in 1879 and, although it was edited by Peter Holmes for his 1952 University of Strasbourg thesis, it was not published again until 1976, when it was included by Prudence M.O'H. Tobin in her *Les Lais anonymes des XII^e^ et XIII^e^ siècles: édition critique de quelques lais bretons* (pp. 324-31).[4] Tobin's text was reprinted in 1984 by Walter Pagani with a facing Italian translation (pp. 260-75) and again in 1992 by Alexandre Micha with a facing Modern French translation (pp. 294-311). A Norse translation of the lay is found in the thirteenth-century *Strengleikar* collection (MS Uppsala, De la Gardie 4-7, pp. 51-54), edited in 1850 by Rudolph Keyser and Carl Unger (pp. 51-54) and again in 1979, with an English translation, by Robert Cook and Mattias Tveitane (pp. 150-57 – for a new translation by Andrew Hamer see below, pp. 44-47). *Doon* has also been translated into Modern French by Danielle Régnier-Bohler (1985, pp. 151-57), into Dutch by Ludo Jongen and Paul Verhuyck (1985, pp. 84-86) and into Spanish by Isabel brunssende Riquer (1987, pp. 119-24).

Date, Author

It is reasonable to assume that the lay of *Doon* was composed after the *Lais* of Marie de France, and a version of it must have existed before the *Strengleikar* collection was assembled. This collection is, however, hard to date; it was certainly composed after 1226 and no later than 1263, the date of the death of King Hákon Hákonarson who commissioned the translation (see Cook and Tveitane, pp. xiv-xv). Tobin (p. 320) dates the composition of *Doon* plausibly to the end of the twelfth or the first part of the

[4] We were not able to consult the University of Strasbourg thesis by Peter Holmes.

thirteenth century, but probably after 1200. The author does not name himself, but the geography of the poem, taken together with its Norman features and the fact that the *Strengleikar* collection appears to have been based on one or more Anglo-Norman manuscripts,[5] suggest that the author was writing somewhere in Britain. The story begins and ends in Scotland, and the test the lady imposes on her suitors involves a ride from Southampton to Edinburgh.[6] In v. 8 Edinburgh (Daneborc) is said to be 'in the north', which would seem to indicate that the author was aiming at an audience in the southern part of Britain. When news of this challenge reaches Brittany, it is said to travel to 'Brittany beyond the sea' ('En Bretaingne dela la mer', v. 67). Tobin (p. 320) expresses the view, based on the tone of the work, that the author was probably secular rather than clerical. Whether or not this is the case, he was certainly aware of other contemporary narratives dealing with themes similar to his own and also of the aspirations of the aristocratic society of his day.[7]

Outline of the Story

There was once a beautiful and courtly maiden living in Daneborc (Edinburgh); she had inherited this region, and her lands were not subject to any other lordship. The place in which she lived was called the Chastel as Puceles (Castle of Maidens), after her and her female companions. But her power made the maiden haughty, and thinking that marriage could be a form of servitude, she refused to take a husband from amongst the noblemen of the region. In the hope of avoiding marriage, she decreed that she would only marry a man who, for love of her, would ride from Southampton to Edinburgh in the course of a single day. A number of men from the region tried this and failed, but some succeeded, albeit arriving at the castle in a weary and worn-out state. They were then taken to a bedroom where a bed had been prepared in such a way that they died during the night; the chamberlains found them dead the next morning. This was the maiden's way of exacting revenge on her suitors.

[5] Forms of some personal names in the *Strengleikar* collection (Milun, Gurun, Ricar) suggest Norman or Anglo-Norman origin, while the cultural and political links between the courts of Henry III of England and Hákon Hákonarson of Norway are well known.

[6] See below for a discussion of the ride and the locations involved.

[7] 'Ce lai a été composé en Grande-Bretagne' (Gaston Paris, 'Lais inédits de *Tyolet*, de *Doon*, du *Lecheor* et du *Tydorel*', p. 37). Paris (*ibid.*) asks whether the lays he is publishing should be attributed to Marie de France, but fails to answer the question, except in the case of *Lecheor*, which, he says, could not be by Marie because of the 'expressions' it contains and its 'peintures déshonnêtes' (p. 39).

The news of all this reached a brave and courtly knight called Doon, who lived in Brittany. Possessed of a swift horse named Baiart and determined to make the attempt, he journeyed to Southampton, agreed a departure date with the lady and succeeded in reaching Edinburgh within the appointed day. When he was taken to the bedroom, he ordered firewood to be brought to him; instead of sleeping in the bed he bolted the door, made a fire and sat beside it. In the morning, he unbolted the door, lay down in the bed and slept. The chamberlains, expecting to find him dead, discovered him to be alive and in good spirits. The maiden, however, still refused to marry him and set him a second test: he had to ride in one day as far as a swan could fly. Thanks to his horse, Doon was again successful, and this time the maiden had no option but to agree to the marriage. The wedding took place and Doon became lord of the region.

The celebrations lasted for three days, but on the fourth day Doon told his wife that he intended to return to his own lands and informed her that she was pregnant with a son, who should be sent to be raised and educated by the King of France. Doon then departed, leaving his wife a gold ring which she was to pass on to her son. She duly gave birth to a son and at the appropriate time sent him to the King of France, who did indeed raise him, in due course dubbing him a knight. Constantly searching for tournaments to enhance his fame, the young boy became the most valiant knight in the land and was loved by everyone. On one occasion, he participated in a tournament at Mont-Saint-Michel, where his father was in the opposing ranks. Father and son eventually clashed and the youth defeated his father, wounding him seriously in the arm. Realising that the young man could be his son, Doon asked to see his hands and, recognising the ring, told him he was his father. He then went on to recount to him the difficulty he had experienced in winning the hand of his proud mother. Father and son were united amidst scenes of joy. They journeyed to Britain, where they discovered that the lady still loved her husband and greatly desired his return. She received Doon as her lord and lived happily ever after with him and her son.

Structure

The text can be divided into the following episodes:

1-6	Prologue
7-34	The maiden’s desire to avoid marriage; the test for the suitors
35-64	The murder of the successful suitors
65-100	Doon: his arrival in Britain and successful accomplishment of the test

101-28	Doon escapes death in the maiden's chamber
129-60	He accomplishes another test and marries the maiden
161-88	His departure and the prediction of the birth of a son
189-218	The son grows up, is raised in France and acquires fame as a knight
219-53	The father-son combat: Doon recognises his son
254-80	Father and son return to the mother; they all live happily ever after
281-86	Epilogue

As in the lays of Marie de France, and in most of the other extant narrative lays, the story is framed by a Prologue (6 lines) and an Epilogue (6 lines). The remaining 274 lines can be divided, as above, into nine sections, roughly equal in length. Alternatively, one can divide the poem into two principal sections: (i) Doon's winning of the maiden's hand (7-160); (ii) his departure, the father-son combat and the happy ending (161-280).

Sources

Scholars have been in no doubt that the father-son combat in *Doon* owes a great deal to a similar episode in Marie de France's *Milun*. In Marie's poem, Milun's son, born to a nobleman's daughter out of wedlock, was sent at birth to be brought up by her sister in Northumbria. When the boy reached a suitable age, his aunt told him what a fine knight his father was and handed him a ring and a letter, which had been given to her by the boy's mother to enable him to find his father. The young man travelled to Brittany where he displayed generosity, participated in tournaments and came into contact with powerful men ('La despendi e turneia, / As riches hummes s'acuinta', ed. by A. Ewert, vv. 323-24). So successful was he that news of his achievements reached the ears of Milun back in Britain. Milun decided to go to Brittany in order to do battle with this knight, who was known simply as Sanz Per. Once he had humiliated this knight, he would set out in search of his son.

Milun made his way to a tournament at Mont-Saint-Michel, where he fought very successfully, but not as well as Sanz Per who was acclaimed above all other contestants. Experiencing the mixed emotions of pleasure and envy ('Par mi tut ceo k'il l'enviot, / Mut li fu bel e mut li plot', vv. 413-14), Milun realised that the time had come for him to joust with the young man. He struck him hard, but broke his lance without unhorsing his opponent. The latter struck Milun in his turn and knocked him off his horse. But noticing Milun's beard and grey hair, the youth was upset by what he had done and took Milun's horse to him. Milun, however, was delighted at what had happened, for he had

recognised his ring on the boy's finger ('Al dei celui cunuit l'anel', v. 432). He then asked the boy for details concerning his upbringing, telling him that no knight had ever unhorsed him before ('"Unques pur coup de chevalier / Ne chaï mes de mun destrier"', vv. 443-44). Satisfied by the reply he received, Milun declared: '"Par fei, amis, tu es mi fiz"' (v. 474). The young man kissed his father and that night they lodged together amidst great joy ('En un ostel furent la nuit; / Asez eurent joie e deduit', vv. 487-88). Sanz Per took his father to his mother, now long since married, with the intention of killing her husband and bringing his parents together in marriage ('"Assemblerai vus e ma mere"', v. 500). But on the return journey they learned that the lady's husband was dead. In due course the son gave his mother to his father in marriage ('La mere a sun pere dona', v. 530). They lived happily ever after ('En grant bien e en [grant] duçur / Vesquirent puis e nuit e jur', vv. 531-32). The poem is completed by an Epilogue, in which we are told that the ancients composed a lay about the *amur* and the *bien* of Milun and his beloved (vv. 533-34).

If we compare this with what happens in *Doon*, we see that in the later stages of this lay the hero's son, having been knighted by the King of France, travels to tournaments in search of fame ('Il erra por tornoier, / Querant son pris et pres et loing', vv. 206-07; cf. *Milun*, v. 338, 'Ki passa mer pur [sun] pris querre').[8] Wanting to do battle with Bretons ('As Bretons se volt acointier', v. 216, cf. *Milun*, v. 324, 'As riches hummes s'acuinta'), he makes his way to a tournament at Mont-Saint-Michel, where he performs exceptionally well.[9] His father Doon is on the opposing side and envious of the young man's achievements ('Envie avoit du bien de lui', v. 223; cf. *Milun*, v. 344, 'E les biens de lui recunter', and v. 371 '[E] pur le bien de lui mustrer'). Father and son move swiftly towards each other and strike each other great blows. The son unhorses the father: 'Le filz a le pere abatu' (v. 226; cf. *Milun*, v. 421, 'Que jus del cheval l'abati'). Doon asks the youth to show him his hands and he recognises the ring on his finger: 'En son doit reconnut l'anel' (v. 248, cf. *Milun*. v. 432, 'Al dei celui cunuit l'anel'). He tells the boy that no one has ever unhorsed him before ('"Onques por coup a chevalier / Ne chaï mes

[8] In *Milun* we are told that Milun was 'first' at the Mont-Saint-Michel tournament ('Milun i est alé primers', v. 391) and in *Doon* that Doon's son always wanted to be 'first' whenever there was a challenge ('N'oï parler de nul besoing / Ne vosist estre li premiers', vv. 208-09). Both Milun's son and Doon's son gain a reputation for generosity (*Milun*, vv. 324-30, *Doon*, v. 201; cf. *Milun*, v. 380).

[9] The verb *s'acointier* can convey the notions of 'to meet', 'to make someone's acquaintance' or 'to clash with someone in battle'.

de mon destrier"', vv. 259-60; cf. *Milun*, vv. 443-44, '"Unques pur coup de chevalier / Ne chaï mes de mun destrier"'). He then informs him that he is his father: '"Vien moi besier, je sui ton pere"' (v. 263). Doon and his son retire to a lodging-house amidst great rejoicing: 'Merveilleuse joie menerent; / A .I. ostel ensemble alerent' (vv. 273-74, cf. *Milun*, v. 487, 'En un ostel furent la nuit'). The boy takes his father to his mother ('Li filz a le pere mené / A sa mere', vv. 276-77, cf. *Milun*, vv. 529-30, 'Lur fiz amdeus les assembla, / La mere a sun pere dona') and they live happily ever after ('Puis vesquirent a grant honor', v. 280, cf. *Milun*, v. 532, 'Vesquirent puis e nuit e jur'). This is followed directly by the Epilogue, in which we are told that the Bretons composed the tune for the lay, which tells of Doon, the horse, the son and the way in which Doon journeyed for the woman he loved (vv. 281-86). Marie de France ends by telling us that the ancients composed a lay about their love and happiness (vv. 533-34). [10]

The motif of a test aimed at the avoidance of marriage is found in another of the lays of Marie de France: *Les Deus Amanz*. Here the wife of the King of Pistre had died and the king did not want his daughter to marry, as she was a great comfort to him. He decreed that the man who won her hand would have to carry her up to the top of the nearby mountain; this, he thought, would prevent anyone from seeking his daughter's hand in marriage ('Cumença sei a purpenser / Cument s'en purrat delivrer / Que nul sa fille ne quesist', vv. 29-31). In *Doon* the lady's decree is the result of a similar desire for deliverance from an unwanted situation ('Par tant se cuidoit delivrer', v. 35). In both lays, when the news became known, a number of men make the attempt ('Asez plusurs s'i asaierent', *Deus Amanz*, v. 41; 'Plusor se mistrent en essai', *Doon*, v. 40). In the *Deus Amanz* no one was successful and they let the matter be: 'Iloec l'esteut laissier ester' (v. 46; cf. *Doon*, v. 36, 'Et cil la lessierent ester'). [11] In each case the scene is set for the emergence of an heroic figure, whose actions and achievements will make the lay what it is.

There is also a textual and thematic link, as Foulet pointed out (p. 46), between Guigemar's desire to marry only the lady who can undo the knot in his shirt, and the maiden from Edinburgh's desire to avoid marriage to a man who might enslave her:

[10] On the question of the influence of the lays of Marie de France on the anonymous lays, see Lucien Foulet, 'Marie de France et les lais bretons' (on *Doon* and *Milun*, see pp. 45-48).

[11] Note the use of the verb *remanoir* in the *Deus Amanz*, v. 47 ('Lung tens remist cele a doner') and *Doon*, v. 37 ('Mes ne pot remanoir ensi').

Femme voleient qu'il preisist,
Mes il del tut les escundist:
Ja ne prendra femme a nul jur,
Ne pur aveir ne pur amur,
S'ele ne peüst despleier
Sa chemise sanz depescer.
Par Breitaine veit la novele;
Il n'ad dame ne pucele
Ki n'i alast pur asaier. (*Guigemar*, vv. 645-53)

Seignor voloient qu'el preïst,
Mes el du tout les escundist.
Ja ne prendra, ce dit, seignor,
Se tant ne feïst por s'amor…
Plusurs se mistrent en essai…
Loing fu portee la novele
De l'orgueilleuse damoisele.
En Bretaingne dela la mer
L'oï .I. chevaler conter. (*Doon*, vv. 27-30, 40, 65-68)

Foulet (*ibid.*) thought that the passage in Guigemar might even be the point of departure for the lay of Doon, the author merely using, for the sake of variation, a different form of test.

The prophecy of the birth of a child is a motif found in both Doon and Marie de France's lay of Yonec. When the lady's lover in Yonec realised that he was fatally wounded, he told the lady that she would give birth to a son ('De lui est enceinte d'enfant, / Un fiz avra pruz e vaillant', vv. 327-28). Doon also tells his lady that she will have a child ('"Vos estesençainte de moi, / .I. filz avrez"', vv. 177-78). There is also another anonymous lay, Tydorel, in which the lady is told by a supernatural being that she will give birth to a child ('"De moi avrez .I. fiz molt bel, / Sel ferez nomer Tydorel. / Molt ert vaillanz e molt ert prouz"', vv. 113-15, cf. vv. 451-55).12

Themes and Characters

The principal thematic elements of the lay of *Doon* are: (i) the existence of a powerful woman who does everything she can to avoid marriage, (ii) the determination of the principal protagonist to win the maiden and her land, (iii) his departure soon after the wedding, (iv) the birth of a son, (v) the restoration of harmony thanks to the well-known

[12] Ed. by Prudence M.O'H. Tobin, *Les Lais anonymes des XII^e^ et XIII^e^ siècles*, pp. 207-26.

folklore motif of the father-son combat.[13] In other words, a proud woman is tamed, she suffers a lengthy period without the husband she had come to desire, and thanks to her son is finally reconciled with her husband and achieves happiness.

The lay is structured in such a way that the maiden controls the opening sections, then the control passes to her husband and finally to the son. The entire narrative is the product of wish-fulfilment. For women, it would have represented the female fantasy of being all-powerful, capable of defending a community (the maiden's skill as a ruler is shown by the absence of any threat to her community from a powerful adversary) and of imposing her will over her male contemporaries. She views marriage as potential slavery and hatches an initially successful plan to thwart the insistence of her entourage that she should take a husband. For men, the tale illustrates that skill and determination can win a powerful and beautiful wife (even one who lives in a different country), that female deviousness can be outwitted, that punishment can be meted out to a woman who wrongs a man, and that, given time, harmony and completion in life are achievable. In spite of the twists and turns of the plot, at the close of the narrative the community has a fine and happily married knight as its lord and an equally fine knight as its heir. No tale could have a more positive outcome for all concerned. The first section, the winning of the bride, comes to an end through a combination of Doon's skill and ingenuity, aided by his horse, whereas the outcome of the second section, involving the recognition of father and son and the marital reconciliation, is due to the son's extraordinary prowess, which neutralises the suffering which the parents have inflicted upon each other.[14] Within the poem harmony is created, destroyed and recreated.

(i) Realism and the *merveilleux*. The poem offers an effective balance of realistic and non-realistic elements. There is perhaps only one clearly supernatural element in the narrative: Doon's prophecy, within a few days of his marriage, of the birth of a son. This

[13] On the motif of the father-son combat, see Murray A. Potter, *Sohrab and Rustem, the Epic Theme of a Combat between Father and Son: A Study of its Genesis and Use in Literature and Popular Tradition* (London: Nutt, 1902), esp. pp. 46-48, and Johanna Witthoff, *Das Motif des Zweikampfes zwischen Vater und Sohn in der französischen Literatur* (Inaugural-Dissertation, Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Bonn; Nürnberg: Hilz, 1921); the influence of *Milun* on a number of Old French texts including *Doon* is dealt with here on pp. 44-64. For the child to bring the parents together after a long separation is, states Potter, a 'not infrequent feature of these stories' (p. 47).

[14] On the tournament combat, see Ross G. Arthur, 'The Ideology of the *Lai de Doon*', pp. 9-10. Arthur rightly points out that there is no 'reconciliation' between father and son (p. 10), but the term does seem appropriate for the final coming together of the husband and wife after their lengthy separation. It is also worth noting that Doon states that he does not know whether he will ever see his wife again ('"Ne sai se mes vos troverai"', v. 176).

prophecy is important to the plot, as the son is needed to create the final harmony, and the ring has to be left with the mother to effect the necessary recognition of father and son. The father clearly knew that one day this recognition would take place. It is also tempting to view Doon's horse, Baiart, as a magic animal. It has exceptional powers and there is a certainly a whiff of the supernatural about it. It is the agent of Doon's success, carrying him from Southampton to Edinburgh in a day and running throughout a whole day as far as a swan can fly. But other suitors had succeeded in making the first ride (v. 47), so in this case there was no fundamental requirement for a magic animal.[15] The second test is perhaps not entirely beyond the powers of a horse with great speed and stamina (see the discussion of the swan episode below). If we look for realism within the poem and are correct in interpreting Sothantone sor la mer (v. 32) and Hantone (v. 80) as Southampton, and Daneborc (v. 13) as Edinburgh, the ride as envisaged is clearly impossible, as the two locations are over 400 miles apart.[16] As John Curry has stated, a horse such as Baiart 'would have been capable of covering a maximum distance of between thirty miles (48 kilometres) and seventy miles (112 kilometres) in any twelve hour period'.[17] We therefore have to conclude: (i) that the author was ignorant of the distance between the locations, (ii) that he was aware of the distance but had no concern for realism, or (iii) that at least one of the places involved is incorrectly interpreted. Curry (p. 87) suggests that the location concerned was not Southampton but Scremeston, south of Berwick-on-Tweed, situated just over fifty miles from Edinburgh. Geographically this makes sense, but we have no evidence that this is what the poet intended. The use of Southampton as a location may have derived from *Milun* on which, as we have seen, the author relied heavily. Here Milun's son travels from Northumbria to Southampton on his way to

[15] On Doon's horse, see Pierre Gallais and Marie Hélène Varlet, 'Le Lai de *Doon*: la logique des images', pp. 17-18. Not only does the name Baiart seem to be based on the colour term *bai* 'bay', but the term *baiart* itself exists in Old French as an adjective or noun ('bay colour, bay horse'). Gallais and Varlet contrast the reddish-brown colour of Doon's horse with the whiteness of the lady's swan, and they relate the horse to the images of earth (over which it travels with such success, thus contributing to Doon's winning of the lady and her land) and fire (which is seen as saving Doon's life by enabling him to keep warm and escape the fate of his predecessors, vv. 112-13). Bayart is the name of Renaud's horse in *Renaud de Montauban*, where it is said to be of unparalleled *bonté* and able, because it was an enchanted horse, to ride for thirty leagues without getting tired ('Por ce qu'en Normendie fu le cheval faé', ed. by J. Thomas, Geneva: Droz, 1989, vv. 885-88).

[16] The Norse translator confirms the identification as Edinburgh: 'There lived long ago up north in Scotland, at the place called Edinburgh, an exceptionally beautiful and courteous maiden'.

[17] John Curry, 'The Speed of a Horse and the Flight of a Swan', p. 86. We are grateful to John Curry for his contribution to our interpretation of the lay of *Doon*.

France ('A Suhthamptune vait passer', v. 319).[18] The text of *Doon* tells us that Doon arrives in Hantone (v. 80), from where he sends messengers to the lady stating that he has arrived in the country ('el païs', v. 83). After he has contacted her, she sends messengers to him to tell him when he should come to her country ('en son païs', v. 90). So it is clear that Sothantone / Hantone is not within the confines of her *païs* (but we do know that it is on the coast, 'sor la mer', v. 32), and also that the distance was so great that the maiden did not expect suitors to succeed in completing the journey in one day.[19]

As Doon himself seemingly possesses some supernatural powers, are we to interpret his ability to survive the maiden's death-dealing bed as the product of some form of foreknowledge? Or is a devious man merely to be seen as defeating a devious woman? Presumably Doon knew about the deaths of the other successful riders, so he knew that he needed to come up with a solution to this problem. But how did he know that her power to kill him would wane with the arrival of dawn? Moreover, when Doon leaves his pregnant wife after three days of marriage this could be seen as suggesting the cruelty and ruthlessness of a non-human figure. But supernatural figures do not normally marry their beloveds, and in many respects Doon is a typical knight of his day.[20] Once Doon leaves his wife, there are no signs of supernatural elements within the tale. Indeed, would a supernatural being be beaten at a tournament, even by his own son?

The maiden of Daneborc displays no clear-cut supernatural elements. The power she enjoys is carefully explained by the poet: she had inherited the land in which she lived and was not subject to any other lord ('Le païs ot en heritage, / N'i orent autre seignorage', vv. 11-12). The wealth and power she possessed had, not unnaturally, made her proud and disdainful of the men in her land ('Por sa richesce s'orgueilli, / Toz desdaignoit ceus du païs', vv. 18-19). Her view of marriage as slavery was presumably

[18] The forms Sushantone and Sohantone designate Southampton in Wace's *Roman de Rou*, ed. by A.J. Holden, 3 vols, Paris, 1970-73, Part III, v. 9833 (William Rufus departs from there for Le Mans) and v, 10570 (Robert Curthose arrives there intending to confront his brother Henry). In view of the allusion to the Castle of Maidens, an expression well documented in both romance and historical archives, there can be no doubt that the form Daneborc refers to Edinburgh. But forms such as Daneborc or Taneb(r)oc are not found in archival material; they belong only to French romance (we are grateful for this information to Philip Bennett and Geoffrey Barrow, University of Edinburgh). The author of *Doon* may well have known the episode in Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide*, in which the forms Tenebroc and Teneboc are used (ed. by M. Roques, Paris, 1952, vv. 2075, 2083).

[19] If the story was written for an audience in the southern part of Britain, the reference to a crossing from Brittany to Southampton (vv. 79-80) would be entirely realistic.

[20] Ross Arthur sees Doon as 'a superior knight', but states that he 'is not supernatural' (p. 9).

conditioned by a number of factors, such as her sense of superiority, the pleasure she took in living in Daneborc ('Ce ert le leu que molt amoit', v. 14), her ability to exercise authority over her maidens and the men who occupied the castle and her lands (chamberlains are mentioned in vv. 61 and 125-26 and 'toz ses barons' in v. 158) and her realistic assessment of the marriage potential of 'ceus du païs'. The text does not say that she rejected marriage outright, only that she feared it would lead to her becoming subservient to a man, presumably one whom she did not consider her equal. When he marries her, Doon does in fact become lord of her territory (v. 160), but he had no doubt impressed her with his display of exceptional powers, hence her willingness to wait for, and welcome, his return.

In spite of these elements of realism, R.S. Loomis sees the maiden as Morgan the Fay, otherwise known as Morcades, who became the beloved and then the wife of Loth, King of Lothian.[21] In the *Enfances Gauvain*, Morcades bears Loth a son Gauvain out of wedlock and sends him away with a ring among other tokens of recognition.[22] In the *Vulgate Merlin* Gauvain encounters his father in battle and defeats him; when his father asks his name, recognition ensues.[23] These links between the maiden of Daneborc and Morgan or another fairy-type figure, and between the themes and motifs of *Doon* and other contemporary texts, could be expanded, but the fact remains that in *Doon* neither the maiden nor her son is named.[24] If we are to attribute magic powers to the maiden, it must be principally with regard to her ability to kill her suitors as they sleep in the bed she has prepared for them, presumably without anyone in the castle knowing how she accomplished this: 'Liz lor fesoit apareillier / Por eus ocirre et engingnier' (vv. 55-56).[25] There was clearly a special skill involved in the preparation of the bed, and the vengeful

[21] Roger Sherman Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949, repr. New York: Octagon Books, 1982), p. 112.

[22] Paul Meyer, 'Les *Enfances Gauvain*, fragment d'un poème perdu', *Romania*, 39 (1909), 1-32 (pp. 19-23).

[23] *The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances*, ed. by H.O. Sommer, 8 vols (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1908-16), II, p. 317.

[24] From amongst the many works on fairy figures in Old French literature, see Laurence Harf-Lancner, *Les Fées au Moyen Age: Morgane et Mélusine, la naissances des fées* (Paris: Champion, 1984) and Pierre Gallais, *La Fée à la Fontaine et à l'arbre: un archétype du conte merveilleux et du récit courtois* (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1992). Gallais states that neither the horse Baiart nor the lady in *Doon* is 'faé'; the horse is merely extraordinary, and the means by which the lady kills her suitors is 'laissé dans l'ombre' (p. 176).

[25] Curry detects a realistic cause of death: hypothermia, caused by the falling body temperature of the exhausted riders (p. 88).

killing and desire to outwit the successful riders is, like Doon's desertion of her, reminiscent of the callous treatment often meted out by a non-human figure (see below for further discussion of the bed as symbolic object). The death of the riders made her very happy ('Cele en ert durement lie', v. 63). But there are no signs of supernatural elements in the maiden's later behaviour; she seems to have become an excellent mother and ultimately an excellent wife.

(ii) Love. Until we reach the closing stages of the poem, there is almost no sign of the presence of love in this lay. In this respect *Doon* differs markedly from the lays of Marie de France, where love is usually the principal focus of the narrative. In the opening stages the maiden shows no interest in love, and the impression is given that she marries Doon only because she cannot set him any further challenges. The first sign of emotion on her part appears when Doon indicates his intention to leave: 'La dame pleure et grant duel fet / De ce que ses amis s'en vet; / Merci li crie doucement, / Mes ce ne li valut noient' (vv. 167-70). The tears shed by the lady are probably more an indication of distress at such an unexpected turn of events than of love for her new husband, but the text does refer to him as her *ami* (v. 168). Later, when his son takes Doon back to Edinburgh, we are told not only that the lady loved her husband very much and desired him greatly ('A sa mere, qui molt l'amot / Et durement le desirrot', vv. 277-78); but that he loved her and that this love had been the stimulus for his original journeys. The lay is said to be about the 'jornees qu'il erra / Por la dame que il ama' (vv. 283-84).

Did Doon fall in love with the maiden before he saw her, as happens to Milun's beloved in Marie's lay ('Ele ot oï Milun nomer; / Mut le cumençat a amer', vv. 24-25)? Or did his conquest of her, in spite of her best efforts, and the resulting marriage and its consummation inspire her love for him? Perhaps the maiden's love was formed during the period of separation, being stimulated in particular by the birth of their son, who was joyfully received by her household and whom she cherished and raised with great care (vv. 190-94). The narrative, however, remains silent on these issues. The tale is evidently not one in which the processes of love are important to the author. However, we can note that, whatever her feelings for Doon, the lady waits for his return with a loyalty reminiscent of that shown by the lady in Marie de France's *Milun,* a lay in which the relationship between the hero and his lady is, from the outset, clearly based on love. The author of *Doon* likes to surprise us, and we would not have anticipated that the lady would live happily ever after with the man who had won her, but then left her so soon

after the marriage. Yet their love, however it was formed, contributes towards the happy ending which the author evidently wanted for the text.

(iii) Chivalry. When he is introduced to us, Doon is described as a 'chevalier …/ Qui molt estoit preuz et vaillanz, / Sage et cortois et enprenanz' (vv. 68-70). So the man whom the maiden marries is a worthy husband and a suitable candidate for the lordship of her domains. We are not told how Doon became a knight or given details about any of his knightly exploits. The fact that, although he himself is from Brittany, he tells his wife to send their son to the King of France would suggest that he was the vassal of the king and on good terms with him.[26] When Doon leaves Edinburgh, he presumably does so in order to return to his lord in Brittany, who otherwise would have missed the valuable service he was no doubt able to give until he encountered his son and returned to Scotland. At the tournament, he has no hesitation, in spite of his age, in taking on a highly successful young opponent. After his return to his wife, the couple live together 'a grant honor' (v. 280), which indicates that he became an eminently successful defender of the community. The son passes through a seemingly conventional period of development as a knight. He learns to ride as soon as he is able to do so, and also to hunt and go hawking by the river (vv. 193-94). He is duly sent to the King of France, who dubs him a knight (v. 205); thereafter he participates in tournaments in order to establish a reputation (*querre son pris*, v. 207). His desire to be wherever a challenge is to be found (vv. 208-09) and his overall achievements cause him to be loved by other knights and regarded as the most valiant man in the land (vv. 210-12). He was able to group around him a large number of companions, who presumably regarded him as their leader (v. 213). The father-son combat takes place at Mont-Saint-Michel, a realistic location for such an event. The description of the tournament is brief (v. 214ff.), but it contains nothing which conflicts with our knowledge of contemporary practice or with accounts of tournaments such as those found in romances or a work such as the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*.[27] No one present at the Mont-Saint-Michel tournament was as successful as Doon's son (vv. 217-18), and everything suggests that Doon himself had played a starring role in many an earlier tournament. He tells his son that he had never

[26] If the lay was written during the reign of King John, the author would be aware of the hostility between John and King Philip Augustus of France.

[27] *History of William Marshal*, ed. by A.J. Holden, trans. by S. Gregory, notes by D. Crouch, 3 vols (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2002, 2005, vol. 3 forthcoming).

before been unhorsed (vv. 259-60), thus confirming his quality as a warrior. Thus prowess in the father has been passed on to the son and become an agent of transformation in both their lives, a force for good which both maximises the positive and overcomes the negative elements in the behaviour of both mother and father, and leads to the rewards of happiness ('Merveilleuse joie menerent', v. 273) and a re-united family.

Symbols and Objects

There is no single, powerful image in *Doon*, such as the nightingale in *Laüstic* and the swan in *Milun*. But the poem contains a number of objects which take on importance within the structure of the narrative, in particular the castle, the bed, Doon's horse, the swan and the ring.

(i) The Castle. A military stronghold normally associated with men, the castle makes its initial impact in the tale through its association with women, but also through its capacity to provide an alternative name for Daneborc: 'Por li [the maiden] et por ses damoiseles / Fu dit le Chastel as Puceles' (vv. 15-16).[28] Raised above the town ('Et au chastel amont venu', v. 50), the castle is the principal locus of the action in this poem. As long as she remains without a husband, the castle represents the basis for the maiden's power. It is here that she hatches her plan to escape the slavery of marriage. To it the riders must travel if they wish to win her hand, and in it she succeeds in killing a number of successful suitors. Doon reaches this castle, then travels to another wealthy castle ('A un chastel qui riche fu', v. 150) and finally returns to Edinburgh to marry her. He then leaves her pregnant with his son, who spends his early years in the castle. The son finally brings his father back to the castle in Edinburgh to enjoy the remainder of his life there. The initial power exerted by the maiden over the castle and the surrounding land (vv. 11-12) is transferred to Doon when he marries the maiden, but abandoned by him after three days. The lady then exercises power in her husband's absence, but finally, in a willing relinquishing of power, she takes him back as husband and lord ('El le reçut comme seignor', v. 279), thus allowing him to resume the control over her land which she had

[28] Loomis reports that 'Edinburgh was early identified as the Castle of Maidens' (p. 108) and that in 1142 King David of Scotland started to use the denomination Castellum or Castrum Puellarum for his charters, instead of Edenburge (p. 109). The Castle of Maidens is mentioned in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (c. 1135-38) and by Wace in his translation of this work, the *Roman de Brut* ('E el mont Agned chastel fist / Qui des Pulceles ad surnun', vv. 1526-27, ed. by I. Arnold, 2 vols, Paris: SATF, 1938-40). The Chastel had certainly gained legendary status by the time of Geoffrey of Monmouth, either as a place of unusual power or as a refuge. It appears in this latter role in the *Perceval* Continuations. It is also mentioned in *Le Bel Inconnu*, *Fergus*, *Yder* and the *Queste del Saint Graal* (see Loomis, pp. 108-12, 326ff.).

earlier bestowed on him ('Seignor l'a fet de son païs', v. 160). Throughout the narrative, the fate of the maiden has therefore been intertwined with that of her castle, which in turn affects her lands and all those who occupy them.

(ii) The Bed. In this text the bed plays the unusual role of killing those who sleep in it, men who fully expected, after their successful accomplishment of the test, to become the maiden's husband. Presumably it is the act of sleeping itself, stimulated by the level of comfort provided by the bed ('En ce bon lit voloit jesir', v. 117; 'De bones coutes, de bons dras', v. 57), which makes the weary traveller vulnerable. Hence Doon's determination to stay awake until dawn, for the bed's capacity to kill appears to be neutralised by the arrival of daylight, at which time his life is no longer under threat ('Au matin, quant il ajorna … / El lit coucha, si se covri, / Se bons li fu, si se dormi', vv. 121, 123-24).[29] The bed is thus the place in which the maiden rejects her would-be conquerors, a place of sexual sterility which helps her to avoid losing her independence and her virginity. It is also a source of joy for the maiden and the place where she takes her revenge ('Cele en ert durement lie, / Por ce que d'eus estoit vengie', vv. 63-64).

(iii) The Horse and the Swan. Unlike the perilous bed, Doon's horse Baiart is an agent of marriage in that its speed and stamina help Doon to win the lady.[30] As horses are traditionally symbols of masculinity and passion,[31] Baiart's contest with the swan ('Baiart erre, le cisne vole, / C'est merveille qu'il ne l'afole', vv. 145-46) mirrors Doon's sexual conquest of the maiden, who initially would like to have killed him and thus avoided the marriage. The swan against which Baiart is pitted does not seem at first to have its traditional role as symbol of beauty, purity and fidelity, as it does in *Milun*. In *Doon* it appears, through its function as an adversary for the hero's horse, as a potential, if ultimately unsuccessful, guardian of the lady's power and independence.[32] The bay-

[29] On the link between the maiden and the motif of night, see Gallais and Varlet, who state that 'La nuit est le domaine de la Pucelle de Daneborc' (p. 20).

[30] We note that the first suitors chose large horses ('Sus granz chevaus tantost montoient', v. 42), whereas Baiart is specifically said to be swift ('isniaus', v. 73) and perhaps therefore lighter (although it is called a *destrier* 'warhorse' by the maiden in v. 136).

[31] 'The horse stands for intense desires and instincts, in accordance with the general symbolism of the steed and the vehicle' (J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. by J. Sage, London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1962, 2nd ed. 1971, p. 152).

[32] Curry points out that, although swans on migration can attain speeds of sixty to seventy miles per hour, they must climb to altitudes of 20,000-30,000 feet to do so. But the lady's swan is a pet swan, which would not migrate. It must have known the castle to which it flew, just as the swan in *Milun* knew the journey from Caerwent to Caerleon and back. Flying in this way, a swan would gain an altitude of little more than a few hundred feet and thus remain visible to Doon; the swan's speed would be eight to ten miles per hour, a

coloured, swift-moving horse competes for supremacy with the white, swift-flying bird. In terms of the four elements, earth and fire (in the form of the horse) combat air and water (in the form of the swan).[33] Baiart's capacity to journey (*errer*) more successfully than the swan wins the day, just as Doon's similar capability ('Tant erra que en la vespree / Ot parfornie sa jornee', vv. 93-94; 'Et des jornees qu'il erra', v. 283) help him to win (*porchacer*) the maiden (v. 265) and achieve final harmony with his wife and son.[34] Once Baiart has performed the required task, the lady's resistance is at an end ('Cele nu pot avant mener', v. 157). Doon can now relax in a castle where he is 'bien herbergiez' (v. 151); it is now he who is in control ('Tant con lui plot, s'i sejorna', v. 153). By flying from one castle to another, the swan has in fact acted as a guide for Doon, leading him to a place where he would be welcomed. It is at this point that the symbolism of the swan could be said to change. If we regard the swan as effectively an image of the lady herself, it can now take on once more its customary role as symbol of a loyal, monogamous union, which, as in *Milun*, will survive a period of separation in excess of twenty years.

(iv) The Ring. The ring is a symbol of identity and wholeness and of an individual's repeating life-cycle (Cirlot, p. 273). Just as the horse combines with Doon to create a successful partnership, which succeeds in winning the maiden's hand in marriage, the ring is, like the son himself, an agent of transformation, helping to transform the family's fortunes by creating the framework for recognition and harmony.[35] The horse and ring combine with Doon's prescience and the son's prowess to defeat the feminine perspective represented by the Chastel as Puceles and the maiden's death-dealing bed. The result is initially the creation of social harmony, which was threatened by the maiden's desire to avoid marriage, and finally the restoration of the short period of happiness which followed the marriage. It could be said that, when armed with the ring,

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challenging but not impossible speed for a horse throughout a whole day. The principal difficulty would be the lack of opportunity for the horse to rest and feed (p. 89). See the note to v. 138.

[33] See Gallais and Varlet, p. 18.

[34] In v. 206 we are told that Doon's son 'erra por tornoier'. The term *errer* 'travel, ride, journey', which can be used as a verb or as a noun, is clearly of considerable importance to the structure of this text. There are ten examples (vv. 31, 41, 43, 93, 108, 137, 145, 148, 206) plus one of *parerrer* (v. 46). There are also three examples of *jornee(s)* 'day, day's ride, journey'.

[35] 'Porteur de l'anneau, signe de circularité, il [Doon's son] est le messager de réconciliation, de la réunion, dont la figure symbolique est aussi celle de l'anneau' (Katherine Frizza, 'Le Lai de *Doon*, ou la fonction de la brièveté', p. 60). She adds that: 'L'anneau de reconnaissance que porte le fils de Doon est aussi le signal de la réunion et de la réconciliation. C'est par l'intermédiaire de la ruse et de l'anneau que se forge une entente réelle' (p. 63).

the son is destined to find his father. The ring is also the object which puts an end to the lady's struggle for independence and the sequence of ruses and counter-ruses which dominate the plot.

Conclusion

Tobin states that the author's purpose was to tell a tale 'comme celles qui existaient à son époque' (p. 324). She adds that he made no effort to create an 'œuvre artistique', and indeed lacked the ability to do so. It is true that many of the author's themes are found in other texts and that he was greatly influenced by the lays of Marie de France, without which the tale would no doubt not have been written as it was. But the author packs a great deal into the 286 lines of the story and he brings the disparate strands of his material to an effective and satisfying conclusion. The lay of *Doon* succeeds in fulfilling both male and female fantasies and in providing an amalgam of realistic and non-realistic elements. For Tobin the author did not possess sufficient talent to worry about a deep meaning for his tale, and for her what meaning there is lies in the maiden's pride and the test of separation which Doon imposes on her (*ibid*.). A better expression of the text's meaning might lie in the notion of power and its exercise. The maiden suffers because she goes against the norm that a woman in power should take a husband and transfer her power to him (we note that her marriage to Doon meets with the approval of the maiden's barons and leads to three days of rejoicing, vv. 158-62). But the author has created an intriguing tale in which the maiden is ultimately willing to do what she initially rejected, and, moreover, in so doing she achieves emotional satisfaction and ultimately creates social harmony. As Ross Arthur has shown, it is certainly not useful to compare the overall meaning of this poem with the lays of Marie de France, as Marie clearly had different objectives and abilities, being more concerned with human passion and the psychology of the individual. The author of *Doon* does not analyse love or try to provide what we would call psychological realism.[36] For Ross Arthur, *Doon*, as it stands, 'gives a clearer view of the attitudes which were necessary to preserve the chivalric society at the end of the twelfth century' than if it had been written by Marie de France (p. 10). There can be no doubt that this tale shows that the author of *Doon* understood fully the nature of contemporary romance narrative and the needs of contemporary audiences.

[36] Donovan states that '*Doon* is unworthy of Marie de France. It consists of two parts unskillfully joined … He [the author] sometimes fails to assign motives' (p. 73). Foulet thought that *Doon* was a typical example of a story which was merely an 'agglomération d'histoires qui n'ont que fort peu de liaison entre elles' (p. 45). Doon's departure was simply a device to bring about the second part of the story (p. 46).

C’est le lay de Doon

f. 33r col. 1

Doon,* cest lai sevent plusor;
N’i a gueres bon harpeor
Ne sache les notes harper.
Mes je vos voil dire et conter
L’aventure dont li Breton
Apel[er]ent cest lai Doon.
Ce m’est avis, se droit recort,
Les Daneborc, qui est au nort,*
Manoit jadis une pucele
A merveille cortoise et bele.
Le païs ot en heritage,
N’i orent autre seignorage,
Et a Daneborc conversoit;
Ce ert le leu que molt amoit.
Por li et por ses damoiseles
col. 2
Fu dit le Chastel as Puceles.
La pucele dont je vos di
Por sa richesce s’orgueilli;
Toz desdaignoit ceus du païs.
N’en i ot nul de si haut pris
Qu’ele vousist amer ne prendre,
Ne de li fere a li entendre;
Ne se voloit metre en servage
Por achoison de mariage.
Tuit li preudomme de la terre
Sovent l’[en] alerent requerre;
Seignor voloient qu’el preïst,
Mes el du tout les escondist.
Ja ne prendra, ce dit, seignor,
Se tant ne feïst por s’amor
Qu’en .I. seul jor vosist errer
De Sothantone sor la mer*
Desi que la ou ele estoit;
Ce lor a dit, celui prendroit.
Par tant se cuidoit delivrer
Et cil la lessierent ester.
Mes ne pot remanoir ensi.
Qant cil du païs l’ont oï
– La verité vos en dirai –,
Plusor se mistrent en essai
Par les chemins qu’errer devoient.
Sus granz chevaus tantost montoient
Et fors et bons por bien errer,
Car ne voloient demorer.
Li plusor n’i porent durer,

Doon is a lay many people know;
There is scarcely a good harpist
Who does not know how to play the melody.
But I wish to tell and relate to you
The adventure from which the Bretons
Called this lay Doon.
It seems to me, if I recall aright,
That near Edinburgh, which is in the north,
There once lived a maiden,
Exceedingly courtly and beautiful.
She held the land as her inheritance,
There was no other lordship,*
And she dwelt in Edinburgh;
She loved this place very much.
Because of her and her damsels
It was called the Castle of Maidens.
The maiden I am telling you about
Became proud on account of her wealth;
She scorned all the men in the land.
There was not one of them so renowned
That she was prepared to love him or wed him,
Or to encourage him to woo her.
She had no wish to enslave herself
By reason of marriage.
All the most valiant men in the land
Tried frequently to win her hand;
They wanted her to take a husband,
But she rejected them all utterly.
She would never take a husband, she said,
Unless he succeeded for love of her
In journeying in a single day
From Southampton by the sea*
As far as the place where she dwelt:
Such a man, she told them, she would wed.
In this way she thought to rid herself of them,
And they did leave her alone;
But things could not remain this way.
When the men in the land heard of this,
– I shall tell you the truth about it –
Many of them made the attempt,
Following the paths they were to take.
Without delay they mounted great horses,
Which were strong and able to run well,
For they had no wish to tarry.
Many of them could not last the pace,

Ne la jornee parerrer.
De tex i ot qui parvenoient,
Mes las et traveilliez estoient.
Quant ill estoient descendu
Et au chastel amont venu,
La pucele contre eus aloit;
Molt durement les ennoroit.
Puis les fesoit par eus mener
En ses chambres por reposer;
Liz lor fesoit apareillier,
f. 33v col. 1 Por eus ocirre et engingnier,
De bones coutes, de bons dras.
Cil qui pené furent et las
Se couchierent et se dormoient;
El soëf lit dormant moroient.
Li chanbellenc mort les trovoient
Et a lor dame racontoient;
Et cele en ert durement lie,
Por ce que d'eus estoit vengie.
Loing fu portee la novele
De l'orgueilleuse damoisele.
En Bretaingne dela la mer
L'oï .I. chevalier conter,
Qui molt estoit preuz et vaillanz,
Sage et cortois et enprenanz;
Doon avoit non le vassal.
Icil avoit .I. bon cheval,
Baiart ot non, molt fu isniaus;
Il ne donast por .II. chastiaus.
Por la fiance du destrier
Voudra cele oevre commencier
Por la meschine et por la terre,
Savoir s'il la porra conquerre.
A l'ainz qu'il pot est mer passez,
Et sus Hantone est arivez.
A la damoisele envoia,
Par son mesage li manda
Qu'el païs estoit arivez;
Envoiast li de ses privez,
Qui li deïssent verité
Q'au jor qu'il lor avoit nommé.
Quant ele vit ses mesagiers,
A lui envoia volentiers;
Le jor li a nommé et mis
Quant el vendra en son païs.

Or complete the journey.
There were those who were successful,
But they were weary and worn out.
When they had dismounted
And made their way up to the castle,
The maiden came to greet them;
She honoured them greatly,
Then she had them taken all alone
Into her bedchamber to rest.
She had beds prepared for them,
In order to kill and trick them,
With fine coverlets and fine sheets.
The men who were exhausted and weary
Lay down and went to sleep;
In the soft bed they died as they slept.
The chamberlains found them dead
And reported the news to their lady;
This made her very happy,
Because she had taken revenge on them.
The news was carried far and wide
About the proud maiden.
In Brittany beyond the sea
It came to the ears of a knight,
Who was very brave and valiant,
Wise, courtly and daring;
Doon was the man's name.
He had a good horse,
Its name was Baiart, it was very swift;
Not for two castles would he have given it away.
He had such trust in his horse
That he decided to take up this challenge
For the maiden and for the land,
To see whether he could win her.
As soon as he could, he crossed the sea
And arrived beneath Southampton.*
He sent word to the damsel,
And informed her through his messenger
That he had arrived in the land;
She should send some of her trusted servants to him,
Who would let him know in truth
The day she had told them he should depart.*
When she saw his messengers,
She gladly sent her men to him;
She appointed and set the day for him
On which he should come to her land.

Ce fu .I. samedi matin
Que Doon s’est mis el chemin;
Tant erra que en la vespree
Ot parfornie sa jornee
Et a Daneborc est venuz;
col. 2 A grant joie fu receüz.
Li chevalier et li sergant,
N’i ot .I. seul, petit ne grant,
Ne l’ennorast et nu servist
Et bel semblant ne li feïst.
Quant a la pucele a parlé,
En une chambre l’ont mené
Por reposer quant lui plera.
Li chevalier lor commanda
Que seche buche li trovassent
Et en la chambre l’aportassent;
Puis le lessassent reposer,
Car traveilliez ert de l’errer.
Cil ont fete sa vole[n]té;
Il a l’uis clos et bien fermé,
Ne velt pas que nus d’eus l’agait.
O .I. fusil a du feu fait,
Pres du feu vint, si se chaufa;
Onques la nuit ne se coucha
El lit qu’il ot apareillié.
S’il qui fu las et traveillié*
En ce bon lit voloit jesir,
Molt tost l’em pot mesavenir.
Qui plus dur gist tant se deult mains
Et plus hastivement est sains.
Au matin, quant il ajorna,
Il vint a l’uis, sel desferma;*
El lit coucha, si se covri,
Se bons li fu, si se dormi.
Cil le cuiderent mort trover
Qui la chambre devoient garder,
Mes il le virent tot hetié;
Entr’eus en sont joieus et lié.
A prime de jor est levé,
Si s’est vestu et afublé;
A la pucele vet parler
Et ses covenanz demander.
La pucele li respondi:
‘Amis, ne puet pas estre ensi;
Plus vos estovra traveillier

It was one Saturday morning
That Doon set out on the road.
He rode so well that by the evening
He had completed his journey
And arrived in Edinburgh;
He was received with great joy.
Of the knights and servants
There was not one, great or small,
Who did not honour him, serve him
And make him very welcome.
When he had spoken to the maiden,
He was taken to a bedchamber
To rest as soon as he wished.
The knight ordered them
To find him some dry firewood
And bring it into the chamber;
Then they should let him rest,
For he was worn out from his travels.
They did as he requested;
He closed the door and locked it securely,
Not wanting any of them to spy on him.
With a flint he made a fire,
Came close to the flames and warmed himself.
At no time that night did he lie down
In the bed which had been prepared for him.
If he who was weary and worn out
Wished to lie down in this fine bed,
Misfortune could soon befall him.
He who has the harder bed suffers so much less
And recovers more quickly.
In the morning, at daybreak,
He came to the door and unlocked it;
He lay down in the bed, covered himself up
And slept in comfort.
Those whose task it was to guard the chamber
Expected to find him dead,
But they found him in good health;
They were all happy and joyful.
Doon rose at daybreak,
Dressed and made himself ready;
He went to speak to the maiden
And ask her to keep the agreement.
The maiden replied to him:
‘Friend, it cannot be so;
You will have to make

f. 34r col. 1
Vostre cors et vostre destrier.
En .I. jor vos estuet errer
Tant comme .I. cisnes puet voler;
Puis vos prendré sanz contredit.’
Il en a demandé respit
Tant que Baiart soit sejorné
Et il meïsme reposé.
Au quart jor fu li termes pris;
Doon fu a la voie mis.
Baiart erre, le cisne vole,
C’est merveille qu’il ne l’fole;
Le cisne ne pot tant voler
Comme Baiart pooit errer.
La nuit sont en .I. leu venu,
A un chastel qui riche fu;
Ilec est il bien herbergiez
Et son cheval bien aaisiez.
Tant con lui plot, s’i sejorna.
Quant bon li fu, si s’en ala
Et a Daneborc est alez;
Ses covenanz a demandez.
Cele nu pot avant mener;
Toz ses barons a fet mander.
Par lor conseil a Doon pris,
Seignor l’a fet de son païs.
Quant espousee ot la pucele,
.III. jors tint cort et grant et bele.
Au quart s’est par matin levez;
Son cheval li est amenez.
Sa fame a a Dieu commandee,
Qu’aler s’en velt en sa contree.
La dame pleure et grant duel fet
De ce que ses amis s’en vet;
Merci li crie doucement,
Mes ce ne li valut noient.
De remanoir merci li crie
Et bien li dit qu’il l’a traïe.
Il ne la volt de rien oïr,*
Car tart li est du departir.*
‘Dame’, fet il, ‘je m’en irai;
col. 2
Ne sai se mes vos troverai.
Vos estesençainte de moi;
.I. filz avrez, si con je croi.
Mon anel d’or li garderoiz.
Quant il ert granz, si li donroiz,
Bien li commandez a garder;

Your body and your horse undergo further trials.
In a single day you must travel
As far as a swan can fly;*
Then I shall marry you without more ado.’
He asked for a delay in this,
Until Baiart had been cared for
And he himself had rested.
The departure was fixed for the fourth day;
Doon set off on his journey.
Baiart ran, the swan flew;
It was a wonder that the horse did not collapse.
The swan could not fly as far
As Baiart could run.
Before nightfall they reached a place
Where there was a splendid castle;
There he was well received
And his horse well rested.
He remained there as long as he wished.
When he felt ready, he departed
And went to Edinburgh;
He asked for what had been agreed.
She could not delay the issue any longer;
She summoned all her barons.
On their advice she married Doon;
She made him lord of her land.
When he had married the maiden,
He held a grand plenary court for three days.
On the fourth day he rose early;
His horse was brought to him.
He commended his wife to God,
Because he intended to return to his own region.
The lady wept and was grief-stricken
At her beloved’s departure;
Tenderly she begged him for mercy,
But it was to no avail.
She begged him to stay
And told him that he had betrayed her.
He refused to listen to her at all,
For he was anxious to depart.
‘My lady’, he said, ‘I am leaving;
I don’t know whether I’ll see you again.
You are pregnant by me;
You will, I believe, have a son.
You should keep my gold ring for him.
When he is fully grown, you should give it to him,
Telling him to keep hold of it;

Par l’anel me porra trover.
Au roi de France l’envoiez,
La soit norriz et ensaingniez.’
L’anel li baille, ele le prent;
Atant s’em part, plus n’i atent,
Alez s’en est, plus n’i remaint.
Molt est dolenz et molt se plaint;
Ençainte fu, c’est veritez.
Au terme que son filz fu nez,
Grant joie en orent si ami.
Tant le garda, tant le cheri
Que li enfes pot chevauchier,
Aler em bois et rivoier.
L’anel som pere li bailla
Et a garder li commanda.
Li vallez fu apareilliez
Et au roi de France envoiez.
Assez porta or et argent,
Si despendi molt largement.
En la cort se fist molt amer,
Car il ert larges de donner;
Molt fu de bon afetement.
En France fu si longuement
Que li rois en fist chevalier,
Et il erra por tornoier,
Querant son pris et pres et loing.
N’oï parler de nul besoing
Ne vosist estre li premiers.
Molt fu amez de chevaliers.
A merveille fu de grant pris;
N’ot si vaillant homme el païs.
De chevaliers ot grant compaingne.
Au Mont Saint Michiel en Bretaingne
Ala li vallez tornoier;
f. 34v col. 1 As Bretons se volt acointier.
N’i ot .I. seul tant i jostast,
Ne de sa main tant gaaingnast.
Ses peres ert de l’autre part;
Molt durement li estoit tart
Qu’il eüst josté au vallet.
Lance levee, el ranc se met,
Envie avoit du bien de lui;
De grant eslais muevent andui,
Granz cox se sont entreferu,
Le filz a le pere abatu.
S’il seüst que son pere fust,

Through the ring he will be able to find me.
Send him to the King of France,
Let him be brought up and educated there.'
He gave her the ring and she took it,
Then he left, he delayed no longer.
He departed, he remained no longer.
She was very distressed and lamented greatly;
She was pregnant, that is the truth.
At the time her son was born,
Her household rejoiced greatly.
She looked after and cherished the child
Until he could ride a horse
And go hunting and hawking by the river.
She gave him his father's ring
And told him to keep hold of it.
The young man was made ready
And sent to the King of France;
He took with him a large amount of gold and silver
And spent very generously.
At court he was greatly loved,
For he gave generous gifts;
He had been very well brought up.
He was in France for so long
That the king dubbed him a knight,
And he went in search of tournaments,
Seeking fame far and wide.
He did not hear of any conflict
Without wishing to be there first.
He was much loved by knights
And exceedingly well thought of;
There was no man of such valour in the land.
With him he had a great company of knights.
The young man went to a tournament
At Mont-Saint-Michel in Brittany;
He wanted to do battle with the Bretons.
There was no one there who jousted as much as he,
Or won so much by his own hand.
His father was on the opposing side;
He was very keen
To joust with the youth.
With his lance raised, he entered the ranks;
He was envious of the other's reputation.
They spurred towards each other at full tilt
And struck each other great blows;
The son unhorsed the father.
If he had known that it was his father,

Molt li pesast que fet l’eüst.
Mes il ne sot que il estoit
Ne Doon ne le connoissoit;
El braz le navra durement.
Au partir du tornoiement,
Doon fet le vallet mander
Que il venist a lui parler,
Et cil i vait a esperon,
Et Doon l’a mis a raison.
‘Qui es tu’, fet il, ‘biaus amis,
Qui de mon cheval m’as jus mis?’
Li damoisiaus a respondu:
‘Sire, ne sai comment il fu;
Ce sevent cil qui furent la’.
Doon l’oï, si l’apela:
‘Mostre ça tost’, fet il, ‘tes mains’.
Li vallez ne fu pas vilains;
Ses ganz oste hastivement,
Andeus ses mains li mostre et tent.*
Quant vit les mains au damoisel,
En son doit reconnut l’anel
Qu’il ot a sa fame baillié,
Molt ot le cors joieus et lié.
Par l’anel que il a veü
A bien son filz reconneü,
Que ses filz ert, il l’engendra.
Oiant toz, li dit et conta:
‘Vallet’, fet il, ‘bien m’aparçui,
col. 2 Quant tu jostas a moi jehui,
Que tu eres de mon lingnage;
Molt a en toi grant vasselage.
Onques por coup a chevalier
Ne chaï mes de mon destrier,
Ne jamés nul ne m’abatra,
Ja si grant coup ne me donra.
Vien moi besier, je sui ton pere.
Molt est orgueilleuse ta mere;
Par grant travail la porchaçai.
Quant prise l’oi, si m’en tornai,
Onques puis ne la regardai.
Cel anel d’or li commandai
Et dis qu’ele le vos donnast
Quant en France vos envoiast.’
‘Sire’, fet il, ‘c’est verité.’
Baisié se sont et acolé,
Merveilleuse joie menerent;

He would have been very upset that he had done so.
But he did not know who he was
And Doon did not recognise him;
He had wounded him severely in the arm.
When the tournament came to a close,
Doon summoned the young man
To come and speak with him,
And he spurred towards him;
Doon addressed him:
'Who are you, fair friend,
You who have knocked me down off my horse?'
The young man replied:
'My lord, I don't know how it happened;
Those who were there know it'.
Doon heard what he said and replied:
'Show me your hands at once', he said.
The youth was not ill-bred;
He took off his gauntlets straightaway
And showed and proffered both his hands.
When he saw the young man's hands,
He recognised on his finger the ring
He had given to his wife;
He was very happy and joyful.
From the ring he had seen
He clearly recognised his son,
That he was his son and he his father.
In everyone's hearing, he spoke to him:
'Young man', he said, 'I realised,
When you jousted with me today,
That you were of my lineage.
You are very courageous.
Never through a blow from a knight
Have I fallen from my horse,
And no one will ever unhorse me,
However great a blow he may give me.
Come and kiss me, I'm your father.
Your mother is a very proud woman;
I won her with great effort.
When I had married her, I departed;
I have never set eyes on her since.
I entrusted this gold ring to her
And told her to give it to you
When she sent you to France.'
'My lord', said the son, 'that is the truth.'
They kissed and embraced each other,
And displayed great joy;

A. I. ostel ensemble alerent.
En Engleterre sont alé;
Li filz a le pere mené
A sa mere, qui molt l'amot
Et durement le desirrot.
El le reçut comme seignor;
Puis vesquirent a grant honor.
De lui et de son bon destrier
Et de son filz qu'il ot molt chier,
Et des jornees qu'il erra
Por la dame que il ama,
Firent les notes li Breton*
Du lay c'om apele Doon.

They returned to a lodging-house together.
They made their way to England;
The son took the father
To his mother, who loved him dearly
And desired him greatly.
She received him as her lord;
Afterwards they lived together in great honour.
About him and his fine horse,
And his son whom he loved dearly,
And the journeys he made
For the lady he loved,
The Bretons composed the melody
For the lay that is called Doon.

NOTES TO THE TEXT

1. The initials ‘D’ and ‘L’ (v. 65) are coloured capitals. The ‘D’ extends over the first three lines of the poem.

8. MS ‘des Daneborc’.

32. MS ‘desor hantone’.

116. MS ‘cil qui sont las’

122. MS ‘ses desferma’.

173. MS ‘il na la’.

174. MS ‘car tant‘

246. MS ‘an II.’

285. MS ‘noces’.

NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION

12. The subject of *orent* in this line is vague and presumably refers to the inhabitants of the castle. Tobin translates as 'il n'y avait pas d'autres seigneurs là'.

32. It is possible to read this line as 'De sus [MS desor] Hantone sor la mer'. In v. 80 Doon seems to arrive 'sus Hantone' ('beneath Southampton'), i.e. at the port of Southampton. However, the de in v. 32 must be translated as 'from' ('De … Desi que…'), and the reference here is to the starting-point for the ride, which is unlikely to have been as specific as 'from beneath Southampton'. At the time of composition of Doon, forms of both Hampton and Southampton were in use. The original settlement of Hampton (Hanton, Hantune, Heantun etc.) was first called Southampton (Suthhamtonia, Suth-hantune) in the middle of the tenth century. See J. Silvester Davies, A History of Southampton (Southampton: Gilbert and Co, 1883). The Norse translator states that suitors have to ride north from Southampton, which is in the south of England, to Edinburgh.

80. Gaston Paris and Tobin emend MS 'et' to 'a' and read 'A Suthantone / Sushantone est arivez'. However, it is probable that Doon would arrive at the port beneath Southampton. Cf. Geffrei Gaimar, L'Estoire des Engleis, v. 2392, 'A Hantone arivad al port' (ed. by A. Bell, Oxford: Blackwell, 1960). In Cligés Alexander and his men 'vindrent au port desoz Hantone' (v. 273, ed. by C. Luttrell and S. Gregory, Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1993). They remain 'desoz Hantone' (v. 287) and then take the 'droit chemin' out of Hantone on their way to Winchester (vv. 300-03), the road which would no doubt have been used for a journey from Southampton to Edinburgh. On the castle and the quay at Hampton, which were early priorities for William the Conqueror when he arrived in England, in order to protect his men and create conditions favourable to trade, see L.A. Burgess, The Origins of Southampton (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1964), pp. 16-17. See also C. Luttrell, 'Southampton dans le Cligés de Chrétien de Troyes', Romania, 114 (1996), 231-34.

84-86. The present translation interprets li (Tobin prints le) in v. 85 as referring to Doon, il in v. 86 as a form of el 'she' (cf. v. 28 'Mes el [the maiden] du tout les escondist', and v. 90 'Quant el [Doon] vendra en son païs') and lor in v. 86 as referring to the messengers mentioned in v. 87. This interpretation coincides with that of Pagani ('che desse informazioni sicure circa il giorno che ella aveva stabilato') and seems to be confirmed when we are told that the maiden fixes the date for the departure (vv. 89-90). The q' in v. 86 remains awkward and difficult to explain. Tobin, however, insists ('il faut comprendre') that these lines mean 'qui puissent lui [the maiden?] dire la vérité au sujet du jour qu'il leur avait nommé (pour son départ)'. This view has the advantage of taking il in v. 86 as 'he', but it leaves the lor unclear. Tobin adds that Doon had 'perhaps' proposed a date himself and required the maiden's confirmation (p. 332). Régnier-Bohler and Micha assume that li in v. 85 refers to the maiden and translate as 'pour attester qu'il était bien parti au jour fixé'; this interpretation does not seem justified by the text, nor does it make clear who proposed the date.

138. Some scholars take the view that tant in v. 138 and v. 147 refers to speed rather than to distance, e.g. Micha, 'en un seul jour vous devrez aller aussi vite qu'un cygne peut voler'; 'le cheval qui courait plus vite que le cygne ne voloit'. Speed and distance are obviosuly linked, but the emphasis seems to be on the stamina of the horse over an entire day rather than on its speed. The horse has to maintain its pace and keep up with the swan, not specifically to outdo it for speed. It appears that at the end of the day Baiart has travelled further than the swan (vv. 146-47).

Doun is the name of this lay

Almost everyone who has learned lays knows this one, which is called *Doun*, but I wish to tell you the events from which this lay called *Doun* derives, just as I have true knowledge of it from correct memory.

In the distant past, there lived north in Scotland, at the place called Edinburgh, a maiden, most beautiful and most courtly. Her inheritance from her father was the entire country in which she dwelt – there was no other ruler of this land. This maiden whom I mentioned to you grew puffed-up with pride because of her power. She despised all who lived in her kingdom, so that there was no one so powerful or valiant that she wanted to have him or love him – she would not hear of that. She said that she would have no man except the one who, for the sake of her love, would ride in one day from Southampton, which is situated in the south of England, north to Edinburgh in Scotland, where she lived. That one, she said, she wished to have, and that one, she says, shall win her! Now when this was made apparent, and those who lived in that kingdom heard about it, it is quite true that many attempted it, and had to accomplish the day's journey.

There were some who achieved the day's journey. And when they came to the city, the maiden went to meet them, and honoured them with a rich welcome, and had a comfortable bed prepared for them, to kill them and deceive them under expensive quilts and rich covers. And they, who had been rolled about and were exhausted lay down, fell asleep, and lay dead. These reports concerning this proud maiden were widely known, so that they were heard about through the whole of Brittany, which lies in the French king's realm, to the south of the English Channel.

A powerful and valiant knight, who lived in Brittany, heard this news; he was called Doun. He had a good horse, and because he greatly trusted his war-horse, he most certainly wishes to test whether he is able to perform this day's journey. He straightway journeyed swiftly across the English Channel, and landed at Southampton. From there, he sent his servant to the maiden, to say where he had landed, and to say that she should send her trusted companions to him. As soon as she saw his messengers, and heard his message, she readily sent her men to him.

Now it was on a Saturday, very early, that Doun began his day's journey, and he rode so swiftly the whole day that he finished his journey before evening. And when he

reached Edinburgh, there was a magnificent welcome for him there, with great splendour and honour.

Later, when he had conversed with the maiden in a seemly manner, she conducted him to a well-prepared room, where he might rest as soon as he wished. But the knight commanded her men to get dry firewood for him, and to carry it to the bedchamber there, and they did as he said. He closed the door afterwards and lay down beside the fire, and warmed himself so much that he did not sleep at all that night. And he did not lie down in the bed which had been made ready for him. Those who are completely exhausted become very eager to lie in comfort, because the harder an exhausted man lies, the quicker are his power and strength renewed. But in the morning, that has been changed to irreparable harm.

In the morning, at Prime, he got up, dressed, and straightway went to speak with the maiden and to claim what had been promised him. Then the maiden answered: 'Beloved', she said, 'that may not yet be, because you must journey as far as my swan flies. Afterwards you shall win me without reproach, so that things will not be delayed.' He then asked for respite until Balard his horse had been rested, and he himself was not exhausted. And she gave him respite until the fourth day.

Doun then began his journey: Balard galloped while the swan flew, and it is a wonder that she did not make him broken-winded. In the evening they both arrived at a magnificent castle. Doun rested there for as long as he pleased, and then journeyed back to Edinburgh, to claim what was owing to him. The maiden could not deny him any longer, and she summoned to her all the nobles and the wisest men who were in her kingdom, and on their advice she was married to Doun. And she made him lord of her whole kingdom with rich honours and great joy.

Following his wedding, Doun held a magnificent feast for three days, and entertained a great number of people with many kinds of good drink. But on the fourth day he got up and dressed very early, and his horse was led out for him, and he bade farewell to his wife, as he now wishes to travel home to his native land. His wife wept then, and expressed her disapproval; she suffered great grief from the fact that her husband wishes to part from her.

'Lady', said Doun, 'I am now going from you, and I do not know whether we two will meet again or not. You have conceived a child by me; if it is as I think, you will give birth to a son. You shall keep this gold ring of mine safe for him, and give it to him when

he is a grown man.' She took the gold ring, but he travelled away with matters as they stood, and remained there no longer.

Now it was quite true that the lady was pregnant, and at the time that her son was born, all her friends rejoiced. She had him so long in her care that he could ride well and go hunting birds and animals. Then his mother gave him his father's gold ring, and commanded him to take good care of it. Later, she prepared a magnificent journey for her son, and sent him to the French king, well instructed in every good custom and courtly manners.

He remained for so long with the French king that he made him a knight. He then journeyed everywhere to tournaments, and proved himself so strong that no one could stand against him in combat, so that he became famous for his valour, and renowned above all his fellows and companions, and a great number of knights entered into fellowship with him. He then travelled with his fellows out to Brittany, to a tournament at the place called Mont-Saint-Michel, because he wishes to become acquainted with the Bretons.

Now, when a great host had gathered together on both sides, there in the company opposing him was his father, who had long yearned for a test of weapons against that young knight. As he came into the ranks and towards him, he lowered his lance and aimed at him, and they met together with hard blows. And the son felled his father, but neither knew the other, because Doun did not recognise him, and the boy wounded him with a great wound in the arm.

When the tournament ended, Doun sent after the boy to come and speak with him, and he came there immediately, riding quickly. At once Doun spoke to him, and said: 'Friend, what sort of man are you, who brought me down off my horse?' 'My lord', he said, 'I do not know in what manner that was; those who were nearest will know.' 'Friend', said Doun, 'ride here to me, and let me see your hands.' And the boy was courteous, and at once took off his gloves and showed him both his hands and arms.

When Doun looked at the boy's hands, he recognised his own gold ring on his finger. 'My boy', he said, 'when we two met today in the tournament, I knew that you were my kinsman. You are extremely strong and most hardy with weapons. Come and kiss me: you are my son; for certain I am your father. Your mother is a woman of great pride: I managed to master her only with much toil. Immediately after I had married her, I left her; I have never visited her since. I gave her that ring which you wear on your

hand, and I know that she gave it to you when she sent you to France.' 'My Lord', he said, 'you're speaking the truth.' They then kissed and embraced.

They travelled afterwards with their horses over the English Channel, and the boy brought his father to his mother, who had yearned for his homecoming for a long time. She received him in a great welcome as her own husband and lord. For many years afterwards they lived in great peace and joy, in reconcilement and honour. The Bretons now composed the lay that is called *Doun* about the knight, and about the horse which was most dear to him.

TYOLET

Introduction

Manuscript, Editions, Translations

The lay of *Tyolet* is preserved in a single manuscript: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. fr. 1104, f. 15v, col. 1 – 20r, col. 1. This manuscript, written largely in Francien with some Norman and Picard elements, dates from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. First edited by Gaston Paris in 1879 (pp. 40-50), *Tyolet* had to wait for a new edition until 1976, when it appeared in Prudence M.O'H. Tobin's *Les Lais anonymes des XII^{e} et XIII^{e} siècles: édition critique de quelques lais bretons* (pp. 227-53). Tobin's text was reprinted in 1984 by Walter Pagani with a facing Italian translation (pp. 156-95) and again in 1992 by Alexandre Micha with a facing Mocdern French translation (pp. 182-223). The lay has also been translated into English by Jessie Weston (1900, pp. 57-78) and Margo Vinney (1978), into Modern French by Herman Braet (1979, pp. 27-46) and Danielle Régnier-Bohler (1979, pp. 103-18), into Dutch by Ludo Jongen and Paul Verhuyck (1985, pp. 13-20) and into Spanish by Esperanza Castro Cobos (1985, pp. 283-94) and Isabel de Riquer (1987, pp. 83-96). *Tyolet* is not found in the Norse *Strengleikar* collection.

Date, Author

The date of the text depends to a great extent on how confident one can be in stating that the author has been influenced by texts such as the *Lais* of Marie de France and the *Conte du Graal* of Chrétien de Troyes and its Continuations. Tobin (p. 229) is mistaken in thinking that the allusion to Yvain as the son of Morgan may derive from the *Merlin* of Robert de Boron, composed at the end of the twelfth century (see note to v. 630 of the present translation). But her view (*ibid*.) that *Tyolet* was probably composed at the beginning of the thirteenth century is as precise as one can be. No information concerning the author is found in the text. On the basis of his failure to respect traditional rules of declension, Tobin (*ibid*.) suggests that he might have come from the west of France, but

this could be an inherited scribal feature and it does not carry conviction as an indicator of authorial provenance.[37]

Outline of the Story

Tyolet is a young man who lives in a forest with his widowed mother. He has been taught by a fairy to whistle in such a way that wild animals are attracted to him. Normally, therefore, he has no difficulty killing game, but one day, having been asked by his mother to catch a stag, he finds the task unexpectedly difficult, for none is to be seen. Eventually, however, he does catch sight of a large, plump stag, but instead of responding to his whistle the animal takes flight and leads him towards a dangerous stretch of water, which it proceeds to cross. At that moment Tyolet spots a roebuck, which does respond to him in the normal fashion. He duly kills this animal without difficulty, but whilst he is skinning it the stag he had been chasing is suddenly transformed into a knight on horseback. Tyolet converses with the knight and asks him a number of naïve questions concerning his function and his armour. One question is: 'What sort of beast are you?' In his reply the knight describes only the external trappings of knighthood, but Tyolet is fired with enthusiasm to become what he calls a 'knight-beast' (*chevalier beste*). The knight tells him to go home and explain things to his mother, who will give him his father's armour.

In spite of her misgivings, Tyolet's mother does indeed give him the armour, and she advises him to make his way to Arthur's court. On his arrival there, Arthur invites him to dismount and eat with him; he asks him who he is and why he has come. As Tyolet is about to eat with Arthur, a beautiful girl, daughter of the King of Logres, suddenly enters, followed by a white brachet with a bell round its neck. She announces that she will give her love to, and take as her husband, the man who can bring her the white foot of the stag which lives in the forest and is guarded by seven lions; the brachet will act as guide.[38] A number of Arthur's knights, beginning with Lodoer, attempt this feat, but none is successful; they are afraid to follow the dog when it enters a broad, deep river. When Tyolet himself makes the attempt, he follows the dog into the water, crosses

[37] Gaston Paris asks (p. 37) whether *Tyolet*, along with the other lays included in his 1879 *Romania* article, should be attributed to Marie de France. The only one which could not in his view be by Marie is *Lecheor*, because of the 'expressions' it contains and its 'peintures déshonnêtes' (p. 39).

[38] A brachet is a hunting hound used to pick up the scent of a hart on the morning of a hunt. See John Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk: The Art of Medieval Hunting* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), pp. 22-25, 47.

the river and is taken to the stag. He whistles to attract the animal and duly removes its foot. The animal's cries attract the seven lions, but after a struggle Tyolet manages to kill them all, whereupon he falls wounded and exhausted at their side.

At this point an unknown knight arrives on the scene. Tyolet unwisely recounts the adventure to him and gives him the white foot. This knight departs, then returns and strikes Tyolet, leaving him for dead. The impostor then proceeds to claim the maiden's hand at Arthur's court. The king, however, noticing that the brachet had not returned with the claimant, orders a week's delay. When the dog does return, Gauvain follows it and discovers the injured Tyolet. A maiden suddenly arrives and Gauvain asks her to take Tyolet to a doctor. He hen returns to court to relate what has happened. The false claimant denies everything, but in due course Tyolet arrives and asks him whether it was he who cut off the stag's foot. To this the knight replies in the affirmative, but he has no answer when asked whether he killed the seven lions and whether he was the one who struck Tyolet himself. The knight asks for mercy and Tyolet pardons him. Tyolet duly marries the maiden, leaves court and goes to her country, where they will reign together as king and queen.

The Origin of Lays as a Genre

We shall never know just how and precisely when Breton lays were first composed, but *Tyolet* makes a contribution to the debate, for its lengthy Prologue purports to tell us something about the original composition and transmission of lays. Brave knights, we are told, would go in search of 'beles aventures' and later, when they returned to court, those who 'found' such adventures would recount their experiences (vv. 7-24).[39] This is not unlike the account we find in another anonymous lay, *Lecheor*, in which knights and beautiful ladies gather together once a year (at the festival of St Pantelion in July) to exchange stories of the chivalric and amorous adventures in which they had been involved since they last met. In *Lecheor* the finest deeds are turned into a lay, with music and song added to the words; the lays are composed collectively, preserved by clerics and knights and performed by skilled musicians who carry them forward until they become known in many lands.[40] A new element in *Tyolet* is that clerics at court ('preude clerc', v. 27) are said to have written down the stories, not in the vernacular but in the more

[39] The verb *trover* 'to find, invent, compose' is used four times in eleven lines (vv. 16, 20, 23, 26).

[40] See G.S. Burgess and L.C. Brook, *Three Old French Narrative Lays*, pp. 66-67 (esp. vv. 1-36) and 70-71 (esp. vv. 103-14).

prestigious Latin language. The aim of the clerics, we are told, was to preserve stories for posterity, so that they would be available when required for the entertainment of future generations (vv. 31-32). In this way Latin would act as a depository for stories, which could be opened up when needed.

In Lecheor clerics help to disseminate the lays which are said to give many people great pleasure (vv. 113-14). In *Tyolet* the author states that in his day these stories in Latin are being translated into the vernacular and currently being told and recounted (the verb *raconter* is used in vv. 25 and 33). Our ancestors tell us, states the author, that from these vernacular stories the Bretons composed many lays. All this would indicate that the author of *Tyolet* regarded the Breton compositions as considerably earlier in date than the story he was about to relate.

The only substantial difference between the accounts in *Lecheor* and *Tyolet* lies in the reference to Latin versions interposed between the original oral tale and the Breton lay. The logic of what the author of *Tyolet* says is that he envisaged the origin of his lay as an account of Tyolet's early life and adventures, which would have been given by Tyolet himself after he had become King of Logres. His tale would have been written down in Latin and then become the lay of *Tyolet* as we have it. It is not clear whether in vv. 35-36 the author is indicating that there were other vernacular versions of the story between the Breton lay and the extant tale. Over the years scholars have been sceptical about the account of events found in *Lecheor* and *Tyolet*, and it is uncertain how much faith we should have in them. It may be wise to accept both accounts without ruling out other possibilities, and we should remember the tendency of authors to seek to ensure a measure of authenticity for their tales.[41]

Structure

The text can be divided into the following episodes:

1-36 Prologue

37-74 Introduction: Tyolet and his mother; his skill at whistling

[41] In the prose *Queste del saint Graal*, dating from around 1220, we find a similar comment. In his Epilogue the author states that the *aventures* recounted in his narrative were related to King Arthur by Bors, who was a participant in them and thus an eye-witness. The king then ordered that they should be set down in Latin by the clerics (*clers*) whose task it was to write down the adventures experienced by the knights who lived at court. Bors's account was then kept in the Library of Salisbury and later translated into French (ed. by A. Pauphilet, CFMA, 33, Paris: Champion, 1923, pp. 279-80).

75-118	Tyolet's attempt to catch a stag; his encounter with the knight whom he calls a knight-beast
119-82	Tyolet learns about knightly armour
183-246	Tyolet's wish to become a knight himself; the knight-beast's prophecy
247-74	The prophecy is realised when Tyolet goes home to his mother
275-320	Tyolet goes to Arthur's court and meets the king
321-64	The arrival of a maiden, the daughter of the King of Logres; her challenge that she will marry the knight who brings her the stag's foot
365-410	First Lodoer, then other knights, attempt the challenge unsuccessfully
411-88	Tyolet undertakes the challenge; although successful, he is wounded
489-526	Tyolet gives the foot to an unknown knight, who attempts to kill him and then falsely claims his prize at Arthur's court
527-74	Suspicious, Arthur imposes a week's delay; Gauvain sets out to find Tyolet
575-620	Gauvain finds Tyolet, sends him to a doctor and returns to challenge the knight at court
621-92	Tyolet returns to court and successfully exposes the knight's treachery
693-703	Tyolet and the princess marry; he leaves with her to become king of her territory
704	Epilogue: 'De Tyolet le lai ci fine'

When compared with those found in the lays of Marie de France and other anonymous lays, the Prologue here is particularly long (36 lines), and the Epilogue, if indeed it can be called an Epilogue, very short (1 line). The most noticeable aspect of the structure of the lay is that it falls readily into two unequal parts: (i) Tyolet's meeting with the knight-beast and the receipt of his father's armour from his mother (vv. 37-280), (ii) the adventure at Arthur's court which culminates in his marriage to the princess of Logres (vv. 281-703). This division into two parts does not of itself create any particular difficulty. But one needs to note the way in which Tyolet is introduced in the second part of the story. When a number of challengers have failed the maiden's test, we read: 'Not a single one of them who went there / Failed to sing the same song / As Lodoer had sung, / Who was a valiant knight, / Except for just one knight / Who was very brave and agile; / He was called knight-beast, / And his name was Tyolet' (vv. 411-18). As a number of

scholars have pointed out, this could be considered as indicating that the audience for this part of the tale had not heard how events had unfolded in the first part and may in fact have never heard of Tyolet. This raises the issue of whether two possibly unrelated stories have been brought together to create a new whole. But before we can decide the extent to which this lay is in its entirety a satisfying composition, and whether or not the themes of the first part blend harmoniously with those of the second, we need to look at the various elements which make up the tale as we have it.

Sources

Tyolet relates the story of how, in an impressively short space of time, a naïve youth becomes the husband of a princess and thereby succeeds her father as king. Alternatively, one could say that the story illustrates the initiation into chivalry, and the swift rise to power, of a youth endowed with special gifts and destined for success. From these points of view, the narrative possesses a satisfying degree of unity.

The poem as a whole has no readily identifiable source. Unlike the lay of *Doon*, *Tyolet* does not contain any scenes or themes which make us think immediately of one or more of the lays of Marie de France. But there are nevertheless a number of interesting analogies with her lays: a stag is important to the narrative in *Guigemar*; the transformation of a man into animal form occurs in *Bisclavret*; in *Yonec* the hawk which flies through the lady's window is transformed into a handsome knight; the withdrawal of a knight from Arthur's court to be with his beloved is a feature of *Lanval*. But in *Tyolet* there does not seem to be any direct structural or thematic borrowing from Marie on a large scale. We can note, however, that *Tyolet* has a happy ending, as do *Guigemar*, *Le Fresne*, *Lanval*, *Milun* and, to a certain extent, *Eliduc*.

There are, however, one or two verbal reminiscences between *Tyolet* and Marie's *Lais*.[42] Foulet (p. 52) and Tobin (p. 229) point to the similarity between vv. 35-36 of *Tyolet* ('Bretons en firent lais plusors, / Si con dïent nos ancessors') and references in Marie's lays to the Bretons composing lays (*Guigemar*, v. 20, *Equitan*, vv. 1-8, 312, *Lanval*, v. 642, *Deus Amanz*, vv. 5, 244, *Laüstic*, vv. 2, 159, *Eliduc*, vv. 1, 1182-83). Verse 38 of *Tyolet* is identical to v. 2 of *Le Fresne* ('Selunc le cunte que jeo sai'). Of particular interest is the fact that the lady in *Tyolet* is described in identical terms (vv.

[42] This issue has been examined by L. Foulet ('Marie de France et les lais bretons', 29 (1905), 19-56, 293-322 (pp. 48-52)). Line references and quotations from the *Lais* of Marie de France are taken from the edition by A. Ewert.

696-98) to those used of Lanval's lady (vv. 94-96). In *Lanval*, albeit in different circumstances, Gauvain supports Lanval as he does Tyolet.

A closer thematic parallel is with the anonymous lay of *Melion,* in which the daughter of the King of Ireland marries Melion and then, when they are out hunting together, asks him to bring her part of a stag which Melion has drawn to her attention. There are also parallels between the endings of *Tyolet, Doon* and *Desiré*; in all three lays the hero seems set to enjoy both political power and a happy relationship with his beloved. *Tyolet* is also linked to *Doon* through the theme of a marriage-test involving skill or bravery on the part of the suitor, although in *Doon* the test has been set as a deterrent to, rather than an inspiration and spur for, marriage. In *Tyolet* the challenge to bring back a trophy confirming the conquest of the beast is reminiscent of an incident in the Tristan legend, which also involves a false claimant. In the Thomas version of the Tristan story, Yseut's hand is to be given to the man amongst the nobility who can rid Ireland of the scourge of a dragon. Although Tristan succeeds in slaying the creature, he is poisoned by its tongue, which he has cut out. A seneschal, who is in love with Yseut and has followed Tristan, then cuts off the dragon's head, claiming that he has slain the beast. As in *Tyolet*, the falsehood is eventually discovered, and Tristan is able to claim Yseut, although not for himself, but as a bride for King Mark of Cornwall.[43] Another text which contains a dramatic transformation of a beast into a human is *Le Bel Inconnu*, in which the repulsive serpent kisses the hero Guinglain, son of Gauvain, and is then released from enchantment to become the attractive Blonde Esmeree.[44]

But undoubtedly the closest analogy between *Tyolet* and a contemporary text is that with the opening of Chrétien de Troyes's *Conte du Graal*.[45] Tyolet and Chrétien's Perceval are both the sons of deceased knights and they live in a forest with their widowed mother. Both mothers wish to keep their sons away from the dangerous world of chivalry and both sons are expert hunters. There is, however, no mention in Chrétien's

[43] See the reconstruction of the lost parts of Thomas's *Tristan* in Joseph Bédier, *Le Roman de Tristan par Thomas*, 2 vols, SATF (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1902-05), I, chapters xiii-xiv. Tobin (p. 135) refers to another instance of a similar motif in *Perlesvaus*, but in this case the link is more tenuous: Perceval defeats and slays the Knight of the Dragon and wins the Circle of Gold, which is then stolen by Nabigan, later slain by Gawain (see Nigel Bryant, *The High Book of the Grail: A Translation of the Thirteenth Century Romance of Perlesvaus*, Cambridge and Totowa, NJ: D.S. Brewer, 1978, branch 9).

[44] Renaut de Beaujeu, *Le Bel Inconnu*, ed. by G. Perrie Williams, CFMA, 38 (Paris: Champion, 1929), v. 3185ff.

[45] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Roman de Perceval ou le Conte du Graal*, ed. by W. Roach. TLF, 71 (Geneva and Paris, 1959).

romance of the skill of attracting animals by whistling or, when Perceval meets a group of knights, of any transformation from animal into human form. Of particular interest, however, is the way in which both Perceval and Tyolet interrogate the chivalric spokesman. They are both dazzled by the armour they can see, both ask who the men are to whom they are speaking and are told they are 'knights', and both want the various items of equipment to be named. In *Tyolet* the questions relate to six items, in the order helmet, shield, hauberk, leggings, sword and lance. Perceval has fewer questions and they concern the lance, the shield and the hauberk. The knight to whom Perceval speaks states that he has recently been dubbed by King Arthur, and in *Tyolet* the knight-beast also seems to be an Arthurian knight. Both mothers give their sons advice as they are about to leave, and both Perceval and Tyolet travel directly to Arthur's court. However, if there is evidence to suggest either that one of these texts borrowed from the other or that there was a common source,[46] there are also numerous differences between the two texts. For example, the opening idyllic Spring topos in the *Conte du Graal* is absent from *Tyolet*, and in Chrétien's poem there is an element of humour not found in the anonymous lay. Unlike in the *Conte du Graal*, too, it is the mother who directs her son to Arthur's court in *Tyolet*, and her advice on knightly behaviour is much briefer than in Chrétien's poem.

Other comparisons between *Tyolet* and contemporary works in Old French can be noted. Tobin (p. 233, n. 19) draws attention to the comparison, indicated long ago by Lucy Paton, between Tyolet's magic gift and that given to Auberon in *Huon de Bordeaux*, enablin him to attract beasts by a special sign:

> Si me donna tel don que vous orrés:
> Il n'est oisiax ne beste ne sengler,
> Tant soit hautains ne de grant cruauté,
> Se jou le veul de ma main acener,
> C'a moi ne viene volentiers et de gré. (vv. 3573-77)[47]

('She gave me such a gift as you shall hear: there is no bird, beast, or boar, however noble or aggressive, that, if I sign to it with my hand, does not come to me freely and willingly.')

[46] Tobin cites Jessie L. Weston, who thought that the lay of *Tyolet* or an early form of it preceded Chrétien's *Conte du Graal* (*The Legend of Sir Lancelot du Lac: Studies upon its Origin, Development, and Position in the Arthurian Romantic Cycle*, London: Nutt, 1901, p. 63).

[47] Ed. by Pierre Ruelle (Brussels: Presses Universitaires de Bruxelles, 1960). See Lucy A. Paton, *Studies in the Fairy Mythology of Arthurian Romance* (Boston: Ginn and Co, 1903), p. 172.

The influence of a fairy on a young knight is best known in the case of Lancelot. In the *Lancelot-Grail* prose cycle Lancelot is stolen as a baby and brought up by a fairy, to be presented at court when he becomes a young man, and in Chrétien de Troyes's *Chevalier de la charrette* Lancelot produces a ring given to him by this fairy which enables him to distinguish enchantment from reality.[48] Such a gift marks its recipient out as special, but it also provides the author with a narrative element which can be developed or utilised as the story requires. Tyolet not only obtains food by virtue of his ability to whistle, but the failure of the magic creature to respond to the whistling, and the way in which, instead of approaching him, it distances itself from him, lend special significance to this encounter. Tyolet's ability to attract animals through whistling will later help him to win his bride.

The quest found in the second part of *Tyolet* has links to the Second Continuation of Chrétien's *Conte du Graal* by Wauchier de Denain. In Wauchier's tale Perceval asks for the favours of one of the pupils of Morgan the Fay. The girl agrees, on condition that Perceval bring her the head of a white stag, and she provides him with a white brachet with which to track it down. With the dog's help, Perceval catches and decapitates the stag, but as he is returning to the fairy he is robbed of both the head and the brachet. When he eventually recovers them, he presents them to the fairy, who grants him the favours he desires. R.S. Loomis states that both Wauchier's story and that found in *Tyolet* 'must derive from a common remote source'.[49]

Tyolet thus clearly contains several incidents and situations which recall other extant Old French works. But the uncertainty of dating means that we can go no further than point to parallels or comparable situations which are never identical. Whether the writer had a direct source, or whether he used his memory to assemble eclectically the amalgam constituted by the present poem, we cannot tell. Tobin is probably right to conclude that '*Tyolet* paraît être une fusion de plusieurs vieilles traditions' (p. 235).

[48] Chrétien de Troyes, *Chevalier de la charrete*, ed. by M. Roques (Paris: Champion, 1958), vv. 2345-50.

[49] R.S. Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949; repr. New York: Octagon Books, 1982), p. 69. The Second Continuation is found in *The Continuations of the Old French Perceval of Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. by W.J. Roach, 5 vols (Philadelphia, 1949-83), IV (1971).

Themes and Characters

The thematic *triggers* for Tyolet's remarkable transformation from naïve youth to future king are: (i) his ability to capture wild beasts, (ii) his meeting with a knight who explains to him the superficial trappings of knighthood, (iii) the receipt of his father's armour from his mother and her advice to go to King Arthur, (iv) Arthur's welcome at court, (v) the arrival of the maiden at Arthur's court and her challenge involving the capture of a wild beast, (vi) Tyolet's extraordinary prowess, manifested in his defeat of the seven lions, (vii) the support of King Arthur and of Gauvain. The themes which need to be examined in some detail are: (i) the role of women in Tyolet's life, (ii) Tyolet's initiation into chivalry, (iii) the realistic and non-realistic elements in the poem, and (iv) the role of Arthur's court.

(i) Women, Love and Marriage. Before the poem opens, a seemingly successful marriage has come to an end. Tyolet's father died fifteen years previously, apparently in chivalric combat. The narrative ends when Arthur gives Tyolet to the daughter of the King of Logres and she takes him away to her land. A happy marriage and a successful reign as king and queen are implied.

Tyolet has clearly been brought up by his mother with the greatest affection and care. Indeed, the only love mentioned in the first part of the poem is that between mother and son ('Sa mere l'ot molt amé', v. 64; 'car forment l'ama', v. 76). But this was a stifling love, aimed at protecting him from the dangers of chivalry. The only other influence on Tyolet's early life was also feminine, that of the fairy who taught him how to whistle. The mother, we are told, was a lady of great worth who knew the value of loyalty (vv. 73-74), qualities which are precisely those required of a good knight. The fairy's gift, which assured Tyolet and his mother of a constant supply of good food, ultimately becomes a crucial factor in his swiftly achieved social elevation. His mother's role in his rise to power is to provide him with the armour he requires and to advise him to make his way to Arthur's court as a well-equipped knight. She is also rightly concerned lest at any stage he should dally (*donoier*, v. 273) with a woman of dubious profession; this concern will, however, turn out to be unfounded.

The third lady of importance in Tyolet's life is the *pucele* who arrives at court just as he is about to eat with King Arthur. She is said, like the lady in *Doon*, to be proud (*orgueilleuse*, v. 322; cf. *Doon*, vv. 18, 264). We are not told the cause of her pride, but can assume that it stems from her upbringing and high lineage. Her characteristics are

those of a true courtly heroine, her exceptional beauty being stressed on several occasions. When we first meet the maiden, her 'cler vis' is said to outdo that of Dido or Helen.[50] In addition, she is twice described as 'bele' and also as both courtly and noble ('molt ... cortoise et bele', v. 400; 'tant par est et noble et bele', v. 526). At the close of the text, just as she is about to accept Tyolet as her future husband, the author is even more fulsome in his praise of her:

> Fleur de lis [ou] rose novele
> Quant primes nest el tans d'esté
> Trespassoit ele de biauté. (vv. 696-98)

These lines are a direct borrowing from Marie de France's *Lanval* (vv. 94-96), and they thus link the maiden textually with Lanval's fairy mistress and confirm any suspicions one might have that she too possesses otherworldly characteristics (when Marie's lady arrives at court, she is also accompanied by a hunting dog, in this case a *levrer*, v. 574).[51]

However, there are strong realistic elements in the maiden's behaviour. She tells Arthur that she is an only child and has come to court with the blessing of her parents in order to seek a husband. The swiftness with which Tyolet becomes king would suggest that the maiden's father was old and that the quest for a husband for his daughter was a matter of urgency, to ensure succession and the continuance of the lineage. The warm greeting offered by the maiden to Arthur on her parents' behalf ('Et si vos mandent par amor', v. 343), and directed at a king of great valour (v. 344), illustrates not only the esteem in which Arthur is held by another king, but it also acts as a guarantee of the quality of any husband discovered from amongst Arthur's knights and as a reassuring sign of the continuing good relations between Arthur's court and that of the King and Queen of Logres.[52] The maiden's success in meeting and marrying Tyolet suggests that the ploy has worked admirably; the test she sets for her future husband is, unlike that of the lady in *Doon*, sufficiently demanding to prevent one of the less skilled knights from accomplishing it.

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[50] In Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide* Enide's cousin is said to be more beautiful than Helen (ed. M. Roques, Paris: Champion, 1952, vv. 6291-93).

[51] For more details on links between *Lanval* and *Tyolet*, see Foulet, pp. 49-51.

[52] The only other examples of the term *amor* in the text concern the love felt by the lions for the stag ('De molt grant amor l'amoient', v. 446), the kiss with which Arthur greets Tyolet on his return ('Puis le baise par grant amor', v. 627) and the one with which Tyolet confirms his pardon of the false claimant ('Si l'en bese par grant amor', v. 691). The term is not used in an erotic context.

If all this has a realistic side to it, the maiden's refusal to bestow her love on any man who cannot give her the white foot of the stag (vv. 351-52), her allusion to the animal's gleaming, gilt-like coat (vv. 354-55), her knowledge that this stag is guarded by seven lions and her possession of a white brachet which will lead the challenger to the stag all indicate supernatural characteristics (see below for further discussion of the *merveilleux* in this poem). But when the *aventure* is over and the maiden takes Tyolet as her husband, the couple leave court to rule over a community set in the real world, not in an otherworldly community such as *Lanval*'s Avalon.[53] Although the maiden promises to give her *amistié* to no one other than the man who brings her the white foot (vv. 351-52), at no time is love mentioned between her and Tyolet. She marries him essentially for the political function he can perform as king of her father's territory. When Tyolet requests her hand in marriage, as he hands over the white foot, which he has retrieved from the false claimant (vv. 693-700), he gives no reason for his wish to marry her. But he cannot have failed to be impressed by her outstanding beauty, which is mentioned yet again as she takes possession of the object of his quest and her desire.

There is a fourth female personage in Tyolet's life, the *pucele* who suddenly arrives just as Gauvain has discovered him in an injured state. Her arrival is announced in exactly the same words as that of the princess of Logres ('Atant es vos une pucele', vv. 321, 551), which would suggest a connection between the two. The role of the second maiden is to assist in Tyolet's recovery, which she does by agreeing to Gauvain's request that she take him to a doctor (vv. 557-64). Her sudden appearance could be considered to indicate that, in fairy-like fashion, she knows where her presence is required. Pierre-Marie Joris sees this girl as an emissary of the healing doctor from the Black Mountain and also as a prolongation of both the *fee* who had taught Tyolet to whistle and the

[53] A difficulty presents itself here, however. The maiden claims to be the daughter of the King of Logres (vv. 327, 341). But Logres is normally presented in romance either as Arthur's principal seat (so called as it was founded by Logryn or Locrinus, the successor to Brutus) or as Arthur's kingdom as a whole. The term also does service for 'England'. In her Index des Noms propres Tobin gives 'Angleterre, ou un royaume en Angleterre' (p. 376). See Louis-Fernand Flutre, *Table des noms propres avec toutes leurs variantes figurant dans les romans du Moyen Age* (Poitiers: Centre d'Études Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale, 1962), p. 262. In the *Lais* of Marie de France the form Logres is found in a passage in *Eliduc* which is not dissimilar to that in *Tyolet*: 'Dame, jo sui de Logres nee, / Fille a un rei de la cuntree' (vv. 1071-72). This might suggest that Tyolet will become king of an area (*cuntree*) of Arthur's own territory. Eliduc is earlier said to travel to the kingdom of Loengre (v. 69). Milun is described as being well known in Loengre (*Milun*, v. 17), and in *Lanval* the Picts and Scots enter 'la tere de Loengre' (v. 9). Writing for a continental audience, the author of *Tyolet* may have misunderstood the usage of the term Logres and interpreted it as a region of Britain.

princess of Logres herself, whom he describes as 'parée de tous les attributs de la féerie' (pp. 53-54).[54]

(ii) Chivalry. Essential to the structure of this lay are the way in which the hero is initiated into chivalry and the fact that within the narrative he demonstrates his exceptional prowess and bravery, thereby winning the maiden who becomes his wife. In an era when kings were expected to lead their men on the battlefield, Tyolet will need the highest level of chivalric skills when he becomes King of Logres. From the outset we know that chivalric activity will loom large in the poem. In the Prologue, Arthur's court is said to have contained knights who were 'hardiz et fiers', two adjectives which are precisely those used by the princess of Logres when she tells Arthur what qualities her future husband will require (vv. 345-46, cf. v. 221). One of the author's aims was to contrast contemporary knights with those of times gone by. There were many worthy and renowned knights in his day, he tells us, but they were not up to the standard of the powerful and generous knights of old (vv. 9-14). These knights used to journey night and day, without squires, in search of adventures (v. 16), and sometimes they would not encounter a dwelling or a tower for two or three days; some of their finest adventures occurred on dark nights (vv. 17-24).[55] We are clearly meant to understand that King Arthur's knights were men of considerable mettle, and that they were models for later generations to follow.

When the story gets under way, we soon discover that chivalry is in Tyolet's blood, for we learn that his father was a knight who had died fifteen years previously (vv. 51-55). His mother had retained his father's armour, so she was able to pass it on to his son (vv. 241-45, 263-66). But when he first meets the knight-beast, Tyolet has absolutely no knowledge of knighthood, and he has grown up without ever setting eyes on a knight (vv. 55-58). Unsurprisingly, the encounter is a source of wonder for him ('A merveilles l'a esgardé', v. 115; 'De tel chose se merveilloit', v. 117). His mother's distaste for chivalry and her determination to protect her son from it are revealed both by their residence 'en .I. bois' (v. 50), ten leagues from another dwelling, and by her distress when she hears of his conversation in the forest (vv. 234, 254).

[54] Joris also sees a close association between the first *fee* and Tyolet's mother, whom he calls the 'mère-fée' (p. 51ff.).

[55] The interpretation of vv. 19-21 remains uncertain (see the note to these lines).

When Tyolet asks his interlocutor who he is, the reply is that he is a 'chevalier' (v. 135). Tyolet's question as to what sort of 'beste' a 'chevalier' is presumably derives both from the transformation he has just witnessed and the fact that he has hitherto lived his life surrounded by beasts, not by humans (vv. 59-60). In response, and this is one of the distinctive features of the text, the knight playfully picks up the term 'beste' and incorporates it within his description of himself. During the conversation he has with Tyolet, the knight provides two similar, but not identical definitions of chivalry, one as a beast which is greatly feared and which captures and eats other beasts (vv. 141-42), the other as a beast which deceives and kills others (vv. 235-36). We can note that this description of the knight as an aggressive animal is reminiscent of the way in which in *Bisclavret* Marie de France defines a werewolf (*garwaf*), as a 'beste salvage' which devours men and wreaks havoc ('Hummes devure, grant mal fait', vv. 9-11 – see also *Melion*, vv. 273-78).

By the time Tyolet's mother comes to use the term 'beste' in her description of a knight ('Tu as tel beste veüe / Qui mainte autre prent et manjue', vv. 255-56), the reader/listener is used to the appearance of this word in the context of both wild animals and chivalry; it has already been used twenty times.[56] Having been taught by the fairy to catch beasts ('bestes prendre', v. 42), Tyolet only needs to transfer this skill to the human sphere in order to become a knight. His mother's understanding of the knight as a dangerous, flesh-eating animal presumably reflects her personal experience, but in particular it is intended to deter her son from entering the same profession, and suffering the same fate, as his father. For Tyolet, of course, the knight is a beast not because of any cruel or bestial activities, but because of his/its capacity for transformation from animal into human form.

Is there any proof in the narrative that a *chevalier* is, or can be, a dreaded beast ('beste molt cremue', v. 141)? One can begin by observing that the second part of the poem contains an allusion to an animal which is said to be greatly feared ('tant est cremu', v. 605). This animal, a serpent, is referred to by Gauvain during the verbal assault he launches against the false claimant's particular brand of chivalry. Gauvain certainly thinks that Tyolet has been a victim of cruel and savage behaviour, such as would be inflicted by an aggressive and dangerous beast. More ambiguous is the scene in

[56] See vv. 42, 44, 47, 67, 82, 84, 137, 142, 148, 151, 154, 155, 189, 191, 205, 215, 218, 231, 235, 239.

the first part of the poem in which Tyolet asks whether there is any other beast as beautiful as the 'chevalier-beste' he is talking to, and the latter points out to him two hundred of Arthur's knights who had just captured and set fire to a 'fort meson' and were now returning home (vv. 193-204). Have these knights acted like beasts? Perhaps not, for they were merely following Arthur's orders (v. 200), but they have certainly caused a good deal of destruction. The knight (and thus the author) uses these men and what they have done to illustrate both the beauty of the knightly profession and the consequences for anyone who opposes them and their lord. The knight-beast points out that in order to be like these men Tyolet would have to be 'preuz' and 'hardi' (v. 221), adjectives already applied in the Prologue to Arthur's knights (v. 8). It is only when Tyolet assures him that he possesses these attributes that the knight seems convinced that the youth has what it takes to become a knight himself. At this point, the knight-beast repeats his description of chivalry (vv. 235-36), but tones it down somewhat, omitting the notion that knights eat their fellow men. He does, however, continue to play along with the naïve youth's vision of the knight as a beast.

Having been dubbed by his mother,[57] Tyolet proceeds to Arthur's court and introduces himself there as a 'chevalier beste'. Interestingly, he defines himself through the act of *trenchier* ('A mainte en ai trenchié la teste', v. 296), an act he will later be called upon to perform in order to win his bride ('Nul qui tant soit hardiz ne fiers / Qui le blanc pié du cerf tranchast', vv. 346-47, cf. vv. 459, 651). Tyolet tells Arthur that he is skilled in capturing game ('prendre venoison', v. 298) and then goes on to ask him for instruction in *sens*, *cortoisie* and *chevalerie* and also for training in tourneying, jousting and the art of spending and giving wisely (vv. 301-06). He has evidently either been told that Arthur's court is the place to learn these things or he has an instinctive view of Arthur's superiority in such matters. Tyolet goes on to claim that there has never been, and never will be, a court where such training could be bettered (vv. 307-10).

Tyolet's education in these areas never materialises, as he immediately becomes involved in the adventure of the stag's foot. This adventure will involve a high level of chivalry and can only be achieved by a knight who is 'hardi' and 'fier' (vv. 345-47). Once the maiden has issued her challenge, we are told that all the knights who had ever

[57] Dubbing by a woman is by no means unknown. In Marie de France's *Milun* the hero is dubbed by his aunt (v. 294).

performed a praiseworthy deed[58] wish to set off in search of the stag, thus confirming its status as a demanding quest and also demonstrating that the maiden's hand in marriage is an enticing prospect.[59] Much to the amusement of his fellow knights, Lodoer, the first to attempt the challenge, fails to bring back the required foot. Although described as a 'vaillanz chevaliers' (v. 414, cf. v. 545), he lacks the extra level of courage needed to risk his life to achieve his aim. All the other knights who make the attempt meet the same fate, with the exception of Tyolet, who is described as 'molt ... preuz et legier' (v. 416). He has the courage and skills required to cross the dangerous water and is consequently led by the maiden's brachet to the stag, which is guarded by seven lions (vv. 437-46). Although he is attacked on all sides by the lions, and his hauberk is broken and his flesh torn, he nevertheless succeeds in killing them all (v. 483). Gauvain later confirms Tyolet's accomplishment, defining him as a knight who has performed deeds worthy of great esteem ('Cel chevalier / Qui molt par fesoit a proisier', vv. 559-60).

It is at this point that the ugly side to chivalry rears its head; we are reminded that a knight does have the potential to be a beast which deceives and kills others. A knight arrives, hears Tyolet's tale and is given the stag's foot (vv. 489-98). This is presumably the first occasion in his life when Tyolet has encountered a hostile male, hence his failure to suspect trickery and his willingness to hand over the all-important white foot. The knight departs, but then returns, intending to murder Tyolet in order to prevent him from challenging him at some future time (v. 510). Tyolet is saved thanks to an altogether different kind of knight, the courtly Gauvain ('Gauvains, qui tant fu cortois', v. 535), who finds Tyolet, arranges for him to be cared for and then returns to court to challenge the false claimant.[60] Gauvain makes the point at some length, and in metaphorical terms, that it is a matter of great shame for a knight to boast of something another man has achieved (vv. 598-605); such words are lacking in substance ('Ce que vos dites rien ne vaut', v. 607). In response, the knight at least shows that he is sensitive to Gauvain's criticism by recognizing that he has been accused of being uncourtly ('vilain', v. 612) and cowardly (vv. 613-14). Attempting to maintain his status as knight, he offers to fight anyone who

[58] One notes the similarity between *Tyolet*, v. 366 ('Qui de rien feïst a prisier') and Marie de France, *Chaitivel*, v. 14 ('Quë aukes feïst a preisier').

[59] The verb *querre* is used in vv. 368, 372, 376, 408, 422.

[60] The motif of the false claimant or impostor is found in a number of Old French texts, including the Tristan legend (see H. Newstead, 'The Origin and Growth of the Tristan Legend', in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History*, ed. by R.S. Loomis, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959, p. 126).

wishes to prove this accusation, but Tyolet's sudden arrival puts an end to the dispute. Willing to claim that he has cut off the white foot, but not that he had killed the seven lions, the knight feels shame (v. 664) and finally confesses the truth. Tyolet accedes to the advice of the king and his knights and pardons him.

Although the negative side of chivalry is visible in this poem, justice is finally done. An outstanding young knight succeeds in his quest and wins the hand of a beautiful maiden and is thereby elevated to the level of royalty. A knight's bravery thus serves to bring him high office. We can note that, although the combat does not take place, the issue of who was telling the truth could have been decided on the battlefield ('en champ', v. 620), as Tyolet accepts the hostile knight's challenge (vv. 676-78). But the hostile knight demonstrates that he has abandoned the knightly ethos; the author states that he fears death more than shame (v. 681). Tyolet's willingness to grant mercy to the knight ('Tyolet li pardonna', v. 685) suggests that he has the compassion which will serve him well in his role as king; he even kisses the offending knight 'par grant amor' (v. 691). One may perhaps conclude that the author has attempted to show that chivalry does indeed harbour bestial instincts, but that it is capable of transcending them.

(iii) Realism and the *merveilleux*. Although *Tyolet* is the story of a knight's boyhood and subsequent rise to power, there are clearly elements within the structure of the poem which are non-realistic. Early in the tale we are told of Tyolet's capacity to attract wild beasts by whistling. This was not an innate gift, as he had been taught the skill by a fairy (vv. 45-46). We are not told anything further concerning this supernatural being, or of the circumstances under which he received his instruction, but this skill is crucial to both parts of the text. So successful was Tyolet at capturing game that his failure to do so on one occasion acts as a clear sign that something in his life is about to change. In due course, the animal he cannot attract by whistling is transformed into a fully-armed knight (vv. 106, 109-10). But this knight then proceeds to behave and converse very much as a normal knight, such as the one met by Perceval in Chrétien's *Conte du Graal*. It is only when the knight gives Tyolet advice on how he can become a knight, and predicts with great accuracy what his mother will say and do (vv. 223-46), that we realise he possesses the gift of prophecy, such as we find in *Doon* and in Marie de France's *Yonec*. Doon (vv. 177-78) and Muldumarec (vv. 327-28) both predict that a son will be born to their beloved. In *Tyolet* the gift of prophecy is of lesser significance, and it is perhaps attenuated by the fact that anyone with knowledge of the mother's view of chivalry could

have predicted her negative reaction with a fair degree of accuracy. But so accurate is the prediction that one wonders if the knight is to be viewed as Tyolet's father in disguise. Or does the fact that the mother reacts exactly as predicted indicate that she is under some form of spell?

Also attenuated are the supernatural qualities of the maiden who arrives at Arthur's court. As pointed out above, she resembles the daughter of the King of Ireland in *Melion*, who approaches Melion whilst he is out hunting, marries him and during a further hunting expedition asks him to bring her part of a stag which he has drawn to her attention. One might conclude that, just as Lanval's fairy mistress comes from her land specifically for him (v. 111), so the maiden in *Tyolet* comes specifically for Tyolet.[61] Only a knight with extraordinary courage and a special ability to capture a particular stag could satisfy her need for an exceptional husband. Unlike the established Arthurian knights, the outsider Tyolet possesses the qualities required.

The princess of Logres is accompanied by a white brachet. Although a commonly used hunting dog, this animal is employed here to guide the challenger for the white foot to a specific location, initially to a raging torrent of water, into which it plunges with the expectation that the suitor will follow. The author points out that the animal possesses the power of thought ('Selonc son sens tres bien cuida', v. 384).[62] Although the brachet later leads Tyolet to the stag with the white foot, it does not return to Arthur's court with the false claimant, and its absence is crucial to Arthur's decision to postpone the handing over of the maiden. When the brachet finally reappears, it leads Gauvain to Tyolet, thus enabling the plot to proceed and the final harmony to be achieved. The strong impression one has that the white brachet belongs to the domain of the *merveilleux* is confirmed by other stories in which this type of hound occurs. These have been studied by Claude Luttrell, who concludes that, where this motif is concerned, 'there nearly always persist traces of the supernatural'.[63]

[61] The way in which the knight-beast penetrates the forest and draws Tyolet first towards its edge and then just beyond it suggests that the 'knight-beast' too had come specifically in search of Tyolet (vv. 89-92).

[62] The brachet performs a function similar to that of the white hind in *Graelent*, the white boar in *Guingamor* and the Hunt for the White Stag in *Erec et Enide*. These animals lead the heroes to love or to their future bride.

[63] Claude Luttrell, 'The Arthurian Hunt with a White Bratchet', *Arthurian Literature*, 9 (1989), 57-80 (p. 79). See above for the occurrence of a white brachet in the Second *Perceval* Continuation. In *Tyolet* the bell round the dog's neck (vv. 330-31) is a completely redundant feature, but it could be a reminiscence of Petitcru in the Tristan legend. The account of the quest for the stag's foot in *Tyolet* has been linked to the

The stag whose foot Tyolet requires in order to win the maiden is guarded by seven lions. The lions have presumably been drawn to their role as guardians by an enchantment of the same type as operates when Tyolet whistles to attract wild beasts (vv. 101-02). The stag has tamed wild beasts and placed them in its service, just as Tyolet tames and captures any beast which hears his whistle (vv. 47-48). When, in the second part of the text, Tyolet approaches the stag, intending to cut off its foot, the seven lions are nowhere to be seen, but on hearing its cries they come charging up and attack Tyolet (vv. 461-63). If it was the brachet and the attraction of Tyolet's whistling which enabled him to get to the stag before the lions could stop him, it is now his personal bravery and skill as a combatant which allow him to kill all the lions. Indeed, whenever the *merveilleux* surfaces in *Tyolet*, realism soon re-asserts itself.

(iv) King Arthur and his Court. By the time *Tyolet* was composed, King Arthur and his court had assumed thematic and symbolic importance within any narrative in which they appear. Arthur figures in three of the anonymous lays published by Prudence Tobin. In *Trot* the hero Lorois gains status and prestige from the fact that he is a knight from Arthur's Round Table, but Arthur does not have a significant role to play within the structure of this narrative. In *Melion* the eponymous hero is an Arthurian knight and here Arthur has much more of a decisive role to play, helping to launch the story and later to bring it to a conclusion. In *Tyolet* Arthur is mentioned in the first line of the text, and he and his court are amongst the elements found in both parts of the narrative. He is said to have been 'de grant pris' and to have had bold and fierce knights in his entourage (vv. 6-8). His knights outshone most current knights, says the author (vv. 9-12). Later, his household is described as noble and well educated ('franche et ensaingniee', v. 532). The knight-beast and the two hundred knights he points out to Tyolet are, we presume, from Arthur's court, and Tyolet's mother clearly knows of Arthur and his reputation, as she tells her newly dubbed son to go to him immediately (v. 270).

The second part of the narrative opens at the court of King Arthur with its reputation for *afetement*, *cortoisie* and *ensaignement*. Tyolet knows that there he will learn about *sens*, *cortoisie* and *chevalerie* and discover how to distribute largesse (vv.

Middle Dutch tale of *Lancelot and the White-Footed Deer* (see Luttrell, pp. 70-71, and the articles, cited in the Bibliography, by R. Hamburger, F. Bauke van der Schaaf and G.H.M. Claassens) and to the Spanish *Le Cerf au pied blanc* (see the article by W.J. Entwistle). See also Foulet, pp. 48-49.

303-10). Arthur recognises Tyolet's potential at once and agrees to retain him at court (v. 314). Later in the story, Arthur's wisdom ('li rois, qui tant sages fu', v. 527) will be manifested when he delays the award of the maiden's hand in marriage, and the courtly Gauvain's role in the rescue of Tyolet is crucial; it confirms Arthur's court as a place of justice. At the close of the narrative, Arthur gives the maiden to Tyolet, an act which blesses their union and thereby raises its status. The court has provided him with the means to become a powerful ruler in his own right. Everything suggests that he will be inspired by Arthur's example. No distaste for court life or criticism of Arthur is suggested here. He has an entirely positive effect on the development of the story, and everything supports the author's view that Arthur was, as the text states, a courtly and valiant king ('cortois rois et vaillanz [fu]', v. 280).

Symbols and Objects

All readers of medieval lays and romances recognise that intersecting with, and illuminating, the themes of the narrative is a series of images or symbols: locations, elements from the natural world (animals, birds, trees, plants etc.), colours, numbers and a variety of actions or objects (metals, precious stones, gestures, clothes, weapons etc.). In *Tyolet* any analysis of the stag which becomes the knight-beast, and the one which yields its right foot as a talisman for the hero, has to take into consideration both theme and symbol. Amongst the other symbols of particular interest in *Tyolet* are: (i) the forest, (ii) the water encountered by Tyolet in both sections of the text, (iii) the colour white.

(i) The Forest. The earliest image contained in the narrative is that of the forest. When the story opens, Tyolet's life has been largely confined to woods, where he lives with his mother, and to the wild beasts he has encountered and pursued there (including bears and lions, as well as all forms of game, vv. 149-50). Contacts with other human beings have been few (vv. 59-60) and he has never seen a knight. This restricted lifestyle will help to explain why, although he is of marriageable age, he acts in a childlike manner when confronted by the knight in shining armour ('Roge est et si reluist forment', v. 158). The fact that the knight is at one stage a plump stag ('.I. cerf qui ert [et] grant et gras', v. 87), which Tyolet initially intends to kill and take home to his mother, does not seem to trouble him. Where animals are concerned, he clearly expects the unexpected. As in many texts of the period, the forest is the home of those who wished to avoid contact with human society, and its values are to a great extent the opposite of those found in the courtly world. Also the forest often symbolises the feminine side of life and this is

certainly true in Tyolet's case.[64] When Tyolet leaves the forest and travels to Arthur's court, he enters a different world, one in which he can learn new things, where, in theory at least, he can find out about the techniques of chivalry and the finer points of sophisticated court life. He tells Arthur that his mother, 'the widow of the forest' (v. 300), has sent him to learn good breeding and the qualities needed by society: '"A vos m'envoie certement / Tot por aprendre afet[e]ment"' (vv. 301-02).[65]

(ii) Water. When Tyolet sets out from his mother's house in search of the stag his mother requires from him, he is very distressed by the fact that none appears. He does not catch sight of one until late in the day, after he has decided to return home (vv. 81-85). However, the stag he does eventually spot turns out to be a knight in disguise. Tyolet follows this stag, which leads him to a river. He is now clearly at the edge of the forest, at the limits of his world. The stag has gone 'beyond' ('Le cerf s'en est outre passé', v. 94; 'outre l'eve s'estoit mis', v. 107), into what is for Tyolet another world. For Tyolet the encounter with water represents a new beginning, a frontier. The river is 'grant et ravineuse / Et lee et longue et perilleuse' (vv. 95-96). The water is no doubt symbolic of Tyolet's new life, which will evidently be challenging and fraught with danger. The stag-knight can cross this barrier, but for the present Tyolet has to remain on the side he knows, on the side of normality. On his side he encounters a plump roebuck ('.I. chevrel cras et lonc et grant', v. 100), an animal which this time does respond to his whistling and allows itself to be killed and skinned. But the stag on the other side of the water is made of different stuff and it will soon initiate Tyolet into the chivalric life for which he is clearly destined. We can observe that Tyolet's life-changing conversation takes place on the riverbank ('seur la rive', v. 134; 'sor la rive', v. 220).

A similar kind of water will reappear in the second part of the story. The brachet leads Lodoer, the first challenger for the white foot, to a river which is dark, fearsome, swollen, swift-flowing and deep ('molt ... grant et lee / Et noire et hisdeuse et enflee', vv. 379-80; 'A la grant eve ravineuse / Qui molt ert parfonde et hisdeuse', vv. 435-36). The

[64] 'Forest-symbolism is complex, but it is connected at all levels with the symbol of the female principle or of the Great Mother' (J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, New York: Philosophical Library, 2nd ed. 1971, p. 112). Cirlot adds that, as the female principle is linked to the unconscious in Man, 'the forest is also a symbol of the unconscious' (*ibid*.). For a discussion of the forest in medieval romances, see Corinne J. Saunders, *The Forest of Medieval Romance: Avernus, Broceliande, Arden* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1993).

[65] We note that, unlike Perceval, Tyolet emerges from the forest and arrives at court looking like a true knight ('Chevalier beste a bien semblé', v. 268); he is not a figure of fun.

similarity between the first and second rivers in the narrative is emphasised by the repetition of the adjectives *grant* (vv. 95, 379), *ravineuse* (vv. 95, 435) and *lee* (vv. 96, 379).[66] Crossing this water is the first element of the challenge for the white foot and it requires more than just the normal level of valour which Lodoer and the other Arthurian knights possess. The successful challenger needs to be a true hero.[67]

(iii) Colours. From the panoply of colours available to him, the author has chosen primarily white.[68] The daughter of the King of Logres arrives on a white palfrey (v. 328) and beside her is a white brachet (v. 329).[69] Thus, the maiden on a white horse with a white dog seeks the white foot of the stag; securing the white foot will be to secure her as a wife. She is later compared to a lily (v. 696) and the whiteness of the dog is referred to on four further occasions (vv. 331, 430, 440, 519). The white foot is mentioned nine times (vv. 347, 352, 422, 425, 458, 518, 578, 585, 649). The colour of the foot contrasts with the blackness of the water (v. 380), which has to be crossed in order to capture the stag and remove its foot. The colour of the water can be seen as emphasising the danger of the quest, which is a struggle against devilish forces, whereas the colour white represents the purity of the adventure and the potential for a successful union between the quester and the maiden.[70]

[66] The term *eve* 'water, river' is used on eight occasions in the text (vv. 93, 95, 97, 107, 110, 378, 383, 435); there is also one example of the term *riviere* (v. 208). It is worthy of note that the princess of Logres arrives just at the moment that Tyolet is using water for social purposes, washing his hands before eating with Arthur ('Ses mains leve, si va mengier', v. 320).

[67] For water as the frontier between two worlds, see O. Jodogne, 'L'Autre Monde celtique dans la littérature française du XII^{e} siècle', pp. 584-85. For a study of dark and dangerous water, see chapter 2 ('L'Eau noire') in Gérard Chandès, *Le Serpent, la femme et l'épée. Recherches sur l'imagination symbolique d'un romancier médiéval: Chrétien de Troyes* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1986), pp. 125-39.

[68] The knight's helmet in the first section is said to be red (v. 158) and the coat of the stag with the white foot is gilt-like (v. 355, cf. v. 330). In order to be cured of his injury, Tyolet is taken to the Black Mountain (v. 561).

[69] The fairy mistress in *Lanval* rides on a white palfrey (v. 551).

[70] Number symbolism is also often found in medieval texts; see Jacques Ribard, *Le Moyen Age: littérature et symbolisme* (Paris: Champion, 1984), pp. 13-34. In *Tyolet* the lions are seven in number, a point which is stressed by the text on four occasions (vv. 356, 445, 449, 655). Ribard (pp. 25-27) reports that the number seven marks the end of one cycle and the beginning of another, thus opening up the way to new adventures; when the hawk flies through her window, Marie de France's heroine in *Yonec* has been in her tower for 'plus de set anz' (v. 37). From this point of view, the killing of the lions marks a stage, but not the only one, in Tyolet's quest for the maiden's hand; he has more obstacles to overcome. We note that Tyolet whistles seven times to attract the stag (v. 455; Tobin gives the incorrect figure of two here).

Conclusion

Like the author of Doon, the writer of *Tyolet* was clearly aiming to produce a story which would satisfy the needs of an audience of knights, ladies and clerics. This narrative would surely have corresponded in particular to the aspirations of those young knights who were willing to take risks in the hope of social and financial advancement. Thanks to the women they marry, both Doon and Tyolet achieve, through their various adventures, positions of power, and at the end of the narrative the audience has every expectation that the couples will live successful and harmonious lives. To construct his story, the author of *Tyolet* has drawn on a number of texts and traditions, and he has presented his story in two distinct parts, before and after Tyolet's arrival at the court of King Arthur. Like Chrétien de Troyes, the author plays on the satisfaction gained by an audience on hearing how a naïve youth, initially unknown at Arthur's court, outdoes his more illustrious rivals. But the question which has to be asked is: to what extent has the author of *Tyolet* been successful in combining the two parts? Can one talk of unity or coherence?

Gaston Paris (p. 41), L. Foulet (p. 48) and others have claimed that the lay of *Tyolet* is totally lacking in unity.[71] However, this view has been challenged by Herman Braet, who considers that there is unity in the lay and that it is created by the theme of the *merveilleux*: 'La féerie assure la cohérence interne et la signification de l'ensemble' (p. 67). The *merveilleux* is certainly one of the unifying factors, but the lay is about chivalry more than about the supernatural, about the way a youth who has been hidden away in a forest has his eyes opened to the potential of the outside world and will rapidly become successful within it. In the first section, Tyolet learns about knightood, to which he is clearly predestined, and in the second he outdoes a series of Arthurian knights and displays exceptional prowess.

King Arthur and his knights appear in both parts and they too act as a unifying element. The notion of crossing a dangerous stretch of water is also crucial. In the first part it is the knight-beast who crosses the water; in the second part it is Tyolet himself, who had first learned about knighthood at the water's edge. If, on the one hand, it has to be admitted that there is a certain awkwardness in the way the author (or the scribe) introduces Tyolet into the second part of the story (vv. 415-18), on the other hand the

[71] Roger Dubuis finds 'graves défauts' in the work, and he complains about its 'manque flagrant d'unité' (p. 426). Vinney states that the story 'is sometimes abrupt and elliptical and lacks clear transitions between scenes' (p. 7).

reader/listener is neverthless expected to understand the significance of Tyolet's ability to whistle (vv. 452-54). For in the second part of the narrative Tyolet requires the method of catching wild beasts which had been taught him by the fairy (vv. 42-46). In addition, he needs the wide range of talents he is said to possess when we are first introduced to him ('engingnos, / Hardi et fier et coragos', vv. 39-40). All in all, the author has combined the various traditions on which he has drawn into a harmonious and effective whole.

C’est le lay de Tyolet

f. 15v col. 1

Jadis, au tens qu’Artur regna,*
Que il Bretaingne governa
Qui Engleterre ert apelee,
Dont n’estoit mie si puplee
Comme ele or est, ce m’est a vis.
Mes Artur, qui ert de grant pris,
Avoit o lui tex chevaliers
Qui molt erent hardiz et fiers.
Encor en i a il assez
Qui molt sont preuz et alosez,
Mes ne sont pas de la maniere
Qu’il estoient du tens ariere,
Que li chevalier plus poissant,
Li miedre, li plus despendant,
Soloient molt par nuit errer,
Aventures querre et trover.
Et par jor ensement erroient,
Que il escuier nen avoient,
Si erroient si toute jor,

col. 2

Ne trouvassent meson ne tor,
Ou .II. ou .III. par aventure,
Et ensement par nuit oscure
Aventures beles trovoient
Qu’il disoient et racontoient.
A la cort erent racontees,
Si comme elles erent trovees.
Li preude clerc qui donc estoient
Totes escrire les fesoient.
Mises estoient en latin
Et en escrit em parchemin,
Por ce qu’encor tel tens seroit
Que l’en volentiers les orroit.
Or sont dites et racontees,
De latin en romanz trovees;
Bretons en firent lais plusors,
Si con dïent nos ancessors.
.I. en firent que vos dirai,
Selonc le conte que je sai
Du vallet bel et engingnos,
Hardi et fier et coragos;
Tyolet estoit apelez.
De bestes prendre sot assez
Que par son sisflé les prenoit,
Totes les bestes qu’il voloit.
Une fee ce li ora

In times gone by, during the reign of Arthur,
When he governed Britain,
Which would later be called England,
It was not as populated then
As it is now, I believe.
But Arthur, whose fame was great,
Had with him knights
Who were very bold and fierce.
These days there are still a good many
Who are very brave and renowned,
But they cannot be compared to
Those from times gone by,
When the most powerful knights,
The finest, the most generous,
Used to travel a great deal at night,
Seeking and finding adventures.
And likewise they travelled by day,
Without any squires with them.
They would travel all day long
And might not find a single dwelling or keep,
Perhaps for two or three days,*
And also on dark nights
They found great adventures,
Which they would tell and relate.
The adventures were recounted at court,
Just as they had been found.
Worthy clerics of the time
Had them all written down.
They were put into Latin
And written down on parchment,
So that when the time was right
They would be listened to with pleasure.
Now they are told and recounted,
Translated from Latin into the vernacular;
The Bretons composed a number of lays about them,
As our ancestors tell us.
They composed one which I shall relate to you,
According to the tale I know,
Of the handsome, clever youth,
Bold, fierce and courageous,
Whose name was Tyolet.
He was very skilled at catching beasts,
Which he caught by whistling,
All the beasts he desired.
A fairy bestowed this gift on him

Et a sifler li enseigna;
Dex onc nule beste ne fist*
Qu'il a son siflé ne preïst.
Une dame sa mere estoit
Qui en .I. bois adés manoit;
.I. chevalier ot a seignor
Qui mest ilec et nuit et jor.
Tot seul en la forest manoit;
De dis liues meson n'avoit.
Mort est bien ot passé .XV. anz
Et Tyolet fu biaus et granz,
Mes onques chevalier armé
N'ot veü en tot son aé,
Ne autres genz gueres sovent
f. 16r col. 1 N'ot il pas veü ensement.
El bois o sa mere manoit,
Onques jor fors issu n'avoit;
En la forez ot sejorné,
Car sa mere l'ot molt amé.
Dont i ala quant li plesoit,
Nul autre mestier ne faisoit.
Quant les bestes sifler l'ooient,
Tot erramment a li venoient;
De ceus qu[e] il voloit tuoit
Et a sa mere les portoit.
De ce vivoit lui et sa mere
Et il n'avoit ne suer ne frere;
La dame molt vaillanz estoit
Et leaument se contenoit.
A son filz .I. jor demanda
Bonement, car forment l'ama,
El bois alast, .I. cerf preïst,
Et il son commandement fist.
El bois hastivement ala,
Si con sa mere commanda.
Desqu'a tierce a el bois alé,
Beste ne cerf n'i a trouvé.
A soi molt corrouciez estoit
De ce que beste ne trouvoit.
Droit vers meson s'en volt aler,
Quant soz .I. arbre vit ester
.I. cerf qui ert [et] grant et gras,
Et il sifla eneslepas.
Li cers l'oï, si regarda;
Ne l'atendi, ainz s'en ala;

And taught him to whistle.
God never made any beast
Which he could not catch by whistling.
His mother was a lady
Who lived at that time in a wood;
She had been married to a knight
Who lived there night and day.
He lived all alone in the forest;
Within ten leagues there was no other house.
He had died a good fifteen years ago
And Tyolet had become tall and handsome,
But never in all his life
Had he seen an armed knight,
And he had scarcely ever seen
Anyone else at all.
He lived in the wood with his mother
And had not left it for a single day;
He had remained in the forest,
For his mother loved him very much.
He roamed around the wood at will,
Having no other occupation.
When the beasts heard him whistle,
They came to him at once;
He would kill those he wanted
And take them to his mother.
He and his mother lived off this,
And he had no brother or sister.
The lady was very worthy
And she behaved with perfect loyalty.
One day she asked her son
Tenderly, for she loved him dearly,
To go into the wood and catch a stag,
And he did her bidding.
He went into the wood at once,
As his mother had asked.
He remained in the wood until terce,
Without finding any beast or stag.
He was very angry with himself
For not finding any beast.
He had decided to go straight home
When beneath a tree he saw standing there
A stag which was both large and plump,
And he whistled at once.
The stag heard him and looked at him;
It paid no attention to him, instead it moved away.*

Le petit pas du bois issi
Et Tyolet tant le sevi
Qu'a une eve l'a droit mené;
Le cerf s'en est outre passé.
L'eve estoit grant et ravineuse
Et lee et longue et perilleuse.
Li cers outre l'eve passa
Et Tyolet se regarda
Triés soi, si vit venir errant
col. 2 .I. chevrel cras et lonc et grant.
Arestut soi et si sifla,
Et li chevreus vers lui ala;
Sa main tendi, illec l'ocist,
Son costel tret, el cors li mist.
Endementres qu'il l'escorcha
Et li cers se tranfigura
Qui outre l'eve s'estoit mis.
[La forme d'homme a tantost pris]*
Et .I. chevalier resembloit;
Tot armé sor l'eve s'estoit,
Sor .I. cheval detriés comé,
S'estoit com chevalier armé.
Le vallet l'a aparceü;
Onques mes tel n'avoit veü.
A merveilles l'a esgardé
Et longuement l'a avisé.
De tel chose se merveilloit,
Car onques mes veü n'avoit;
Ententivement l'avisa.
Le chevalier l'aresonna,
A lui parla premierement,
Molt bel et amiablement.
Demande li qui il estoit,
Qu'aloit querant, quel non avoit.
Et Tyolet li respondi,
Qui molt estoit preuz et hardi,
Filz a la veve dame estoit
Qui en la grant forez manoit:
'Et Tyolet m'apele l'on,
Cil qui nomer veulent mon non.
Or me dites, se vos savez,
Qui vos estes, quel non avez.'
Et cil li respondi errant,
Qui seur la rive fu estant,
Que chevalier ert apelé.

Slowly it left the wood
And Tyolet followed it,
Until it led him straight to a river;
The stag crossed over it.
The river was large and swift-flowing,
Broad, long and dangerous.
The stag crossed over the river,
And Tyolet cast a glance
Behind him and at once saw coming towards him
A plump, tall and large roebuck.
Tyolet came to a halt, whistled
And the roebuck came towards him;
He stretched out his hand and killed it on the spot,
Taking out his knife and thrusting it into its body.
Whilst he was flaying it,
The stag which had crossed over the river
Changed shape.
[It soon took on human form]
And assumed the appearance of a knight;
He was fully armed at the water's edge
And, mounted on a horse with flowing mane,
He sat like an armed knight.
The youth observed him;
He had never seen the like.
He looked upon him in amazement
And gazed at him for a long time.
He wondered at such a thing,
For he had never before seen its like.
He stared at him intently;
The knight addressed him
And spoke to him first,
Very pleasantly and amiably.
He asked him who he was,
What he was seeking and what his name was.
And Tyolet replied,
Who was very brave and bold,
That he was the son of the widow
Who lived in the great forest:
'And I am called Tyolet
By those who wish to use my name.
Now tell me, if you know,
Who you are and what your name is.'
And he replied at once,
The one who was standing on the bank,
That he was called a knight.

Et Tyolet a demandé
Quel beste chevalier estoit,
Ou conversoit et dont venoit.
‘Par foi’, fet il, ‘jel te dirai,
Que ja mot ne t’en mentirai.
f. 16v col. 1 C’est une beste molt cremue;
Autres bestes prent et menjue,
El bois converse molt souvent
Et a plainne terre ensement.’
‘Par foi’, fet il, ‘merveilles oi.
Car onques puis que aler soi
Et que par bois pris a aler,
Ainz tel beste ne poi trover.
Si connois je ors et lions
Et totes autres venoisons;
N’a beste el bois que ne connoisse
Et que ne preigne sanz angoisse,
Ne mes vos que ne connois mie.
Molt resemblez beste hardie.
Or me dites, chevalier beste,
Que est ice sor vostre teste,
Et qu’est ice qu’au col vos pent?
Roge est et si reluist forment.’
‘Par foi’, fet il, ‘jel te dirai,
Que ja de mot n’en mentirai.
C’est une coiffe, hiaume a non,
Si est d’acier tout environ.
Et cest mantel qu’ai afublé,
C’est .I. escu a or bendé.’
‘Et qu’est ice qu’avez vestuz,
Qui si est pertuisiez menuz?’
‘Une coste est, de fer ovree;
Hauberc est par non apelee.’
‘Et qu’est ice qu’avez chaucié?
Dites le moi par amistié.’
‘Chauces de fer sont apelees;
Bien sont fetes et bien ovrees.’
‘Et ce que est que ceint avez?
Dites le moi se vos volez.’
‘Espee a non, molt par est bele,
Trenchant et dure la lemele.’
‘Ice lonc fust que vos portez?
Dites le moi, ne me celez.’
‘Veus le savoir?’ ‘Oïl, par foi.’
‘Une lance que port o moi.

And Tyolet asked him
What kind of beast a knight was,
Where it lived and where it came from.
‘In faith’, he replied, ‘I shall tell you,
Without a word of a lie.
It is a beast which is much dreaded;
It captures and eats other beasts.
For much of the time it dwells in the woods
As well as on open land.’
‘In faith’, said Tyolet, ‘I am hearing wonders.
For never since I learned to walk,
And began to move about the woods,
Have I been able to find such a beast.
And I am acquainted with bears and lions
And all other forms of game;
There is no beast in the wood which I do not know
And which I do not capture without effort,
Apart from you, whom I do not know.
You are the very image of a brave beast.
Tell me now, knight-beast,
What is that on your head?
And what is that hanging round your neck?
It is red and very shiny.’
‘In faith’, he said, ‘I shall tell you,
Without a word of a lie.
It is a coif and called a helmet,
And it is made entirely of steel.
And this cloak I am dressed in
Is a shield with strips of gold.’
‘And what is that are you wearing
Which is full of little holes?’
‘That is a coat fashioned from iron;
It is called a hauberk.’
‘And what is it you have on your feet?
Be kind enough to tell me.’
‘They are called greaves and made of iron;
They are well made and well fashioned.’
‘And what is around your waist?
Tell me if you will.’
‘It is called a sword and is very beautiful;
Its blade is sharp and tough.’
‘And that long piece of wood you are carrying?
Tell me, do not conceal it from me.’
‘Do you wish to know?’ ‘Yes indeed.’
It is a lance, which I carry with me.

col. 2

Or t’en ai dit la verité
De qanque tu m’as demandé.’
‘Sire’, fet il, ‘vostre merci.
Car pleüst Dieu qui ne menti
Que j’eüsse tiex garnemenz
Con vos avez, si biaus, si genz,
Tel cote eüsse, et tel mantel
Con vos avez, et tel chapel.
Or me dites, chevalier beste,
Por Deu, et por la seue feste,
Se il est auques de tiex bestes
Ne de si beles con vos estes.’
‘Oïl’, fet il, ‘veraiement;
Ja t’en mosterré plus de cent.’
Ne demora que un petit,
Si comme li contes nos dit,
Que .II. cenz chevaliers armez
Erroient tres par mi uns prez,
Qui de la cort au roi venoient.
Son commandement fet avoient;
Une fort meson orent prise
Et en feu et en charbon mise,
Si s’en repairent tuit armé,
En .III. eschieles bien serré.
Chevalier beste dont parla
A Tyolet et conmanda
C’un seul petit avant alast,
Outre la riviere gardast.
Cil a fet son commandement;
Outre regarde isnelement,
Si voit errer les chevaliers
Trestoz armez sor les destriers.
‘Par foi’, fet il, ‘or voi les bestes
Qui totes ont coiffes es testes.
Onques mes tex bestes ne vi,*
Ne tiex coiffes con je voi ci.
Car pleüst or Dieu a sa feste
Que je fusse chevalier beste.’
Cil ra donques a lui parlé
Qui sor la rive estoit armé:

f. 17r col. 1

‘Seroies tu preuz et hardi?’
‘Oïl, par foi, le vos afi.’
Si li a dit: ‘Or t’en iras,
Et quant ta mere reverras
Et ele parlera a toi,

Now I have told you the truth
About everything you have asked me.'
'My lord', he said, 'thank you.
Would to God, who never lied,
That I might have such equipment
As you have, so fine and handsome,
That I had such a coat, such a cloak,
As you have, and such a head-piece.
Now tell me, knight-beast,
In God's name, and his holy festival,
If there are any other beasts like you
Or any as beautiful as you are.'
'Yes', he said, 'in truth;
I shall soon show you more than a hundred.'
It was only a short while later,
As the tale tells us,
That two hundred armed knights
Were making their way across a meadow;
Who came from the king's court.
They had been carrying out his orders
And had captured a fortress,
Set fire to it and reduced it to ashes;
They were returning fully armed,
In three squadrons in close array.
The knight-beast then spoke
To Tyolet and told
Him to go onwards a little
And look across the river.
He did as he was told;
He looked across immediately
And saw the knights riding
Fully armed on their warhorses.
'In faith', he said, 'now I can see the beasts,
Who all have coifs on their heads.
I have never seen such beasts as these,
Nor such coifs as I see here.
Would to God on his holy festival
That I were a knight-beast.'
The man spoke to him once more,
The one who was armed on the bank:
'Would you be brave and bold?'
'Yes, indeed, I swear to you.'
And the other said to him: 'Go now,
And when you see your mother again
And she speaks to you,

Ele dira: “Biaus filz, di moi
De quoi tu penses et que as”.
Et tu li diz eneslepas
Que tu as assez a penser,
Que tu vorroies resembler
Chevalier beste que veïs,
Et por ce eres tu pensis.
Et ele te dira briement
Que ce li poise molt forment
Que tu as tel beste veüe,
Que autre engingne et autre tue.
Et tu li dis que par ta foi
Que male joie avra de toi
Si tu ne puez estre tel beste
Et tel coiffe avoir en ta teste.
Et des ce qu’ele ce orra,
Isnelement t’aportera
Toute autretele vesteüre,
Cote et mantel, coiffe et ceinture,
Et chauces et lonc fust plané,
Tex con tu as ci esgardé.’
Atant Tyolet s’en depart,
Qu’en meson soit molt li est tart.
Puis a a sa mere donné
Le chevrel qu’il ot aporté
Et s’aventure li conta
Tot ainsi comme il la trova.
Sa mere li respont briement
Que ce li poise molt forment,
‘Que tu as tel beste veüe
Qui mainte autre prent et manjue’.
‘Par foi’, fet il, ‘or est ainsi;
Se je tel beste con je vi
Ne puis estre, bien sai et voi
Que male joie avrez de moi.’
col. 2 Mes sa mere, quant ce oï,
Isnelement li respondi:
Totes les armes qu’ele a
Isnelement li aporta,
Qui son seignor orent esté.
Molt en a bien son f[i]lz armé.
Et quant el cheval fu monté(z)
Chevalier beste a bien semblé.
‘Sez or, biauz filz, que tu feras?
Tot droit au roi Artur iras

She will say: “Fair son, tell me
What is on your mind and what is troubling you”.
And you should tell her promptly
That you have much to think about,
That you would like to resemble
The knight-beast you saw,
And that is why you were deep in thought.
And she will say to you at once
That she is very upset
That you have seen such a beast,
Which deceives and kills others.
And you should tell her on your oath
That she will know sorrow because of you
If you cannot be such a beast
And wear such a coif on your head.
As soon as she hears this,
She will quickly bring you
The very same equipment,
Coat and cloak, coif and belt,
And greaves and a long, smooth piece of wood,
Just as you have seen here.’
Then Tyolet departed,
For he was very anxious to get home.
Then he gave his mother
The roebuck he had brought
And told her his adventure,
Just as he found it.
His mother replied to him at once
That it upset her greatly
‘That you have seen such a beast
Which captures and devours many another’.
‘In faith’, he said, ‘this is the way things are;
If I cannot be a beast
Such as I saw, I know full well and see
That you will know sorrow because of me.’
But his mother, when she heard this,
Responded swiftly:
All the arms she had
She quickly brought him,
Which had belonged to her husband.
She armed her son with them splendidly,
And when he had mounted his horse,
He looked just like a knight-beast.
‘Do you know, fair son, what you will do now?
You will go straight to King Arthur,

Et de ce te dirai la somme:
Ne t'acompaingnes a nul homme,
Ne a fame ne donoier
Qui commune soit de mestier.'
Atant s'en est de li torné
Et l'a baisié et acolé.
Tant a erré par ses jornees,
Que monz que terres que valees,
Qu'a la cort le roi est venu,
Qui cortois rois et vaillanz [fu].
Li rois a son mengier seoit,
Servir richement se fesoit,
Et Tyolet est enz entrez
Si comme il vint, trestot arme[z].
A cheval vint devant le dois.*
La ou seoit Artur le roi[s].
Onques .I. mot ne li sonna,
Ne noient ne l'aresonna.
'Amis', fet li rois, 'descendez,
Et avec nos mengier venez,
Si me dites que vos querez,
Qui vos estes, quel non avez.'
'Par foi', fet il, 'jel vos dirai,
Que ja ançois ne mengerai.
Rois, j'ai a non chevalier beste;
A mainte en ai trenchié la teste
Et Tyolet m'apele l'on.
Molt sai bien prendre venoison.
Filz sui, biau sire, s'il vos plest,
A la veve de la forest;
f. 17v. col. 1 A vos m'envoie certement
Tot por aprendre afe[te]ment.
Sens voil aprendre et cortoisie,
Savoir voil de chevalerie,
A tornoier et a joster,
A despendre et a donner.
Car ainz ne fu ja cort de roi,
Ne jamés n'iert si con je croi,*
Ou tant ait bien n'afetement,
Cortoisie n'ensaingnement.
Or vos ai dit ce que j'ai quis,
Rois, or me dites vostre avis.'
Li rois li dit: 'Dan chevalier,
Je vos retien, venez mengier.'
'Sire', fet il, 'vostre merci.'
Tyolet donques descendi,

And I shall tell you all you need to know:
Do not associate with any other man
Nor pay court to any woman,
Who is of ill-repute.'
Thereupon he left her,
And she kissed him and embraced him.
He journeyed day after day,
Over hills, lands and valleys,
Until he came to the court of the king
Who was courtly and valiant.
The king was sitting at dinner;
He was being richly served,
And Tyolet made his entrance,
Just as he had come, fully armed.
On horseback he came before the high table,
Where Arthur the king was sitting.
He did not utter a single word,
Or address him in any way.
'Friend', said the king, 'dismount,
And come and eat with us;
Tell me what you are looking for,
Who you are, what your name is.'
'In faith', he said, 'I shall tell you,
Because I shall not eat before doing so.
King, my name is knight-beast;
I have cut off the heads of many beasts,
And people call me Tyolet.
I am very good at catching game.
I am the son, fair lord, if you please,
Of the widow of the forest;
She sends me to you with confidence
To learn all about good breeding.
I want to learn wisdom and courtliness,
I want to know about knighthood,
How to tourney and to joust,
To dispense gifts and be generous.
For there has never been a king's court,
And there never will be one, I believe,
Where there is so much wealth or breeding,
Courtliness or learning.
Now I have told you what I am looking for;
Tell me, king, what you think.'
The king replied: 'Lord knight,
I retain you, come and eat'.
'My lord', he said, 'thank you.'
Then Tyolet dismounted;

De ses armes s’est desarmé,
Si s’est vestu et afublé
De cote et de mantel legier;
Ses mains leve, si va mengier.
Atant es vos une pucele,
Une orgueilleuse damoisele;
De sa biauté ne voil parler,
[Qu’on ne pot plus bele trover.]*
Onques Dido, ce m’est a vis,
Ne Elainne n’ot si cler vis.
Fille au roi de Logres estoit,
Sor .I. blanc palefroi seoit;
.I. blanc brachet triés soi portoit.
Une sonnete d’or avoit
Pendue au col du [blanc] brachet;
Molt ot le poil deugié et net.
Tot a cheval en est venue
Devant le roi, si le salue:
‘Rois Artur, sire, Dex te saut,
Le tot poissant qui maint en haut’.
‘Bele amie, celui vos gart
Qui les bons retient a sa part.’
‘Sire, je sui une meschine,
Fille de roi et de roïne,
Et de Logres est rois mon pere;
col. 2 N’ont plus enfanz, li ne ma mere,
Et si vos mandent par amor,
Comme a roi de grant valor,
S’il i a de vos chevaliers
Nul qui tant soit hardiz ne fiers
Qui le blanc pié du cerf tranchast,
Biau sire, celui me donnast,
Icelui a seignor prendroie,
De nul autre cure n’avroie.
Ja nus hon n’avra m’amistié,
S’il ne me donne le blanc pié
Du cerf qui est et bel et grant
Et qui tant a le poil luisant
Por poi qu’il ne semble doré;
De .VII. lïons est bien gardé.’
‘Par foi’, fet li rois, ‘vos creant
Que iltel soit le covenant:
Que cil a fame vos avra
Qui le pié du cerf vos donra.’
‘Et je, dan rois, si le creant

He took off his armour,
Put on and donned
A tunic and light cloak;
He washed his hands and went to eat.
Lo, a maiden suddenly appeared,
A proud damsel.
I do not wish to describe her beauty
[Because one could not find anyone more beautiful];
Never did Dido, I believe,
Or Helen, have such a fair countenance.
She was daughter of the King of Logres
And was seated on a white palfrey;
Behind her she carried a white brachet.
There was a golden bell hanging
Round the neck of the white brachet;
Its coat was very fine-textured and pure.
On horseback she came
Before the king and greeted him:
'King Arthur, my lord, may God protect you,
The all-powerful who lives above on high'.
'Fair friend, may He take care of you,
He who protects those who are good.'
'My lord, I am a maiden,
Daughter of a king and queen,
And my father is King of Logres;
He and my mother have no more children,
And they ask you out of friendship,
As befits a king of such great worth,
That, if any of your knights
Is bold and fierce enough
To cut off the white foot of the stag,
Fair lord, he would give him to me,
I would take him as my husband
And would care for no one else.
Never will any man have my love,
Unless he gives me the white foot
Of the stag, which is large and handsome
And has hair so shiny
That it almost seems golden;
It is well guarded by seven lions.'
'In faith', said the king, 'I promise you
That such is the agreement:
That he will have you as his wife
Who gives you the stag's foot.'
'And I, my lord king, promise

Que iltel soit le covenant.’
Tel covenant ont afermé
Et entr’eus .II. bien devisé.
En la sale n’ot chevalier
Qui de rien feïst a prisier,
Qui ne deïst que il iroit
Quere le cerf, s’il le savoit.
‘Cest brachet’, dist el, ‘vos menra
La ou le cerf converse et va.’
Lodoër molt le covoita;
Le cerf querre premiers ala.
Au roi Artu l’a demandé
Et il ne li a pas veé.
Le brachet prent, si est montez,
Le pié du cerf est querre alez.
Le brachet qui o lui ala
Droit a une eve le mena,
Qui molt estoit et grant et lee
Et noire et hisdeuse et enflee;
Quatre .C. toises ot de lé
f. 18r col. 1 Et bien .C. de parfondee.
Et le brachet en l’eve entra;
Selonc son sens tres bien cuida
Que Lodoër enz se meïst,
Mes de tot ce noient ne fist.
Il dit que il n’i enterra,
Car de morir nul talent n’a.
A soi redit a chief de pose:
‘Qui soi nen a n’a nule chose;
Bon chastel garde, ce m’est vis,
Qui garde qu’il ne soit maumis’.
Dont s’en est li brachez issuz;
A Lodoër est revenuz,
Et Lodoër si s’en ala
Et le brachet triés soi porta.
Droit a la cort en vint errant,
Ou li barnages estoit grant;
Le brachet rent a la pucele,
Qui molt estoit cortoise et bele.
Dont li a li rois demandé
S’il avoit le pié aporté,
Et Lodoër li respondi
Qu’encor en ert autre escharni.
Dont l’ont par la sale gabé
Et il lor a le chief crollé,
Si lor a dit que il alassent
Quere le pié, si l’aportassent.

That such is the agreement.’
They confirmed this agreement
And established it between the two of them.
In the hall there was no knight,
Who had ever performed a deed worthy of esteem,
Who did not say that he would go
In search of the stag, if he knew where it was.
‘This brachet’, she said, ‘will take you
To where the stag lives and roams.’
Lodoer had a great desire for it;
He was the first to set off in search of the stag.
He asked King Arthur for it,
And he did not refuse him.
He took the brachet, mounted his horse,
And departed in search of the stag’s foot.
The brachet, which went with him,
Led him straight to a river,
Which was very large and broad,
And black, menacing and swollen;
It was eight hundred fathoms wide
And a good two hundred deep.
The brachet plunged into the river;
Its instinct led it to expect
That Lodoer would follow it,
But he did nothing of the kind.
He said he would not go in,
For he had no wish to die.
After a while he said to himself:
‘He who does not have his life has nothing;
He keeps a good castle, I believe,
Who keeps himself from being harmed’.
Then the brachet came back out;
It returned to Lodoer,
And Lodoer departed,
Carrying the brachet behind him.
He headed straight for the court,
Where a great many barons were assembled;
He gave the brachet back to the maiden,
Who was very courtly and beautiful.
Then the king asked him
If he had brought the foot,
And Lodoer replied to him
That others would be shamed by it.
Then throughout the hall they mocked him,
And he shook his head at them,
Telling them to go
And look for the foot and bring it back.

Quere le cerf molt i alerent
Et la pucele demanderent.
N'en i ot nul qui la alast
Q'autretel chançon ne chantast
Con Lodïer chanté avoit,
Qui vaillanz chevaliers estoit,
Fors seulement .I. chevalier
Qui molt estoit preuz et legier;
Chevalier beste ert apelé
Et Tyolet estoit nommé.
Cil s'en est droit au roi alé;
Hastivement a demandé
Que cele gardee li soit,
col. 2 Que le pié blanc querre iroit.
Jamés, ce dit, ne revendra
Devant ice que ill avra
Le pié blanc destre au cerf trenchié.
Li rois li a donné congié
Et Tyolet s'est adoubé
Et de ses armes bien armé.
A la pucele donc ala;
Son blanc brachet requis li a.
El li a bonement baillié
Et il a pris de li congié.
Tant ont chevauchié et erré
Que andui sont venu au gué,
A la grant eve ravineuse
Qui molt ert parfonde et hisdeuse.
Le brachet s'est en l'eve mis,
Outre s'en vet, noant tot dis.
Aprés lui se met Tyolet;
Tant a suï le blanc brachet
Sor son destrier sor coi il sist
Que a la terre fors s'en ist.
Dont l'a le brachet tant mené
Que il li a le cerf moustré.
.VII. granz lïons le cerf gardoient
Et de molt grant amor l'amoient.
Et Tyolet garde, sel voit
Enmi .I. pré ou il paissoit;
N'i avoit nul des .VII. lïons.
Tyolet fiert des esperons;
Devant le cerf le fet aler.
Tyolet prent lors a sifler
Et li cers molt beninement
Vers Tyolet vient erramment.

Many of them went in search of the stag
And they asked for the maiden's hand.
Not a single one of them who went there
Failed to sing the same song
As Lodoer had sung,
Who was a valiant knight,
Except for just one knight,
Who was very brave and alert;
He was called knight-beast,
And his name was Tyolet.
He went straight to the king
And quickly asked
That the maiden should be kept safe for him,
Because he would go in search of the white foot.
Never, he said, would he return
Before he had
Cut off the right white foot of the stag.
The king gave him leave to do so
And Tyolet put on his equipment,
Dressing himself in full armour.
Then he went to the maiden;
He asked her for her white brachet.
She gave it to him gladly,
And he took leave of her.
They rode and journeyed
Until they both came to the ford,
At the great, swift-flowing river,
Which was very deep and menacing.
The brachet plunged into the river
And swam quickly across it.
Tyolet went in after him;
He followed the white brachet
On his horse, on which he sat,
Until he emerged on to dry land.
Then the brachet brought him to the point where
It showed him the stag.
Seven lions guarded the stag
And they loved it very dearly.
And Tyolet looked, and saw it
In the middle of a meadow where it was grazing;
None of the seven lions was in sight.
Tyolet spurred his horse
And rode up to the stag.
He then began to whistle,
And in very docile fashion the stag
Came towards him at once.

Et Tyolet .VII. foiz sifla;
Li cerf du tot donc s’aresta.
S’espee tret isnelement,
Du cerf le blanc pié destre prent,
Par mi la jointe li trencha,
Dedenz sa huese le bouta.
Le cerf cria molt hautement
f. 18v col. 1 Et li lïon tout erroment
Grant aleüre i sont venu;
Tyolet ont aparceü.
Uns des lïons a si navré
Le cheval ou il sist armé
Que la destre espaule devant
Et cuir et char en va portant.
Quant Tyolet a ce veü,
.I. des lïons a si feru
De l’espee que il porta
Que les ners du piz li trencha;
De ce lïon n’ot il plus guerre.
Son cheval chiet soz lui a terre,
Donques Tyolet le guerpi
Et li lïon l’ont assailli.
De totes parz assailli l’ont,
Son bon hauberc rompu li ont;
La char des braz et des costez
En plusors leus est si navrez
A poi que il nel devoroient.
Tote la char li desciroient,
Mes il les a trestoz tuez;
A poi ne s’en est delivrez.
Dejoste les lïons chaï
Qui malement l’orent bailli
Et de son cors si domagié;
Ja par li n’ert mes redrecié.
Es vos errant .I. chevalier
Et sist sor .I. ferrant destrier.
Arestut soi, si resgarda;
Molt par le plaint et regreta.
Et Tyolet les eulz ouvri,
Qui du travail ert endormi;
S’aventure li a contee
Et de chief en chief racontee.
De sa huese le pié sacha
Et au chevalier le bailla.
Et cil l’en a molt mercié,
Car le pié a forment amé;

And Tyolet whistled seven times;
The stag then stopped in its tracks.
He drew his sword at once,
Took hold of the right white foot of the stag,
And cut it off right through the joint;
He thrust it into his hose.
The stag cried out very loudly,
And the lions at once
Came rushing up
And caught sight of Tyolet.
One of the lions so wounded
The horse on which he was sitting, armed,
That at its front it tore off the right shoulder,
Both hide and flesh.
When Tyolet saw this,
He struck one of the lions
With the sword he was carrying,
So hard that he cut through the sinews of its breast;
He had no further trouble from this lion.
His horse collapsed beneath him,
So Tyolet abandoned it
And the lions attacked him.
They attacked him from all sides,
Breaking his good hauberk;
The flesh on his arms and sides
Was so wounded in many places
That they very nearly devoured him.
They tore all his flesh,
But he killed every one of them;
He only just escaped from them.
He collapsed beside the lions
Who had injured him so badly
And done him so much harm;
He could never have got up on his own.
Lo, a knight suddenly arrived,
Seated on an iron-grey horse.
He stopped and looked;
He lamented and grieved for Tyolet greatly.
And Tyolet opened his eyes;
He had fallen asleep through weariness.
Tyolet told him his story
And recounted it from start to finish.
He drew the foot out of his hose
And gave it to the knight.
And he thanked him for it warmly,
For he was delighted to have the foot.

De lui prent congié, si s’en va.
col. 2 En la voie se porpensa
Que, se le chevalier vivoit
Qui le pié donné li avoit,
Se il ne s’en voloit fuir,
Que mal l’em porroit avenir.
Ariere torne maintenant.
En pensé a et en talent
Que le chevalier ocirra;
Jamés ne li chalangera.
Par mi le cors bien l’asena
– De cele plaie bien garra –
Bien le cuida avoir ocis;
Atant s’est a la voie mis.
Tant a son droit chemin tenu
Qu’a la cort le roi est venu.
La pucele au roi demanda,
Le blanc pié du cerf li mostra.
Mes il n’ot pas le blanc brachet
Qui au cerf conduit Tyolet;
Bien le garda et main et soir,
Mes de ce ne puet il chaloir.
Cil qui le pié ot aporté,
Qui que l’eüst au cerf coupé,
Par covenant velt la pucele,
Qui tant par est et noble et bele.
Mes li rois, qui tant sages fu,
Por Tyolet qui n’ert venu,
Respit d’uit jors li demanda;
Adonc sa cort assemblera.
N’i avoit or fors sa mesniee
Qui molt ert franche et ensaingniee.
Dont a cil le respit donné
Et en la cort tant sejorné.
Mes Gauvains, qui tant fu cortois
Et bien apris en toutes lois,
Est alé querre Tyolet,
Car repairié fu le brachet
Et il l’a avec lui mené.
Tost le brachet l’[a] amené
Qu’il l’a trové en pasmoisons,
f. 19r col. 1 El pré dejoste les lïons.
Quant Gauvains le chevalier voit
Et l’ocise que fet avoit,
Molt plaint le vaillant chevalier.
Sempres descent de son destrier,

He took leave of him and departed.
On his way, he realised
That if the knight remained alive,
Who had given him the foot,
And if he himself had no wish to flee,
He could suffer misfortune because of this.
He turned back at once.
He had made up his mind
That he would kill the knight;
Then he would never challenge him.
He struck him a good blow to his body
– He will recover fully from this wound –
And was convinced that he had killed him;
Then he set off on his way.
He kept going straight
Until he came to the king's court.
He asked the king for the maiden,
Showing him the foot of the white stag.
But he did not have the white brachet,
Which had led Tyolet to the stag;
Tyolet had kept it with him morning and night,
But the knight had paid no attention to this.*
The man who had brought the foot,
Whoever had cut it off the stag,
According to the agreement wanted the maiden
Who was so noble and beautiful.
But the king, who was so wise,
Because Tyolet had not arrived,
Asked for a week's delay;
Then he would assemble his court.
At that time he had only his retinue,
Which was very noble and well bred.
So the knight accepted the delay
And remained for that period at court.
But Gauvain, who was so courtly
And well versed in every matter,
Set out in search of Tyolet,
For the brachet had returned
And he took it with him.
The brachet soon led him
To where he found Tyolet in a faint,
In the meadow beside the lions.
When Gauvain saw the knight,
And the slaughter he had accomplished,
He lamented over the valiant knight greatly.
At once he dismounted

Molt doucement l’aresonna.
Tyolet foiblement parla
Et, neporquant, de s’aventure
Li a conté toute la pure.
Atant es vos une pucele
Sor une mule gente et bele.
Gauvain gentement salua
Et Gauvains bien rendu li a,
Et puis l’a a soi apelee,
Estroitement l’a acolee,
Si li prie molt doucement
Et molt tres amiablement
Qu’ele portast cel chevalier,
Qui molt par fesoit a proisier,
A la noire montaingne au miere.
Et cele a fete sa proiere;
Le chevalier en a porté
Et au mire l’a conmandé.
De par Gauvain li commanda;
Cil volentiers receü l’a.
De ses armes l’a despoillié,
Sor une table l’a couchié
Et ses plaies li a lavees,
Qui molt erent ensanglentees.
Quant il l’a par trestout curé,
Le sanc fegié d’entor osté,
Bien a veü que il garroit;
Au chief d’un mois tot sain seroit.
Entretant fu Gauvains venu
Et en la sale descendu.
Le chevalier i a trouvé
Qui le blanc pié ot aporté.
Tant s’est en la cort demorez
Que les (v)uit jors sont trespassez.
Dont vint au roi, su salua,
col. 2 Son covenant li demanda
Que la pucele ot devisé
Et il endroit soi creanté:
Qui que le blanc pié li donroit
Que ele a seignor le prendroit.
Li rois dist: ‘Ce est verité’.
Quant Gauvains ot tot escouté,
Eneslepas avant sailli,
Et dist au roi: ‘N’est pas ainsi.
Se por ce non que je ne doi
Ci, devant vos qui estes roi,

And spoke to him very tenderly.
Tyolet replied in a feeble voice,
But nevertheless, with regard to what had happened,
He told him the whole truth.
Lo, a maiden suddenly arrived
On a fine and handsome mule.
She greeted Gauvain graciously
And Gauvain returned the greeting;
Then he summoned her to him
And embraced her tightly,
Begging her very tenderly
And very gently
To take this knight,
Who was so worthy of esteem,
To the doctor in the Black Mountain.
And she did what he asked;
She took the knight
And entrusted him to the doctor.
In Gauvain's name she entrusted him to him,
And he received him gladly.
He removed his armour,
Laid him on a table
And cleansed his wounds,
Which were caked in blood.
When he had tended to him thoroughly,
And removed all the congealed blood,
He saw that he would recover;
In a month's time he would be perfectly well.
Meanwhile, Gauvain had returned to court
And dismounted in the hall.
He found there the knight
Who had brought the white foot.
He had remained at court
Until the week was up.
Then the knight came to the king and greeted him;
He asked for the agreement
Which the maiden had established
And he himself had confirmed:
That whoever gave her the white foot
She would take him as her husband.
The king said: 'That is the truth'.
When Gauvain had heard all this,
He immediately stepped forward
And said to the king: 'This is not so.
Even though I ought not to be so bold,
Here, before you who are king,

Desmentir onques chevalier,
Serjant, garçon ne escuier,
Je deïsse qu'il mespreïst;
N'onques du cerf le pié ne prist
En la maniere que il conte.
Molt fet au chevalier grant honte
Qui d'autrui fet se velt loer
Et autrui mantel afuler
Et d'autrui bouzon velt bien trere
Et loer soi d'autrui afere
Et par autrui main velt joster
Et hors du buisson velt trainer*
Le serpent qui tant est cremu.
Or, si n'i sera ja veü,*
Ce que vos dites rien ne vaut.
Aillors ferez vostre assaut,
Aillors porchacier vos irez;
La pucele n'emporterez.'*
'Par foi', fet il, 'Sire Gauvain,
Or me tenez vos por vilain
Qui me dites que n'os porter
Ma lance en estor por joster,
Bien sai trere d'autrui bouzon
Et par autrui main du buisson
Le serpent trere qu'avez dit.
N'est nul, si con je croi et cuit,*
Se vers moi le voloit prover
Qu'en champ ne m'en peüst trover.'
En ce qu'en cel estrif estoient,
f. 19v col. 1 Par la sale gardent, si voient
Tyolet qui estoit venu
Et hors au perron descendu.
Li rois contre lui s'est levez.
Ses braz li a au col getez,
Puis le baise par grant amor;
Cil l'encline comme a seignor.
Gauvains le baise et Uriain,
Keu et Evain, le filz Morgain,
Et Lodoier l'ala besier
Et tuit li autre chevalier.
Li chevaliers, quant il ce voit,
Qui la pucele avoir voloit
Par le pié qu'il ot aporté
Que Tyolet li ot donné,
Au roi Artur dont reparla
Et sa requeste demanda.

As ever to contradict a knight,
Man-at-arms, groom or squire,
I would say that he is acting wrongly;
He never took the stag's foot
In the manner he stated.
It is a matter of great shame for the knight
Who tries to boast of another's deed,
To don another's cloak,
To draw another's crossbow,
To boast of another's achievement,
To joust through another's hand,
And to drag out of the bushes
The serpent which is so dreaded.
Now this will never happen here;
What you say has no value.
Go and make your assault somewhere else,
Go and seek your fortune somewhere else;
You will not be taking the maiden away.'
'In faith', he said, 'my lord Gauvain,
Now you are treating me like a peasant
In saying to me that I dare not carry
My lance into combat in order to joust,
That I am capable of drawing another's bow
And using another's hand
To draw the serpent from the bushes, as you have said.
There is no one, as far as I believe and am aware,
Who, if he wished to prove this in combat against me,
Would fail to find me on the battlefield.'
While this dispute was going on,
They looked across the hall and saw
Tyolet, who had arrived
And dismounted at the block outside.
The king rose to greet him.
He threw his arms around his neck,
Then kissed him as a sign of great love;
Tyolet bowed to him as befits a lord.
Gauvain embraced him, and Urien,
Kay and Yvain, son of Morgan,*
And Lodoer went to embrace him,
As did all the other knights.
When the knight saw this,
Who wanted to have the maiden
By virtue of the foot he had brought,
Which Tyolet had given him,
He went and spoke to the king again
And made his request once more.

Mes Tyolet, quant il ce sot
Que la pucele demandot,
A lui parla molt doucement
Et li demanda benement:
‘Dan chevaliers, dites le moi,
Tant comme estes devant le roi,
Par quel reson volez avoir
La pucele, je voil savoir.’
‘Par foi’, fet il, ‘je vos dirai:
Por ce que aporté li ai
Le blanc pié du cerf sejorné;
Li rois et li l’ont creanté.’
‘Trenchastes vos au cerf le pié?
Se ce est voir, ne soit noié.’
‘Ouïl’, fet il, ‘je li trenchai
Et ici o moi l’aportai.’
‘Et les .VII. lïons qui ocist?’
Cil l’esgarda, nul mot ne dit,
Ainz rogi molt et eschaufa,
Et Tyolet dont reparla:
‘Dan chevalier, et cil, qui fu,
Qui de l’espee fu feru,
Et qui fu cil qui l’en feri?
col. 2 Dites le moi, vostre merci.
Ce m’est a vis, ce fustes vos.’
Cil s’embroncha, molt fu hontos.
‘Mes ce fu de bien fet col fret
Quant vos feïstes tel forfet.
Bonement donné vos avoie
Le pié [qu’]au cerf trenchié avoie,
Et vos tel loier en sousistes,
Por .I. pou que ne m’oceïstes.
Mort en dui estre voirement.
Je vos donnai, or m’en repent;
Vostre espee que vos portastes
Tres par mi le cors me boutastes;
Tres bien me cuidastes ocirre.
Se vos ce volez escondire
De prover voiant cest barnage,
Au roi Artur en tent mon gage.’
Cil entent qu’il dit verité,
Du coup li a merci crié;
Plus doute la mort que la honte,
De rien ne contredit son conte.
Devant le roi a lui se rent

But when Tyolet heard
That he was asking for the maiden,
He spoke to him very gently,
And asked him in friendly fashion:
‘My lord knight, tell me,
While you are before the king,
On what grounds you want to have
The maiden, I would like to know.
‘In faith’, he said, ‘I shall tell you:
Because I have brought her
The white foot of the swift-moving stag;
The king and she herself have agreed to this.’
‘Did you cut off the stag’s foot?
If this is true, let it not be denied.’
‘Yes’, he said, ‘I cut it off
And brought it here with me.’
‘And the seven lions, who killed them?’
He looked at him and said nothing;
Rather he became red and inflamed,
And Tyolet addressed him again:
‘My lord knight, who was it
Who was struck by the sword,
And who was it who struck him with it?
Tell me this, I beg you.
I believe it was you.’
The knight bowed his head and was much ashamed.
‘It was like getting a broken neck after a good deed,
When you committed such a misdeed,*
In good faith I had given you
The foot which I had cut off the stag,
And you rewarded me in this way,
By almost killing me.
In truth I ought to have died.
I gave it to you, now I regret it;
Your sword, which you carried,
You struck right into my body.
You certainly thought you had killed me.
If you wish to defend yourself
By proving this in front of these barons,
I tender my pledge to King Arthur.’
The knight realised he was telling the truth
And immediately begged him for mercy;
Fearing death more than shame,
He did not contradict his account in any way.
He surrendered to him in front of the king,

A fere son commandement,
Et Tyolet li pardonna
Au conseil que il puis en a
Du roi et de toz ses barons;
Et cil l'en vait a genoillons;
Dont l'en eüst le pié besié,
Quant Tyolet l'a redrecié,
Si l'en bese par grant amor;
N'en oï puis parler nul jor.
Li chevaliers le pié li rent
Et Tyolet donques le prent,
Si l'a donné a la pucele.
Fleur de lis [ou] rose novele,
Quant primes nest el tans d'esté,
Trespassoit ele de biauté.
Tyolet l'a donc demandee;
Li rois Artur li a donnee,
Et la pucele l'otroia.
f. 20r col. 1 En son païs donc le mena;
Rois fu et ele fu roïne.
De Tyolet le lai ci fine.

Ready to do his bidding,
And Tyolet pardoned him
As a result of the advice he received
From the king and all his barons.
And the knight fell to his knees;
He would have kissed his foot,
When Tyolet raised him up
And kissed him with great affection;
I have since heard no more of him.
The knight gave him back the foot,
And Tyolet took it
And gave it to the maiden.
The lily or a new rose,
When it first blooms in summertime,
Did she surpass in beauty.
Tyolet then asked for her hand;
King Arthur gave her to him,
And the maiden consented.
Then she took him to her land;
He was king and she was queen.
Here ends the lay of *Tyolet*.

NOTES TO THE TEXT

1. The initial decorated capital J extends over the first eight lines of the poem.

47. MS ‘onques’.

108. Insertion conjectural.

215. MS ‘ne tiex bestes’.

285. MS ‘devant le roi’.

308. MS ‘niere’.

324. Insertion conjectural.

604. MS ‘hors du besoing trainer’.

606. MS ‘ot si’.

610. MS ‘nemporteroit’.

618. MS ‘mes nul’.

NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION

19-22. Micha interprets these lines as indicating that the knights 'cheminaient aussi à longueur de journée sans écuyer, sans trouver deux ou trois châteaux'.

80. Terce (or tierce) was the third hour of the day (about 9.00 am).

90. Micha and Braet interpret the verb atendre here as 'to wait for' rather than 'to pay attention to'.

521-22. These lines are not easy to interpret. Tobin (note, p. 253) gives the translation: 'Il [Tyolet] le garda [le brachet] du matin jusqu'au soir, mais il [le chevalier] ne peut se soucier de cela'. But she also suggests that the brachet was guarding Tyolet, who had fallen asleep because of his pain. Braet renders the lines as '(Le chien le veillait du matin au soir). Mais cela n'avait aucune importance', Micha as 'Celui-ci [Tyolet] l'avait gardé continuellement avec lui, ce dont le chevalier ne s'était aucunement soucié', and Vinney as 'He [Lodoer] watched for it morning and night, but about this he cannot be concerned'.

630. Tobin (p. 229) states that Morgan the Fay is also said to be Urien's wife and Yvain's mother in the Merlin of Robert de Boron, but in fact it is only in the Post-Vulgate Merlin that this connection between Morgan and Yvain occurs (Merlin: roman en prose du XIIIe siècle, ed. by G. Paris and J. Ulrich, 2 vols, SATF, Paris: Firmin Didot, 1886, I, pp. 201-02). The earliest extant reference to Morgan as Yvain's mother seems in fact to be the one found in Tyolet. We are grateful to Rupert T. Pickens for assistance with this note.

665-66. Interpretations of these lines differ: 'But this was indeed a treacherous blow when you committed such an outrage' (Vinney); 'Quand vous avez commis ce crime, j'ai bien vu que ma générosité m'avait coûté cher!' (Régnier-Bohler); 'Mais c'était un cou brisé en échange d'un bienfait, quand vous avez commis ce crime' (Braet); 'Pour un tel forfait, vous méritiez de vous casser le cou' (Micha); 'Quand vous avez fait une telle transgression, ç'aurait été bien fait si vous avez cassé le cou' (Tobin, note, p. 253). Tobin compares this passage to Roman de Renart, Branche X, v. 9518 ('Que l'an dit: de bien fait col frait', ed. by M. Roques, Paris: Champion, 1958).

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