Yde and Olive

INTRODUCED, EDITED, AND TRANSLATED BY

Mounawar Abbouchi

Medieval Feminist Forum:
A Journal of Gender and Sexuality
Subsidia Series, Volume 8, 2018
Medieval Texts in Translation 5
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Preface

I first came across the text of Yde et Olive while doing research on female knights during graduate studies at the University of Georgia. Having had very little experience with Old French at the time, and finding no translation into any modern language, I struggled to attempt to read it from the two existing editions of the text, which were not readily accessible. The story was so compelling in the themes it evoked and the questions it posed, however, that I resolved to establish a new edition of the text along with a translation into Modern English as my thesis project.

The following is adapted from a Master’s thesis defended at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia, USA in July 2015 under the direction of Dr. Thomas Cerbu. This work would not have been possible without my professors at UGA, especially Dr. Catherine Jones, whose continued mentorship and patience have helped me complete this project. My thanks also go to the Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino for assistance and invaluable information provided about the manuscript, and particularly to Dr. Franca Porticelli, Chief Curator of the Manuscript and Special Collections Department, who
answered so many of my questions. Finally, thank you to Dr. Kathryn Maude, without whose support and encouragement *Yde and Olive* would still be in the dark.

**Introduction**

The story of Yde and Olive is part of a larger thirteenth-century cycle that centers around the family of Huon de Bordeaux, a beloved character from French medieval legend, each episode focusing on one generation of the family. The section sometimes referred to as *La Chanson d’Yde et Olive* (The Song of Yde and Olive) spans 1062 lines and stands just as well as an independent narrative as it does in relation to other parts of the cycle. The text of *Yde et Olive* is uniquely preserved in Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino, Ms. L II.14 (referred to in this edition as *T*).

The titular Yde is the granddaughter of Huon, the patriarch of the family. Yde’s father, Florent, sick with grief over the loss of his beloved wife, Clarisse (daughter of Huon), seeks to replace her by marrying their only daughter Yde. After being approached by him with this horrifying proposal, Yde escapes from her father’s kingdom. Disguised as a boy, she has a series of adventures and military escapades, which eventually lead her to Rome; there, the Emperor Oton, impressed by her valor and military prowess, rewards her with the hand of his daughter, Olive, thus making her his heir. On their wedding night, and for two weeks after, Yde puts off consummating the marriage, but eventually reveals her secret to Olive. Her loyal wife promises never to betray her. Unfortunately for the two women, a servant overhears their conversation and promptly informs the king. Oton is, of course, enraged. Knowing the penalty for the deception is death by burning, Olive gets down on her knees and prays for salvation. At that moment, an angel sent by God appears and tells the court that Yde has been, by the will of God, transformed into a man, and endowed with *tout cbou c’uns hom a de s’umanité*, or “everything that makes a man.” The
angel reassures the court that Yde and Olive will produce an heir to be named
Croissant (the hero of the next episode in the cycle). Peace and balance are thus restored.

Yde et Olive, along with the cycle to which it belongs, has previously been edited
twice, once by Max Schweigel in 1889 in an out-of-print German edition,¹ and then again
in 1977 by Barbara Anne Brewka in her dissertation.² The two editions, as invaluable as
they are, do present some challenges and errors. Caroline Cazanave notes the need for a
revised edition of the cycle in her book on the Huon sequels, commenting on the
many errors in Brewka’s edition, despite its concomitant merits and her “courage” in
taking on the challenge.³ Despite these issues, the two previous editions have been
invaluable to this work, which relies on comparative readings of the manuscript and
the previous editions while incorporating some of Cazanave’s suggestions and
corrections to present a newly edited Yde et Olive as a stand-alone narrative for the first
time in English.

It is my hope that this facing-page edition and translation of this single episode
from the Huon cycle will contribute to a burgeoning discussion about female heroes and
nonconforming women in medieval literature. Though stories of female knights and
cross-dressers are not uncommon in the French Middle Ages (and beyond), examples of
sex change and transgender characters are scarce. Yde et Olive is therefore of particular
interest to those who study the Middle Ages from a gender or feminist approach. Though

¹ Max Schweigel, “Esclarmonde, Clarisse et Florent, Yde et Olive.” Drei Fortsetzungen der
Chanson von Huon de Bordeaux nach der einzigen Turiner Handschrift zum Erstenmal
veröffentlicht (Marburg: Elwert’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1889).
² Barbara Anne Brewka, “Esclarmonde, Clarisse et Florent, Yde et Olive I, Croissant, Yde et
Olive II, Huon et les Géants, Sequels to Huon de Bordeaux, as Contained in Turin Ms.
³ Caroline Cazanave, D’Esclarmonde à Croissant: Huon de Bordeaux, l’épique médiéval et
described as “scabrous” by some nineteenth- and early twentieth-century critics, it has gained more critical attention recently as it evokes themes of identity and sexuality that contemporary readers will find timely.
1. Gender and Sexuality in *Yde et Olive*

a. Yde/Ydé

Gender identity and performance create the central conflict of *Yde and Olive*. The first difficulty a reader of the Old French text will face is in Yde’s name and the pronouns used to refer to the character. They are not always consistent with her presumed gender at any given time. The poet/scribe almost always refers to Yde in the feminine, but switches to the masculine when she is being addressed or talked about by another character (with a few exceptions that may be attributed to scribal error or demands of poetic form). The most recurring forms of the name and their apparent gender are as follows: *Yde* with a mute *e* is the nominative feminine form, *Ydain* the feminine objective. For the masculine, *Ydes* is the prevalent nominative form and can sometimes be accented, usually in assonance position or at the caesura, while *Ydé* is the objective. The different forms and their variations (as detailed in the table below with the number of times each form appears in the text) provide the author/scribe with lexical tools to create some interesting gender play through grammatical form.

*Figure 1. Occurrences of the Name “Yde” and Its Variations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yde/Ide/Ydee</th>
<th>Ydain</th>
<th>Ydes/Ides/Ydés</th>
<th>Ydé/Idé</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As an example, in line 402: “*J’ai non Ydés,* cele respondu a,” Yde introduces herself in the
masculine to the Germans (Ydés), but the author/scribe still refers to her as female (cele).

The constant shifting between pronouns similarly highlights Yde’s own fluidity of gender and aids the author/scribe in creating ambiguity until the end. Sometimes the poet will alternate between the feminine and the masculine, as in the following passage (continued from the example above):

“J’ai non Ydés,” cele respondu a.
Je te retieng; nus maus ne t’en venra.”
Ides errant l’Alemant enclina.
A son ostel l’Alemans l’en mena.
Dix gart Ydain, li rois qui tout crea.
On l’a servie, mais ore servira.

“My name is Ydé,” she answered.
“Brother,” he said, “you will lead my horse.
I will retain you; you will be under my protection.”
Ydé promptly bowed to the German,
Who led him to his lodgings.
God, the king who created everything, protect Yde!
She who was once served will now serve in turn.

(402-8)

After Yde introduces herself for the first time as Ydés, the poet as well switches to the

4 This is the first time the speaker himself refers to Yde using the masculine form of her name.
masculine, as if, now that she has identified herself to the Germans, the reader is meant to see her through their eyes as a young squire; but shortly after, the poet switches back to the feminine objective Ydain in his prayer for God to protect her. This makes the translation challenging since the object pronoun l’ is not gender-specific. Likewise, in some instances the pronoun is omitted altogether. Consequently, lines such as “A son ostel l’Alemans l’en mena” above will depend on the translator’s reading of the situation. In this instance, I have chosen the masculine for l’ since the German thinks he is leading a man to the inn; however, the pronoun can just as easily be translated as feminine.

In other instances, Yde’s gender is unambiguous, particularly in some battle scenes where her femaleness does not jar the poet who refers to her as “damoiselle Yde” in the scene of unarmed combat with one of the thieves (laisse XIII). The speaker recognizes that she is still a woman, even though she is performing traditionally masculine feats of strength and prowess, but does not express any surprise, instead treating this performance as matter of fact. Another example appears to suggest that the speaker actively seeks to remind us of Yde’s gender while she is doing battle, unambiguously describing her as fair in the feminine la bele:

Et la bele est envers lui aprocie,

Fiert Embronchart sor sa targe florie,

And the fair one went to meet him.

She struck Embronchart on his floral shield.

(762-63)

For ease of reader comprehension, this translation uses throughout "Yde" when the poet has used a feminine form of the name and "Ydé" when the form is masculine. While this is
an imperfect solution to an intractable problem of grammatical gender across languages, it provides clarity around the play of gendered language for readers of the translation. Due to this ambiguity, moreover, and the lack of closure the encounter with the angel provides (more on that below), this edition will refer to pre-transformation Yde in the feminine, not to erase the fact of her supposed transgender identity, but because Yde herself identifies as a woman in internal monologues and in her revelation to Olive, nor does she ever express a desire to become a man. The question of Yde's identity is never completely resolved, the transformation being somewhat imposed on our heroine to escape capital punishment.

b. The Performance of Gender

Yde keeps company with many women disguised as men throughout literary history, from virgin martyrs like St. Pelagia to a swath of Shakespearean heroines. A male appearance gives the heroines of such narratives a freedom of movement that they do not normally possess and plays an active role in the success of their heroic journeys. According to Valerie Hotchkiss, “women often put on male clothing to circumvent impediment to social prestige or personal fulfillment,” and further, that “the empowering force of male disguise reveals the limitations in medieval inscriptions of female identity since success—which is often attributed to the ‘manly spirit’ of the heroine—is contingent upon the suppression of femaleness.” As soon as they put on male garb, the limitations placed on them because of their sex seem to disappear.

Indeed, not only is her femaleness suppressed, but it seems that the borrowed attire somehow endows Yde with previously unmentioned qualities. As soon as she is in men’s

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clothing, changes in behavior and appearance become apparent. Indeed, her physical transformation is not instantaneous at the end when the angel announces it, but rather happens gradually. The speaker goes from describing her as beautiful, well-mannered, devout in her faith, and all the things a woman – and no less a princess – should be, to muscular, strong, and well-built almost as soon as she does anything in her new wardrobe. The reader sees Yde through the eyes of various characters, first through the eyes of the German soldier who thinks she looks fit to fight alongside him and hires her; then she is seen the way the band of thieves sees her, as an able body that would be wasted by simply killing her; King Oton sees that Yde is “grant, membru et formé,” (big, brawny, and well-built, line 624). Finally, Olive’s gaze is perhaps the most endearing, and at once the most telling. Seeing her beloved return from war, the princess stares longingly at him from the battlements and surprises herself by falling in love with him, admitting that she had “never been so taken with a man” before (line 808), a wink from the poet to the audience. While Yde’s body is presented as somewhat androgynous—the poet insists that she “[n]’ot mamelete c’on aperchoive riens” (had no breasts that could be seen, line 300)—her clothes confirm her masculinity in the eyes of others.

The power of the disguise does not stop there, as it not only alters her appearance, but it also seems to endow her with new abilities. As soon as she is out of Aragon and on her own, she is capable of fighting and killing several Spanish soldiers. It is very unusual, to say the least, for a young woman of fifteen who, as far as the evidence goes, was only taught her letters, with no mention of martial training and with no indication that she was particularly strong or physically able before she donned her disguise, to merely pick up a sword and kill trained soldiers on the battlefield. Her supposed masculinity, however, is never doubted or challenged, and the speaker expresses no surprise, nor does he intervene to explain where Yde acquired her new set of skills. Everyone believes it.
Once the illusion is in place, it must be maintained. Unlike men who dress as women in medieval literature, almost always letting their real sex show underneath the disguise for comic effect, as Meagan Evans explains, the female-to-male disguise must be total. It takes more than just her clothes and outer appearance to pull it off; her language and mannerisms must be just right in order to complete the illusion. Yde demonstrates great strength and skill in combat, and her diction becomes more and more “unladylike” and assertive as the story progresses. Though she was never submissive, even talking back to her father and making him angry at lines 313-14, her speech patterns become more aggressive and “masculine” when she is dressed in men’s clothing. She says to the thieves:

“Fil a putain ! Mauvais larron pullent!
Vo traiçons ne vous vorra noient.
Vers moi avés pensé vilainement;
Cis a luitiêt, je croi qu’il s’en repent.
Je ne vous dout se n’estiés plus de .c.!”

“You sons of whores! Evil, rotten thieves!
Your treachery will gain you nothing.
You plotted wickedly against me,
But I think this man who fought me is regretting it.
I would not fear you if there were a hundred of you.” (573-77)

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While this is not the sort of language one expects to hear on the lips of a princess, cursing and intimidation become as natural to her as fighting.

Indeed, language plays a large part in Yde’s deception. The author’s use of pronouns and descriptors reinforce the illusion. As long as people perceive a man – see him and hear him – for all intents and purposes, Yde is a man. People do not need proof of Yde’s identity until the illusion is broken by the boy’s words. And it is once again with language that her assumed identity is restored: the angel’s speech at the end of the poem is enough to convince everyone that Yde now possesses the proper male appendages, insisting that the test prepared for her by Oton is no longer necessary. The king and his barons in attendance are never shown proof of her transformation, only informed of it. The construction of Yde’s identity thus relies almost exclusively on other people’s perceptions.

c. The Three Transgressions of Yde

The text of Yde et Olive is largely organized around the theme of transgression and can be divided into three parts corresponding to three main transgressions: incest, cross-dressing, and same-sex marriage. They are all, of course, sexual in nature, and each is condemned to varying degree by the church. The frequent use of the word cors (body), which appears twenty-four times in the poem, underscores this textual focus on sexual sin. Cors is often used figuratively in Old French to mean “the person” or “the self”; however, the word’s continued recurrence emphasizes the physical, bodily nature of the primary conflicts in the text.

Though Yde is not to blame for the first transgression and plays no active part in it, she is the trigger for it. The incestuous desire that Florent has for his daughter disrupts the social structure and community of Aragon. This relationship is unacceptable for obvious
religious reasons, of which his courtiers promptly remind the king, standing categorically against him in the matter. Sorbarré, his most trusted adviser, speaks very bluntly:

[...] “Qu’est ce que tu dis, leres?
Doit dona fille estre a toi mariee?
A ceste loi que Dix nous a donnee,
Dedens infer sera t’ame dampnee.”

“What are you saying, villain?
Will your daughter, then, be married to you?
According to the law that God gave us
Your soul will be damned to hell.”
(178-81)

Diane Watt points out another interesting aspect of Florent’s transgressive scheme, one which also offends against another aspect of the church teaching: from mid-twelfth century on, the canonists insisted that the consent of each of the partners who are to be wed, and not simply that of the families, was crucial if the contract was to be binding.7 Florent’s intentions appear, then, to be illegitimate on multiple levels, since Yde also does not consent to or approve of the engagement. The later marriage agreement between Yde and Olive provides a notable contrast, when Olive’s father explicitly seeks her

consent before concluding the negotiations.

Cross-dressing, the second transgression, is a result of the first; it is perhaps not as severe, but still considered unnatural and punishable by law. However, Thomas Aquinas, a (near-)contemporary of the *Huon* author, adds a stipulation in the *Summa Theologica*, Question 169, stating that “[n]evertheless this may be done sometimes without sin on account of some necessity, either in order to hide oneself from enemies, or through lack of other clothes, or for some similar motive.”

It would appear, therefore, that Yde may not be committing a sin. However, this “transgression” runs far deeper than the clothes on her back. As discussed above, the male clothes bring with them a new identity, and her actions and behavior while in men’s clothing may be construed as transgressive since Yde crosses the clear boundary between femininity and masculinity. As Ydé, the warrior readily takes down his enemies, showing ruggedness and boldness of speech, and provoking the affections of a young woman. The transgression lies in Yde’s crossing of gender boundaries and disruption of the social order rather than in the cross-dressing itself.

Interestingly, the speaker does not seem overly concerned with the idea that Yde’s deeds of valor are being carried out by a person who is biologically female. He does not suggest any kind of moral judgment; on the contrary, he seems to be on Yde’s side throughout, beseeching God to protect her and fearing for her life when she is betrayed.

The third transgression, that of participating in same-sex marriage when she is compelled to marry Olive, does require the text’s only apology for Yde’s activities. While debating what course of action to take, Yde elects do as she is told and marry the princess, but the speaker makes it clear that she does not choose it willingly. She laments having to

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marry a woman and says, “Mix me laissasse en .i. fu embrase[r]” (Better to have had me burned! (line 891). The speaker also exculpates the king for marrying his daughter to another woman, stating that “Or a sa fille li rois femme donné, / Car il cuidoit que ce fust hom d’Ydé” (The king had given his daughter to a woman / Because he thought Ydé was a man, lines 924-25).

Having escaped one kind of unnatural marriage (incest), Yde then finds herself in what society considers to be another one. As if coming back full circle, she is again charged with mortal sin, although Watt argues that “despite its socially disruptive potential, female homoerotic desire is treated more sympathetically than the father-daughter incest with which it is paralleled and to which it is connected conceptually.”9 More broadly, Judith Bennett argues that female homosexual relationships were relatively less troubling than male ones, adding that “most theologians . . . either overlooked or trivialized same-sex relations between women” because no offspring could ever result from such a union. Moreover, lesbian relationships would have been considered less grievous than male homosexual relationships because “in the 'spermatic economy' of medieval understandings of sex, little harm was done in same-sex relations between women—since no sperm were spilled.”10

However, Yde and Olive's crime is not simply that they are in a same-sex relationship, nor that they lied and hid it from the world; they are guilty of potentially putting a stop to the line of succession. Two women cannot produce an heir and therefore cannot ensure the continuity of the monarchy. Jeopardizing the future of Rome and its ruling dynasty warrants capital punishment. The only way out of the situation is through

9 Watt, “Behaving like a man,” 266.

divine intervention.

In the interest of clarifying the text's double standards, it must be pointed out that Florent is merely warned of the harm that his sin would have for his immortal soul and the kingdom at large, while Yde and Olive are threatened with being burned alive for their sin. The question is, then, whether it is the gravity of the sin itself or the gender of the sinners which prompts the threatened punishment. Florent, a man and a king, seems to have little to fear in terms of the repercussions of the decisions he makes. On the other hand, Yde and Olive, though hightborn ladies, lose their own agency as soon as Yde is female again in the eyes of the emperor and his court (even as, ironically, Olive's marriage to Yde had given both women agency and sexual freedom they did not possess before). Only when Yde is transformed into a man does he recover that agency; Olive does not regain it at all.

2. Poetic Form

The poem consists of 1062 lines, divided into nineteen laisses numbered 1 to 19 in this edition. The poet uses assonance in its sense specific to medieval French poetry: "the identical stressed (tonic) vowel at the end of each line." A change of assonance signals the start of a new laisse. The length of the laisses is irregular, ranging from 23 lines (laisse I) to 125 lines (laisse XVII). In the manuscript, the beginning of each laisse is indicated with a

\[11\] Catherine Jones gives this definition and example in An Introduction to the Chanson de Geste (Florida: University of Florida Press, 2014): “‘Assonance’ refers to the identical stressed (tonic) vowel at the end of each line. Although the words oîr, Crist, chapleîz, and vif do not rhyme (having different final consonants), they all share the stressed vowel i” (135).
bold and decorated initial letter.

The poem is composed in the decasyllabic lines typical of the early *chansons de geste* which usually demonstrate the “epic caesura,” dividing the lines into four and six syllables; however, the hemistiches are sometimes irregular, and the line breaks often feel unnaturally abrupt or forced. Indeed, some odd syntactic choices have proven to be a challenge for translating and punctuating the original text. Very few connectors are used, and the reader must often rely on context clues for accuracy and logic.

Cazanave has faulted the author for curious repetitions of the same words in assonance position (in the first and shortest *laisse* of the poem, the participial forms “joians” and “riant” are repeated three times each for the sake of the assonance in -an), as well as inconsistent scansion, sometimes idiosyncratic caesuras, and odd pauses, which can hinder clarity. The most noticeable links between *laisse* are created with repetition and variation of phrases at the beginnings of *laisse* to recall immediately previous ones. For instance, *laisse* XI ends with “Au mengier va seoir par desirier” (And she gladly sat down to eat), a variation of which begins the following *laisse*: “La damoiselle est au mengier assise” (The young woman sat down to eat).

Epithets are often used to describe characters in typical epic form: Yde is “la pucelle au vis fier” (the maiden of the proud face), just like her mother, an epithet later echoed by “Olive a la ciere cler” (Olive of the bright face). Florent “a la ciere membre” (of the rugged countenance) is revisited as “le cors puissant” (the strong body); Oton is “li fors rois couronné” (the strong crowned king). Each epithet highlights a character’s key trait, which gets recalled elsewhere in the text.

12 For further detail on the *chanson de geste* and its form, see Jones, *Introduction to the Chanson de Geste*.
3. The Text in Context

Figure 2. Huon's Family Tree

a. *Huon and its Sequels*

The narrative of *Huon de Bordeaux* must have been relatively popular when it was first composed as it survives in several manuscripts, but it garnered even more attention a few centuries later when it was adapted into prose and widely circulated across Europe. Huon's story, along with its sequels, made its way into English, more a romance at this
point than an epic, with Lord Berners’s sixteenth-century translation.\textsuperscript{15} The character who captivated the English imagination, however, was not Huon himself, but his father-figure Auberon, who eventually resurfaced in \textit{A Midsummer Night's Dream}.

The initial success of \textit{Huon} appears to have prompted a poet, perhaps the poet, to continue the story, introducing Huon’s family and progeny and making the beloved \textit{chanson de geste} into a dynastic cycle, albeit a non-traditional one. Below is a list of the cycle episodes, based on Cazanave’s work (variations in manuscript and print versions and adaptations of the cycle eliminate the possibility of a single, definitive set of episodes):

i. \textit{Le Roman d'Aubéron}

ii. \textit{Huon de Bordeaux}

iii. \textit{Esclarmonde}

iv. \textit{Huon, roi de féérie} \textit{Couronnement en féérie}

v. \textit{Clarisse et Florent}

vi. \textit{Yde et Olive I}

vii. \textit{Croissant}

viii. \textit{Yde et Olive II}

ix. \textit{Huon et les Géants}

x. \textit{La Chanson de Godin}

The sequels, however, had considerably less success with the more conservative critics of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Léon Gautier, author of \textit{Les épopées françaises}, saw little need for the story to have gone on as long as it did. After a summary and analysis of the various sequels, he remarks in an exasperated tone, “Vraiment, il était temps de s'arrêter” (It

was really time to stop).\(^{16}\)

The sequels may have struck some critics as too risqué for the sensibilities of the time, as Gautier remarks on the subject of *Yde et Olive*, and particularly Yde's marriage to Olive and her subsequent transformation: “Le lecteur se demande peut-être comment l'auteur pourra sortir de cette péripétie scabreuse. Rien de plus aisé: Dieu change le sexe d'Idé, et il a un fils qui s'appelle Croissant. Voilà jusqu'où était descendue l'idée de Dieu dans le pauvre cerveau de ce versificateur du trentième ordre.” (The reader might wonder how the author will get himself out of this scandalous turn of events. Simple: God changes Yde's sex, and he has a son named Croissant. That is how debased the idea of God becomes in the small mind of this third-rate versifier [the poet].)\(^{17}\) It appears, then, that only the main *Huon* narrative remained a favorite for both its so-called literary and commercial value.\(^{18}\)

Like many other *chansons de geste* and poetic works of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the *Huon* cycle was adapted into romance in the fifteenth-century trend of *mise en prose*. All of the sequels are present and developed in the prose version, which was first printed by Michel Lenoir in 1513. The subsequent print editions were seemingly in circulation and read more widely than their verse counterparts.

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\(^{17}\) Gautier, *Épopées* 3:745.

\(^{18}\) Cazanave, *D'Esclarmonde à Croissant*, 22; Gaston Paris adapted the *Huon* story into a book for children: *Aventures merveilleuses de Huon de Bordeaux, pair de France et de la belle Esclarmonde ainsi que du petit roi de Féérie Auberon mises en nouveau langage* par Gaston Paris de l'Académie Française (Paris: Didot, 1898). Citations for various editions of the various parts of the *Huon de Bordeaux* cycle are included in the reference list.
b. Huon de Bordeaux: A Feminine Cycle

The various sequels in the Huon Cycle have been divided and titled depending on manuscript presentation and editorial preference, but they sequentially follow the narratives around Esclaramonde (Huon’s wife), Clarisse (his daughter), and Yde (his granddaughter).

Unlike other family chronicles or dynastic cycles, in which female stories are secondary to the larger masculine plots (e.g., Tristan de Nanteuil), the Huon sequel cycle focuses largely on the matrilineal line. The evolution of the roles these women play in their respective narratives reveals an increasing female agency, beginning with the episode titled Esclarmonde, which centers around Huon’s wife. Esclarmonde is a Saracen princess, an exotic object of erotic desire, which the hero finally obtains by making her his wife. Though she is supposed to be the main character in the section editors have named after her, Esclarmonde remains mostly passive and plays no substantial role beyond being Huon’s lady-love and his inspiration to fight.

Esclarmonde’s daughter, Clarisse, takes a step away from being a damsel in distress and toward taking initiative. At the beginning of her narrative, she fights against and escapes from Brohart, her tormentor and kidnapper. Later, when she and her beloved Florent are being held captive, she breaks down the wall of her cell, and with the help of a watchman, she frees Florent, and the two escape together.

Thus the cycle arrives at Yde who makes a decidedly more dramatic move toward autonomy to challenge the limitations imposed by her gender, even though, and perhaps because, she does not operate within its traditional boundaries. In what seems to be the recurring plight of the women of the family, Yde is threatened with an undesirable marriage; she quickly demonstrates her own agency, dons a set of men’s clothes, and goes off on adventures usually reserved for male heroes.

Each episode in this cycle appears to mirror the one preceding it, borrowing motifs
from it and subverting them. Each daughter is a foil for her mother. The series of women overcoming the odds imposed on them by their gender is finally broken by Yde’s transformation, first in appearance and then in biology (or so we are told), as she slowly leaves the realm of the feminine in the process of realizing her agency. This begs the question of whether the two are mutually exclusive; in becoming independent and taking charge of her life instead of leaving it to fate, she moves further away from the female side of the binary than either of her foremothers and eventually breaks with it completely. Crucially, she is also the first one in her family to have a son and not a daughter.

c. The Question of Genre

Though usually considered to be a *chanson de geste*, *Huon de Bordeaux* and its sequels also include elements of romance. William Kibler has seen the need for new nomenclature and coined the term *chanson d’aventure*. Indeed, the traditional qualities of *chanson de geste* may be too limiting for the cycle of Huon and his descendants. Though epic motifs and tropes appear throughout—the setting in a Carolingian context (which Kibler sees as typical of the late French epic), wars between Christians and pagans, and the Christianization of pagan lands—there are also many elements which do not typically appear in the *chansons de geste* proper, but belong more to the realm of romance and courtly literature.

The *Yde et Olive* episode adheres to some of the conventions of the *chansons de geste*: although there is an absence of pagans, the hero’s journey is indeed fraught with battles for the faith, represented by the city of Rome and her emperor. However, it is first and foremost a personal, psychological, and transformative journey of self-discovery in which

wonder and exploration pave the way for the heroine’s success. After she arrives in Rome and meets Olive, the text enters the world of courtly romance. However, this reverse courtship breaks the usual mold in two important ways. In the first place, the princess Olive is the actively enamored rather than the object of desire; she is the gazer rather than the object of a typically male gaze. Olive is proactive and pursues, though shyly at first, her beloved. The ability of Olive to express her desire and even ask for it attests to her agency. On the other hand, the hidden princess Yde finds herself once more the object of desire, but this time subject of a feminine gaze. Olive subverts traditional heteronormative courtly love by unknowingly falling in love with a woman.

On the subject of genre, Catherine Jones has commented that “Huon de Bordeaux exemplifies the chanson d’aventures, a hybrid form of epic production that emerged in the thirteenth century.”20 “Hybrid” precisely describes Yde et Olive, as not only are elements from romance and courtly literature apparent, but there are also moments in the text more akin to those found in the fabliau than the epic chanson. This is best exemplified by an amusing expression at line 956: “Que jouer voelle a la pate levee,” which literally means “that I wish to play with raised feet,” clearly implying sexual intercourse (rendered more idiomatically in this translation as “wanting to take our pleasure”). Though Olive denies having any interest in sexual activity, this provocative expression, though euphemistic, sounds out of place coming out of the mouth of a princess. The general tone of the poem is far from sarcastic or humorous; nevertheless, moments like this one exemplify the generic hybridity of the text as a whole.

20 Jones, An Introduction to the Chansons de Geste, 123.
4. Language of the Text

Brewka has already delineated the linguistic characteristics of the manuscript in great detail in the introduction to her dissertation, so this discussion focuses on features of the Yde et Olive portion of the manuscript, specifically the Picard and Anglo-Norman traits of the text. There is a general consensus among critics of this manuscript that the author, or at the very least the scribe, is either of Picard origin or writing in the Picard dialect. The text overall poses no problem for readers of standard Francien (the Old French of the region around Paris) though it sometimes displays certain dialectal idiosyncrasies. Picard and Anglo-Norman are both northern dialects, and they share some common traits and phonetic changes. However, while Anglo-Norman retains some Latin singularities, Picard “was perhaps the most idiosyncratic dialect of Old French, and it was recognized as ‘unusual’ even in the medieval period.” The following are examples of dialectal intrusions in the text of Yde et Olive:

a) The Picard first person pronoun jou is used more often than je.

b) The Picard le appears regularly instead of the feminine la, contributing to the gender ambiguity discussed above. The third person masculine possessive pronouns sen (Pic.) and son are interchangeable.

c) The Picard third person possessive se often replaces the feminine sa.

d) The Picard second and third person possessives no and vo often replace nostre and vostre.

22 Kibler, An Introduction, 252.
e) The neuter pronouns che (line 668) and chou recur in the text.\footnote{Geneviève Hasenohr, ed., \textit{Introduction à l’ancien français de Guy Renard de Lage}, 2nd ed. (Paris: Sedes, 1993), 54.}

f) The Picard infinitive caïr (to fall) appears instead of cheoir.

g) The Old French sound [ts] produced by c is palatalized in Picard and often noted with a cb.\footnote{Kibler, \textit{An Introduction}, 252.} In the first person singular conjugation of the present tense, the final consonant is thus palatalized to a c(h) as in calench (line 772) and sench (line 961).

h) In Anglo-Norman c and g are interchangeable at the end of words.\footnote{Hasenohr, \textit{Introduction à l’ancien français}, 121.} Thus in the text are seen vieng (line 620) and retieng (lines 643 and 645).

i) A hard c in Picard replaces the cb in Old French. However, in front of an i or an e, it becomes cb. Thus are noted cante instead of chante (line 150), but chil instead of “cil” (lines 555 and 912).

j) The Old French words ending in –eau have –iax endings in Picard, which are expanded to –iau, as in biax and biauté, occurring numerous times in the text, or carreaux/quariax (line 588).

k) The ending –iee is reduced in Picard, so feminine past participles in –iee end in –ié, and words like liee become lié.

l) Brewka notes the conflation of an and en in such words as talent (also appearing as talant) and dolent (also dolans in Y\&O)\footnote{Brewka, “Esclarmonde,” 73.} or mangier and mengier.

The following edition attempts to intervene as little as possible, leaving some dialectical idiosyncrasies in spelling or word endings. Likewise, I have followed Cazanave in the issue of the “imploding r,” already beginning to weaken in the twelfth century before it
disappears entirely. Cazanave recommends not emending this phonetic weakening and muting of \( r \), as it reflects “une évolution réelle” in the language. I have therefore not emended words like \textit{faussas} (line 453) or \textit{escuies} (line 509) where my editorial predecessors have \textit{faussa[r]s} and \textit{escue[r]}.

5. The Manuscript

The unique manuscript of \textit{Yde et Olive}, Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale di Torino Ms. L II.14, is the only extant manuscript that contains all of the sequels to Huon de Bordeaux, including as well \textit{La Chanson de Godin}, a ten-thousand-line poem not preserved elsewhere. In addition to \textit{T}, two other manuscripts contain versions of the \textit{Huon} cycle narratives: BnF fr. 22555 and fr. 1451, known as \textit{P} and \textit{R} respectively. However, neither of them contains a complete version of the \textit{Yde et Olive} narrative, manuscript \textit{R} containing only a short summary.

In 1904, the Turin library suffered a devastating fire that destroyed many of its precious books and rarities beyond recovery. The fire left \textit{T} in poor condition, though mostly legible, and relatively undamaged compared to other more unlucky books. Indeed,

\footnotesize

\begin{itemize}
\item 27 Christiane Marchello-Nizia, \textit{Histoire de la langue française aux XIV\textsuperscript{e} et XV\textsuperscript{e} siècles} (Paris: Dunod, 1992), 83.
\item 28 Cazanave, \textit{D’Esclarmonde à Croissant}, 27n41.
\item 29 Françoise Meunier, \textit{La Chanson de Godin: Chanson de geste inédite} (Louvain: Bibliothèque de l’Université, 1958).
\item 30 Ernst Wahlgren, in his description of the manuscript, attributes to its thickness the relatively mild damage it suffered: “Grâce sans doute à sa masse importante, le ms. se trouvait mieux défendu des flammes que beaucoup d’autres mss. français et se présente, après la restauration, dans un assez bon état.” Ernst Wahlgren, \textit{Renseignement sur quelques}
\end{itemize}
though some pages bear the marks of having survived water and smoke damage, some of
the bigger and cleaner tears visible on the pages can only be explained by a heavy shock of
some kind or by the document having been subjected to brute force.\textsuperscript{31} It is fortunate that
the Schweigel edition was completed before the fire and so provides a complete reading of
the text in the manuscript when it was mostly intact. This edition is based on photographs
of pages from the manuscript provided by the library in Turin, but it relies on the
Schweigel edition to fill in gaps where reading of the manuscript is impossible today.

The large manuscript is currently split into four separate volumes, the division
having been made after the first restoration in 1908-1909. The \textit{Huon} cycle is contained in
the third volume (fols. 354-460\textsuperscript{v}), with \textit{Godin} taking up more than half of those pages. \textit{Yde et Olive} spans fols. 389\textsuperscript{v}-395\textsuperscript{v}. A second wave of restorations on \textit{T} occurred between 1974
and 1980. The third volume was restored between 1978 and 1980, a year after Brewka
completed her dissertation.\textsuperscript{32}

The manuscript measures around 343mm by 250mm according to recent
measurements by the library, with the modern binding expanding it to 375mm by 275mm.
The text covers around 252mm by 188mm (at fol. 394\textsuperscript{r}) and is laid out in two columns per
page, measuring around 249mm in length and 73mm in width (at fol. 396\textsuperscript{r}). The
interlinear space averages 7mm.

The pages are decorated with a red and blue border matching the red and blue

\begin{flushright}
\textit{manuscrits fran\c{c}ais de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Turin} (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells
Boktryckeri, 1934), 17.
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{31} Brewka says in her introduction that some of the texts were thrown out the window in
an effort to save them from the flames; Brewka, “Esclarmonde,” 61.

\textsuperscript{32} Brewka, “Esclairmond,” 62. This means that many of the parts Brewka had some trouble
with no longer offer impediments to reading. For instance, she reports some parts being
covered in tape, making it difficult to decipher the writing. The tape she mentions no
longer exists.
initials of each laisse. Flourishes and marginal illustrations sometimes adorn the page, but the true gem of the Huon section of the manuscript are the eight gilded miniatures which have miraculously survived for the most part with their gold leaf intact. One of these is related to the Yde et Olive narrative and is described at the corresponding lines in the edition (unfortunately, there is no online access to this image). Curiously, there are pages where the decorations stop, leaving the page completely black and white, only to continue on the next. The text is presented in a Gothic script and is dated with a terminatus ad quem of 1311. Brewka has posited that the manuscript is the work of at least two hands.\textsuperscript{33} She provides an extensive description of T along with discussion of its provenance, so it can suffice to state here that T appears to have belonged to the duke of Savoy by 1713, and it is possible that the book had been in his family much longer than that. Brewka believes that the decorated manuscript may have been created for a prominent lady “worthy of such a gift.”\textsuperscript{34}


Apostrophes are added following the conventions of modern French, and modern punctuation is used, including quotation marks for dialogue, as is modern capitalization. The acute accent distinguishes tonic “e” from atonic “e” in polysyllabic words, especially at the end of a line to mark the assonance. This edition expands all abbreviations, with some of the most common patterns displayed in the manuscript listed below. Abbreviations are used sporadically, sometimes several times per line, and other times sparsely for several

\textsuperscript{33} Brewka, “Esclarmonde,” 70.
\textsuperscript{34} Brewka, “Esclarmonde,” 68-69.
verses at a time. This helps the scribe keep line lengths more or less consistent throughout the manuscript.

I systematically expand all abbreviations as follows:

a) The only word the scribe consistently abbreviates is \textit{mlt}, which does not appear in the \textit{Yde et Olive} section in its complete form. It appears elsewhere in the manuscript twice as “molt” and at least six times as “mout,” including in the Godin section. It is expanded as “molt” in this edition.

b) The symbol \textcircled{9} represents “con” or “com.” It has been resolved as “com” when followed by a “b,” “p,” or “m,” or when it stands for the conjunction “com” (modern French “comme”), and as “con” when followed by all other letters.

c) Horizontal bars or dashes “ over some letters or words usually indicate an omitted “n” or “m,” in which case expansion follows the same rules as in \textit{b}, but sometimes they indicate that several letters have been omitted.

d) The use of two strokes usually signifiles that there are two letters omitted such as in \textit{qût} (“quant”).

e) Three strokes usually stand for “our” or “ur.” They occur most often in the abbreviation \textit{p‘‘} which has been resolved as “pour.”

f) First and second person plural pronouns sometimes appear as \textit{n‘} and \textit{v‘}. They appear elsewhere as “nous” and “vous,” so they have been expanded as such.

g) The symbol \textit{Z} stands for “et” and appears at least five times more often than the unabbreviated conjunction.

h) The letter \textit{p} with a crossed tail is resolved as “par” in most instances, but sometimes as “per” as in “perdi.”

i) The letter \textit{p} also appears with either a bar or stroke above it and is mostly resolves as “pri” or “pre.”
j) “qui,” “que,” and “qu’” are abbreviated as a q with a stroke mark above it.

The letters “u” and “v” are sometimes interchangeable, especially in the middle of a word where modern French would use “v.” Likewise, little distinction is made between “i” and “j.” I have followed modern spelling conventions in these cases and rendered “u” as “v” when it is a consonant, with the same distinction made for “i” and “j.” The last pair poses a problem particularly for Roman numerals which I transcribe as they appear in the text. Where either “i” or “j” may appear in the manuscript, this edition uses "i" consistently to represent the number one. The scribe delimits numbers with a dot on either side (e.g. .xv.); the edition mimics this convention, which is especially useful for differentiating the number .i. from the adverb of place (“y” in modern French.) and personal pronoun “i”.

Symbols Used in This Edition

General notes about the text, manuscript, glosses, and previous editions are indicated as footnotes at the bottom of the page.

My own emendations to the text (correcting scribal errors or proposing readings for illegible sections of the manuscript) are in square brackets [ ]. To signal differences in previous editions, the initials B and S for the Brewka and Schweigel editions respectively precede the line number.

The folio number and side corresponding to the text is indicated on the right side of the column of the edited text.

Finally, sections where the manuscript has sustained heavy damage are indicated with curly brackets { }.  

29
7. Note on the Translation

The challenge of the following translation is trying to stay true to the original French without interfering with the meaning while at the same time making the text readable for a modern audience. The following remarks are intended to alert the reader to the nuances present in the French for fear of losing them in the translation and hopefully to complement the comparison of the side-by-side texts:

a) I have elected not to anglicize character names in the spirit of interfering as little as possible with the text. So Sorbarré, Désiier, and the like keep their French names (with added accents). Masculine names are rendered in the objective case and feminine names in the nominative, as these are generally the most recurring forms. Thus while the female characters’ names remain Yde, Clarisse, and Olive, the male characters become Ydé (nominative Ydes), Oton (nom. Otes), and Florent (nom. Flores).

b) The author/scribe alternates between the preterit and the present, perhaps for the assonance or meter. However, for the sake of consistency, the English translation uses the narrative past throughout.

c) The way characters address each other is also volatile. Within the same conversation or piece of dialogue, a speaker might use the second person singular (tu) or the polite second person plural (vous) interchangeably to address an interlocutor. This aspect of the Old French text is not uncommon, and once again might occur solely for reasons of meter or rhyme, but it is lost in Modern English.

d) The style of the poem is mostly paratactic, using short, simple sentences without many
connectors or conjunctions. This is typical of the epic (Jones, 17); however, it would translate into choppy Modern English. I have therefore inserted conjunctions and other connectors, following as best I could the logic and the sense of the original to lend the text causality, sequence, and continuity where they are textually lacking.

e) Line breaks are usually respected in the translation to facilitate following along in the facing-page edition, with a few exceptions, which needed a compromise for the sake of coherent English syntax.

f) Likewise, some intensifiers and tautologies typical of the epic genre are sometimes reduced in English to avoid redundancy, as in “Quant li rois l’a oïe et escoutee,” which has been rendered simply as “When the king heard it” (line 77). Such intensifiers remain in other instances to relay the emphasis, as in “Pleure et souspire, molt a ciere matee” rendered as “Strained with grief as he wept and sobbed” (line 91).

g) The biggest challenge for the translation is the problem of pronouns, which is related to the various and sometimes confusing versions of Yde’s name used by the author. The use of the Picard pronoun “le” for the feminine only complicates matters further, as the author/scribe alternates between the feminine and masculine versions of Yde’s name, often making it difficult to know whether the referent is feminine or masculine. Moreover, the Old French poet occasionally goes several lines without using any pronoun or direct antecedent at all, leaving a verb standing ambiguously alone, where the Modern English translator must provide a pronoun and clear referent. This translation attempts to minimize the use of pronouns when they are not present in the original text in order to avoid assigning an unintended gender identity to the main character and to keep the author’s portrayal of Yde—and indeed her self-identification—intact. When it is necessary to have a pronoun in a sentence where the Old French is ambiguous about gender, I follow the closest occurrence of Yde’s name or other context clues.
There is one instance in which the translation had to diverge from the original for reasons of logic. In line 740, while addressing his barons, Oton does not yet know that Yde is a woman but refers to her with the feminine objective Ydain. The same syllable count could have been achieved with the masculine objective Ydé (it should be noted that the sentence does not call for the objective case to begin with), so it is most likely an error on the author/scribe’s part. Consequently, that occurrence of Ydain becomes Ydé in the translation.
I

Florent came joyfully to Aragon, And brave Garin was glad, For there was peace, and he had his son back. Everyone was in good spirits, light of heart and full of joy, Thanking the Almighty Father For all the good that remained to them. They rode to the palace in splendid display. Clarisse rode beside them merrily With over one hundred maidens Whose hearts were glad, light, and joyful. Strong Florent embraced her,
Et le baisa doucement en riant.

Ensamble vont au mostier simplement.

Florens i offre .i. paille molt tres gent

15 Et .i. marc d’or, puis offrent autre gent.

Aprés en vont orer molt bonement.

Quant canté ot li bon prestres Climens

Si vont mengier, n’i font delaïement.

Molt ont de mes du tout a lor talent.

20 Après mengier se jüent li auquant;

A escremir aprendent li enfant,

Et li pluisour vont as tables juant.

And, smiling, kissed her sweetly.

Together they went dutifully\(^1\) to the church

Where Florent made a gift of a beautiful silk

And one gold marc, after which others made offerings,

And then they prayed devoutly.

When the good priest Clement had performed the mass,

They went to feast soon after

Where there were dishes aplenty filled with all that they desired,

And after the feast, they reveled for some time:

Young men learned to fence,

And many played backgammon

\(^1\) The original “simplement” or “simply” has religious connotations. It can also mean “humbly.”
Cil jongleor les vont molt deduisant. While the minstrels entertained them.

En Arragonne estoit la gent molt lié The people of Aragon were very glad

De chou qu'il sont tout partout apaisié. That there was peace among them,

Li rois Garins est molt afoibliés, But King Garin had grown weak with age,

Son bel visage appali et froissié. His handsome face paled and wrinkled.

Em poi de terme l'ot molt amenuisié. Soon he had lost his strength

Ne li tient mais de deduit commencer And no longer delighted himself

De cacerie ne de vol d'esprevier. In hunting or hawking.

Entour lui sont li baron arrengié; The barons gathered around him

Mander li font les maistres pour aidier. And called for physicians to aid him,

Cascuns d'aus dist confors n'i a mestier, But none of them had any comfort for him.

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2 “Cil” here functions as a definite article. Kibler (65) writes: “Cil is often found in traditional descriptions of objects or beings regularly evoked in such situations.” The translation will therefore use “the” when appropriate.
Et {l'aigre} mors le commence a coitier

Bitter death began to court him

Qui ne le veut jamais entrelaisser. 389b

And would not release him.

Ses lais a fait— ne s'i volt atargier;

He did not delay in making his will,

Quanqu'il avoit a tout pour Diu laissiét.

Leaving everything he had to God,3

Dix ait de s'ame et merci et pitiét.

May He have mercy and pity on his soul!

Ses .ii. mains joint, si regarde le ciel.4

He joined his hands together and looked up to heaven,

Diu reclama, le Pere droiturier,

Imploring God, the just Father:

“Secourés moi! Trop sui a grant mescief.

“Save me! How wretched I am!

Partir me voel du mont a vo congiet,

With your leave, I wish to depart from this world,

Mais d'une coze ai jou le cuer molt lié:

But of one thing my heart is very glad:

Que mi baron sont partout apaisié.”

That everywhere my barons are at peace.”

---

3 Probably meaning to the Church, but the statement also carries the figurative sense of leaving one's fate to God.

4 S6222 esgarde
To his dear son he proclaimed resolutely:

“Farewell, Florent. I have left my kingdom."

Pray God to have mercy on me.”

And so he lay down, and spoke not another word.

The king was dead, so the clergy assembled

To bury him in the church that same day.

The king died on that day,

And Florent with the rugged countenance was king.

---

5 The use of the past tense perhaps implies that he is leaving it to Florent.

6 The formuliac “ciere membree” appears in other chansons de geste, such as Ami et Amile (line 1492). The expression appears to indicate a common trait of the ideal and beautiful knight, as is the case for Ami, according to Beatrix Koncz in her PhD dissertation “Ami et Amile: Tradition, techniques et structures poétiques dans une chanson de geste du début du XIIIe siècle.” (PhD diss., Eötvös Loránd University, 2011).
En tel mois a corone d’or portee;

Clarisse fu roîne coronee.

He donned the crown that same month,

And Clarisse was crowned queen.

A grant deduit ont lor vie gardee;

Li rois Florens engroissa s’espousee.

They took great pleasure in their life together,

Such that King Florent made his wife pregnant;

Li gentis dame a faite sa portee—

Li tans aproce que sera delivree.

The noble lady carried her burden to term,

And the time for her to be delivered of it drew near.

Molt par estoit fresce et encoulouree.

She was fresh and full of color,

But she was fearful of her pregnancy

De sa groiseur est molt espoëntee;

Sainte Marie a sovent reclamee:

And often invoked Saint Mary thus:

“My lady, help this wretch,

And let her be delivered of her fruit!”

Li rois a molt la roîne escoutee.

The king listened to the queen for a long time,

\footnote{B6274 cel}
Vint au moustier, s’i a grant gent menée. And went to church, taking many of his people with him,

Pour celi prie qu’il avoit tant amee, To pray for the one he had so loved,

Mais chou ne vaut— poi ara de duree; But to no avail, for she had little time left.

Lor grans amours iert par tans dessevree; Their great love would soon be severed,

Qu’élé en morut, ce fu griés destinee. For it was her grim fate to die.

Une fille ot; au moustier fu portée. She had a daughter who was taken to the church

Yde ot a non quant en fons fut levee. And baptized Yde.

Au roi Florent ont sa fille moustree. When Florent was shown his daughter,

Quant il le voit grant joie en a menée. He had great joy,

De la roïne a tantost demandée. But he immediately asked after the queen.

(On voit bien l’uevre ne puet estre celee),9 His people knew the affair could no longer be concealed,

Pour chou li ont la verité contee. So they told him the truth.

---

8 S6255 la fille
9 The tear runs through this line.
Quand le roi l'aura entendue et escoutee,
Il cier pasmés—tel dolour a menée.
Au relever a ses paumes hurtees.
Courant s'en vient pour veoir s'esprousee. 390 a
Molt de sa gent sont après lui alee.
Vient a palais, si l'a morte trouvée,
Celi u monde qu'il avoit mix amée.
Pour Clarisse a sa vois en haut levee:
“Suer, douce amie, mar fustes onques nee.
Pour vous ai jou tante riens oubliée,
Et a repos estoit ma char’s entree.
Or m'est pour vous ma grans dolors doublee.
Bien m'est avis que vous m'estes emblee.”
L’iaue des iex li est aval coulee;
When the king heard it,
He fainted from the great pain it caused him.
When he got up, he struck his palms
And came running to see his wife,
Followed by many of his people.
At the palace, he found her lying in death
The one whom he had loved best in the world.
He raised his voice high for Clarisse:
“Beloved, sweet friend, you were born in an evil hour!
For you I had set aside so many things,
And I had found peace,
But now my great grief for you deepens.
I daresay you are stolen from me.”
Tears ran down his face
Strained with grief as he wept and sobbed,
His chest awash with them,
Whereupon he collapsed again.

Sorbarré\textsuperscript{10} raised him up immediately

And said, “Good king, for virtue’s sake,
Would you cry yourself to death?”

“God,” said Florent, “my sorrow is great.
Treacherous Death, you were too bold
When you took my wife from me!”

His people surrounded him, beside themselves,
Gently mourning the queen
Until the morning when the bright dawn appeared.

\textsuperscript{10} One of Florent’s important followers, a former Muslim who converted to Christianity and appears as well in \textit{Clarisse et Florent}. 
IV

Grans fu li dix c’on mena pour Clarisse:
Pleurent et crient et mainnent grant martire.

Dusc’au moustier ne s’arresterent mie;
Avoec aus ont grande cevalerie.
Toute gent vont plourant pour la roïne.
Aprés la messe, lués qu’ele fu fenie,
En .i. sarcu ont encloze Clarisse;
Ens u cancel ont la bele enfouïe.

Tout entour sont assemblé la clergie.
Li rois retourne en sa grant sale antie
Dont rest li dels doublés de la roïne.

IV

Great was the mourning that they held for Clarisse,
Crying and wailing in their grief.
They made their way to the church without stopping
Accompanied by a large cavalry.
Everyone went weeping for the queen.
After the mass was over,
Clarisse was laid in a tomb.
The beautiful one was interred in a chancel,
As the clergy all gathered round.
The king returned to his ancient great hall,
Where he renewed his grief for the queen.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11} The prefix “re” in “rest” adds a double emphasis to “doublé.”
“Que devenrai,” fait il, “pour vous, amie?”

“Amie douce, or es tu orphenine!”

“Sorbarrés fait lués aporter sa fille.

Si home ont dit, “Vous faites vilonnie.

Pour duel mener ne le rarés vous mie.

Laissiés le duel si ferés courtoisie.

De li avés une molt bele fille;

Si bele n’a dusc’a la mer de Grisse.

Pour tel restor soit la noize laissie.”

Li rois respont, “Seignour, et jou l’otrie.

“Pour vous, amie?”

“Amie douce, or es tu orphenine!”

“Sorbarré soon had his daughter brought to him.

When he saw her, he cried aloud:

“My dear, you are now an orphan.”

His men said to him, “What you’re doing is unseemly!

You will not have her back by mourning.

And would do well to leave your grief.

You have a beautiful daughter by her;

There is none so beautiful as far as the Grecian sea.

For this mercy, let grief be set aside,”

To which the king replied, “Lords, I will concede

And refrain from it since you are all asking me to.”

12 Interestingly, “restor” can also mean “replacement” or “substitution.” Perhaps the author is foreshadowing events to come.
Li rois s’en tient mais c’est a grant hascie.

Pour son enfant fait querre .ii. norices

Qui nuit et jour durement l’ont servie.

Dusc’a .vii. ans li ont mené tel vie.

Ains puis le roi Florent ne virent rire;

Et nuit et jour pour sa femme souspire.

Ydain baisoit la bouce et la poitrine.

A ses .vii. ans fu a la lettre mise.

Ele aprent tant, bien sot son sautier lire

Et en rommans et en latin escrire.

Bien ait li cuers qui si bien le doctrine.

A .xiii. ans fu si bele meschine,

Pour sa biauté toute gent s’esjoissent.

Au pere l’ont rouve duc et prince,

The king kept his word, but to his great torment.

He had two nurses brought for his child,

Who attended to her diligently night and day,

Such a life was she given until she was seven years old.

Until then, they did not see the king smile.

He sighed for his wife night and day,

And he would kiss Yde’s mouth and chest.

At the age of seven, she was taught her letters:

She learned very well and knew how to read her psalter

And write in French and Latin.

Blessed be whoever taught her so properly.

By fourteen, she had grown into a beautiful young woman,

And everyone rejoiced at her beauty.

Dukes and princes asked her father for her hand,
Et conte et roi volentiers le presissent:
N'en n'i vient nul que on ne l'escondisse.
Requize l'ont de dela Rommenie.
Li rois respont marier n'en voel mie;
Ains l'averà pour lui a compaigngne—
Ne voel de li enco eslongier mie.
C'est ses dedui— n'autre amor il ne prise.
Molt souvent l'a accolée et baisie
Pour s'espozez a cui ele fu fille.
I. jour de mai que l'aloete crie,
Cante la melle et s'esjoist li pie,
I. diemence quant la messe ot oïe,
Ist du moustier Florens et sa maisnie;
C. cevaliers ot en sa compaignie.
En .i. vergier de grant anci
cerie

La sont assis sur l’erbe qui verdie.

Li rois parole oiant sa baronnie:

“Seignor,” fait il, “se Dix me beneïe,

Molt ai esté en ceste enfermerie.

Il a passé .xiii. ans—voire .xv.—

Que j’ai perdue Clarisse la roïne,

La bele dame cui Jhesus beneïe.

De bone amor l’amoie sans faintize;

Onques puis jour n’och femme a compaignie.14

Ore est bien drois que a vous tous le die:

In an ancient orchard

They sat on the verdant grass.

The king spoke, and his barons listened:

“My lords,” he said, “God bless me,

I have been in this infirmity13 for a long time.

It has been fourteen years, nearly fifteen

Since I lost queen Clarisse –

Jesus bless that fair lady.

I loved her well and faithfully;

Since then I have never enjoyed the company of a woman,

But it is fitting that I tell you all this:

13 “Enfermerie” could mean an “illness” as well as “imprisonment” Alternatively, the latter may also connote “cloistering” or a state of (in this case, voluntary) chastity.

14 In the Schweigel edition, these two lines are inverted (lines 6345–46).
Pour femme avoir iert ma joie essaucie.

Having a wife would complete my happiness.

Une en arai. N'iert hom {qui} m'en desdie.”

I will have one, and no man can dissuade me from it.”

La gent au roi ont grant {joie} menee

The king’s people were very glad

De chou qu’il a a femme {se\textsuperscript{15} pen}see.

That he had his mind set on a wife:

“Sire,” font il, “pour la vert{u nome}e,

“Sire,” they said, “for goodness’ sake,

Dont sera elle et de quele contree? 390\textsuperscript{a}

From where will she be, from which country?

Si m’aït Dix, molt iert bone eüree

By God, what a happy hour it will be

Quant d’Arragone iert roïne clamee.”

When a queen is proclaimed in Aragon.”

Et dist Florens: “Par l’ame de mon pere,

Florent said, “By my father’s soul,

Maint haut homme ont ma fille demandee.

Many high-born men have asked for my daughter’s hand,

Jou ne sai homme u mix fust mariée.

And I do not know a better man for her to marry.

\textsuperscript{15} B6389 \textit{sa}
Dedens .i. mois l’averai espouzee;

Jou le prendrai pour l’amour de sa mere.”

Dist Sorbarrés: “Qu’est ce que tu dis, leres?

Doit dont ta fille estre a toi mariee?

180 A ceste loi que Dix nous a donnee,

Dedens infer sera t’ame dampnee.”

Et dist Florens: “Mar i ara pensee

S’il est nus hom qui le m’ait desloee!

Lués li arai l’ame du cors sevree.”

185 Sa fille mande, et on l’a amenee.

Dix comme est fresce et bien encoloree!

Tout riant vient devant le roi, son pere,

Et li rois l’a entre ses bras combree.

Bien l’a .x. fois baisie et accollee,
Et celle s’est vers lui avolente,
Mais ne set pas son cuer ne sa pensee.
Quant le sara si en iert molt iree.
Son cier pere est si fort u cuer entree;
Tout le tresperce dessi en la coree.

Du sens istra se ne l’a espouzee.
Dix! Pour coi a li rois tele pensee
Dont tante dame iert encor esplouree,
Et tante terre et destruite et gastee,
Tante jovente en iert deshyreete,
Tante pucelle orphenine clamee?
Li rois ara pour li sa ciere iree.

And she yielded to him readily,
For she did not know his heart or his mind.
When she would learn about it, she would be outraged.
She had so consumed her dear father’s thoughts
And pierced through his heart
That he would lose his mind if he did not marry her.
God! Why would the king have such an idea,
Which would yet cause so many ladies to be lamented,
So many lands to be destroyed and spoiled,
So many young women to be disinherited,
So many maidens to be proclaimed orphans?¹⁶
And because of her, the king would be driven to great anger.

¹⁶ This appears to be a prophetic intervention on the narrator’s part.
Tant a Ydain baisie et accolée.

But still he kissed and embraced Yde at great length.

Passa li jours, s’aproisma le vespree.

Thus the day passed, and it was near vespers.

La gent au roi est forment tourmentee

The king’s people were sorely aggrieved

205 Tout pour Ydain que il a enamee.

For Yde, with whom he had fallen in love.

Par nul d’aus tous n’en iert l’uevre contee.

She was not told of the matter by any of them,

Dist l’uns a l’autre, “Ceste coze est provee:

But one would say to the other: “This thing is certain:

S’il le tenoit en sa cambre a celee,

If he had her shut up in his room,

Ja ne seroit de Florent deportee

She would not be spared by Florent for long,

210 Qu’il nel eüst tantost despucelee.

For no sooner would he take her maidenhead.

S’elle sa{voit} de son cuer la pensee,

If she knew his heart,

Anchois {fui}roit17 outre la Mer Betee18

She would prefer to flee across the frozen sea

17 The same tear which disrupts the reading on the recto has made some words illegible on this page. Reading based on S6395-97.

18 “Mer Betee” literally means “frozen sea.” The following explanation is found in Olivier Collet’s edition of Le Roman de Jules César (1993): “Afin d’exprimer l’éloignement d’une contrée, les auteurs médiévaux recourent volontiers à l’image de La Mer Betee, littéralement ‘mer figée’ ou ‘gelée’ (latin mare coagulatum), et le érudites s’accordent généralement à rapporter cette expression à une géographie
Que l'attend[ist. C]hou est coze prouvee

Car {la puc}elle est tant bien escolee;

215 Du tout s’estoit a Diu servir donnee.”

VI

Li rois Florens de riens ne s’arresta.

Ains fait mander sa gent, plus ne targa.

Briés et escris a pris, ses seela.

Les haus barons u Florens se fia

220 Mande partout, et la gaite i ala.

La gaite a dit marier se vaerra.

Than wait for it to happen. This thing is certain,

For the young woman is well schooled

And has devoted herself entirely to God’s service.”

VI

King Florent would stop for nothing,

But called his people together without delay.

He had letters and missives written, which he sealed himself,

Summoning the high barons whom he trusted

From everywhere, and the watch guard went to him.

He told the guard that he wanted to get married.

---

nordique” (p. 431). [In order to express distance from one’s country, medieval authors turn to the image of La Mer Betee, literally “the still sea” or “frozen sea” (latin mare coagulatum), and the learned often like-mindedly assign this expression a nordic geography.]

19 Enclisis of “si les”.

20 Probably Guis, the same watch guard named in line 245. Guis was Florent’s guard in Clarisse et Florent when Florent was imprisoned by his father; Guis helped the two lovers to escape.
Cascuns l’entent, grant joie en demena.
Savoir vorront qu’il lor demandera
Et l’occoison pour coi semons les a.

En Arragonne tant de gent entré a
Que li marciés et la ville em puepla.
Cascuns barons se vesti et para,
Puis vont a court – nus ne s’i arresta.

Li rois Florens grant joie au cuer en a.

Cascuns haus hom molt bel le salua.
Les haus barons cascu accolé a,
Et lor a dit conseillier se vorra
De femme avoir, car volenté en a.

Pluisour li dient que trop atendu a,

“Ber, pren moullier dont honors te venra.

This brought great joy to everyone who heard him.
They all wanted to know what he would ask of them,
And for what reason he had called for them.
So many people had come to Aragon
That they crowded the markets and the town.
Each baron dressed and arrayed himself,
And went straightaway to court.
King Florent rejoiced at this,
As each high-born man greeted him courteously.
He embraced each noble baron
And told them that he wanted to be advised
On taking a wife, because such was his desire.
Many told him that he had waited too long.
“Brave sir, marry a woman who will bring you honor.
Si m’aït Dix, ta cours mix en vorra.

By God, your court will be better off for it,

Ce fu damages quant vo femme fina,

Though it was a tragedy when your wife died,

Car sa pareille ne trouverés vous ja.’’

For never will you find her equal.”

Li rois l’entent, tantost le cief crolla.

Hearing this, the king nodded his head.

Il fait laver, a mengier lor donna;

He had them wash and invited them to eat:

A grant plenté de viandes i a.

There was an abundance of food,

Puis sont levé quant li mangiers fina.

And when the feast was finished, they got up,

En son vergier son conseil assambla,

And he assembled his council in his orchard.

Et Sorbarrés pres de lui s’acosta.

Sorbarré sat next to him,

Li gaite Guis, qui bonté li fist ja,

As well as Guis, the sentinel, who had done him a kindness in the past.


“You spoke of marrying some time ago.”

De marier avés parlé piece a.

---

21 The Old French “piece a que” means “it has been a long time that.”
Or esgardés u li cuers vous traira,

Look where your heart will lead you,22

Et respondés ensi com vous plaira.

And answer as it pleases you.

250 Decha la mer si haute femme n’a,

There is no high-born woman from here to the sea

S’avoir le voels, que on ne t’amaint cha.”

Whom we would not bring to you if you wished to have her.”

Li rois a dist que sa fille prendra;

The king said that he would take his daughter,

N’autre, ce dist, que li n’espousera.

And that he would marry no other but her.

Quant l’ont oï, li uns l’autre bouta,

When they heard him, they nudged each other,

255 Lievent lors mains, cascuns d’aus se signa.

Raised their hands up, and crossed themselves.

“Sire,” font il, “Damledix vous en gart!

“Sire,” they said, “God keep you from this!

Onques n’avint, ne jamais n’avenra;

It has never been done, nor will it ever come to pass.

Or n’est il hom que, s’il vous escoutast,

No man who hears you

Ne vous tenist de tel coze a musart.

Would not take you for a deviant.

---

22 The original “esgarder” can also mean “be careful.” This might be a hint from the minstrel foreshadowing Florent’s questionable decisions and his barons’ objections later on.
Sousviegne vous de Diu qui nous forma, Qui le baptesme et le foi nous donna. Gardons la loi que il nous commanda. Cis iert honnis qui le trespassera. Le mariage, quant il le commanda, Tous crestïens Jhesucris commanda C’a son parage ne se mariast pas. Tu ne le pues avoir dusques en quart, U autrement bougrenie sera.” Florens l’oï, grant mautalent en a. Dist a sa gent, “De chou ne parlés pas! Si m’ait Dix, autre que moi n’avra.  

Remember God who made us
And gave us baptism and the faith.
Let us keep to the law by which he commands us.
Certainly whoever transgresses it would be dishonored.
When he commanded marriage,
Jesus Christ instructed all Christians
That they should never marry their kin.
You can only marry beyond the fourth degree, 23
Otherwise it would be heresy.”
When Florent heard this, he was greatly angered.
He said to his people, “There will be no discussion!
So help me God, she will have no one else but me.

______________________________
23 See introduction for a discussion of laws concerning consanguinity.
La damoiselle avoec moi remanra."

VII

Li rois Florens les a fais esmaier.

Sa fille mande et fait aparillier.

275 Alé i sont si noble conseillier,

Et Sorbarrés le commence a coitier.

Son cors acesme la pucelle au vis fier

De dras a or qui molt estoient cier.

A l’adestrer i ot maint chevalier;

280 Des cambres ist, s’entre u palais plenier.

Encontre li est li barnés dreciés.

De sa biauté est cascuns formiés.

Bien le vous doi conter et annoncier:

Plus estoit blance que n’est nege en fevrier;

The maiden will stay with me."

VII

King Florent had greatly troubled them.

He asked for his daughter and had her dressed.

His noble councilmen went to him,

And Sorbarré began to implore him.

The maiden with the proud face adorned herself

In precious golden garments.

Many knights accompanied her

As she left her quarters and entered the great palace.

The gathered barons stood to greet her,

Each moved by her beauty.

Indeed I must tell you and recount

That she was white as snow in February
285  Desor le blanc ot couleur qui bien siet,
   Upon that whiteness was a very becoming tint
    Vermelle estoit comme roze en rozier;
    Of red, as a rose on the bush.
    Les iex plus vairs que n’a faucons muiers;
    Her eyes were brighter than any falcon’s,
    Les caviax blons qui cercelent arrier,
    And she had blond hair that fell in curls on her back.24
    N’i vaut fix d’or de biauté .i. denier.
    A golden thread was not worth one denier of its beauty.

290  Ains nus cristaus tant fust aparilliés,
    Never was a crystal more dazzling
    Ne fu plus blans – bien l’oze tesmongnier –
    Or whiter, I daresay,
    Com est li frons Ydain a l’aprocier.
    Than Yde’s brow when one approached her.
    Le nes traitich, les sourcix enarciés,
    Her nose was shapely, her eyebrows arched;
    Bouce vermelle et les dens bien forgiés,
    Her mouth was red and her teeth well formed,
    295  Le col plus blanc que n’est ivoires ciers,
    Her throat whiter than precious ivory,
    Les mains grailletes, les dois bien adreciés,
    Her hands dainty, her fingers shapely,

24 Literally, “her hair curled at the back.”
Hances bassetes, et s’ot vautis les piés,

And she had low hips and arched feet.

Tant est ses cors de tout biens adresiés.

Thus was her body well formed in every way.

Jovenete est de .xv. ans tous entiers;

The young woman was a full fifteen years of age

300 N’ot mamelete c’on aperchoive riens.

Yet had no breasts that could be seen.

Envers son pere est ses cors adresiés.

Yde stood facing her father,

Li rois l’accole et baisa volentiers.

And the king gladly embraced and kissed her.

Encoste lui sor .i. paile s’assiet,

She sat next to him on a silken coverlet,

Et ne savoit de coi il veut plaider.

Not knowing what he wished to talk to her about.

305 “Ma bele fille,” dist Florens, “or oiés. 391’b

“My beautiful daughter,” said Florent, “now listen to me.

Orphenine25 estes, s’ai de vous grant pitiét.

You are an orphan, and I pity you greatly.

Puis que perdi vo mere, ne fui liés,

Since I lost your mother, I have not been happy,

Mais par vo cors iere resleeciés.

But because of you26 I have found joy again.

25 The scribe has added a dash over the “n.” A possible slip of the hand?

26 Or “in your person.”
Mix ressemblés vostre mere au vis fier

You resemble your mother with the proud face

310 Que riens qui fust onques desous le ciel.

More than anything else under heaven.

Pour son samblant, ai jou vo cors plus cier.

Because of this likeness, you are all the dearer to me;

Si vous prendrai a per et a moullier.”

Therefore, I will take you as my companion and wife.”

Cele l’entent, si embroncha\(^27\) son cief.

When she heard him, her face sank.

“Peres,” fait elle, “as tu le sens cangiét?

“Father,” she said, “have you lost your senses?\(^28\)

315 Plus chou ne dites, car trop est grans peciés!”

Don’t say that again, for it is a terrible sin!”

Adont se veut la pucelle drecier.

Then the maiden made to get up.

“Fille,” fait il, “de chou ne parlés nient.

“Daughter,” he said, “not another word,

Ja me feriés tantost vif erragier!”

Or you will make me very angry.”

Tout si baron s’en sont agenoulliét,

All his barons knelt down

320 Et dient, “Rois, aiés de vous pitiét.

And pleaded, “King, have pity on your soul.

---
\(^27\) S6496 *embronche*

\(^28\) Literally, “has your reason changed?”
Tu vex ta fille et ton cors vergongnier!"

Florens a dit, “Leceour, pautonnier!

N’est hom vivans qui m’en puist traire arrier.

Que par celui qui en crois fu dreciés,

325 Jou le prendrai cui qu’en doie anoiier!”

VIII

La fille au roi est forment esmarie.²⁹

Toute nuit pleure, si s’apelle caitive.

“Que devenrai? Pour coi fui ainc nasquie?

Se li miens³⁰ peres a o moi compaignie,

330 L’ame de moi en iert pour voir traïe!

Jou m’en furai, chi n’arresterai mie.”

_________________________________________
²⁹ S6509 *esmaïe*
³⁰ S6512 *mens*
Es vous le roi o sa grant compaignie
Qui en sa cambre a fait mener sa fille;
Il a poour que ne li soit ravie.

Le bai[n]g fait faire u sa fille iert baignie.
Si qu’ele estoit si fort espöerie,
Atant es vous Désiier de Pavie.
En la ville entre a grant cevalerie.
Encontre va Florens et sa maisnie,

Et la pucelle est fors du baing salie.

Dras d’omme vest, de riens ne s’i detrie;
En guize d’omme s’est bien aparillie.
Vient a l’estable, au destrier est lancie,

And behold, the king with his great company
Had his daughter led to his chambers
Because he was afraid that she would be taken away from him.
He had a bath prepared where his daughter was washed.
As she sat there, thoroughly terrified,
Lo and behold, Desiier of Pavie31
Entered the city with a great cavalry.
Florent and his household went to meet him,
Whereupon the young woman hurried out of the bath;
She quickly put on some men’s clothing,
And so disguised,
She went to the stables and made for a destrier,

31 Florent’s uncle, also a main antagonist in Clarisse et Florent.
Puis est montee que ne s’atarga mie.

Mounting it without delaying one moment,

345 Par nului n’est veüe ne coisie.

Nor was she seen or spotted by anyone.

Fors d’Arragonne en va, Dix li aë.

So she left Aragon, God help her!

Floreng revint, en sa cambre l’a quize;

When Florent came back to his chambers looking for her,

Bien s’aperchiut que s’en {estoit fuïe).

He saw that she had fled.

Molt fu dolans, je ne vous en {ment) mie:

He was greatly grieved by this—I will not lie to you.

Pour la pucelle amene grant martyre,

He raised a great clamor over the young woman,

391’a

Et la commune entour lui braït et crie.

And the people around him cried and wailed.

Dïent au roi, “Vo destrier n’avés mie.

They told the king: “You no longer have a warhorse;

Dessus s’en va fuiant Yde vo fille.”

Your daughter has fled on it.”

IX

En la cité ot molt grant marison,

There was great sorrow in the city

32 Word effaced. We rely on S6532.
Tout pour Ydain a la clere fachon

For Yde with the bright face,

C’on a\textsuperscript{33} perdue par itele aucoison.

Who was lost under such circumstances.

Et Yde en va a coite d’espouron.

Meanwhile, the young woman spurred on her horse,

Vestus avoit dras d’omme pour paour.

Dressed in men’s clothing out of fear.

Quant du jour voit aparoir la luour,

When she began to see daylight,

En bos s’enbusce la bele toute jour;

The fair one hid in the forest all day.

Par nuit cevauce, que n’i fait nul demour.

She rode by night and did not linger anywhere.

Dedens le mois vendi son arragon.\textsuperscript{34}

Within a month, she had sold her horse,

N’avoit dont vivre, n’avoit or ne mangon,

For she had nothing to live on or to eat.

Or va a pié seule sans compagnon.

Thus she went on foot without any companion.

Bien est vestue a guize de garchon:

She was well disguised as a boy

Accaté ot cauces et caperon,

And had bought hose and hood

\textsuperscript{33} Ms. 9 a; S6539 [On] []a

\textsuperscript{34} An “arragon” is a horse or destrier (Moisan, Répertoire des noms propres, vol. 1, 173).
Braies de lin si beles ne vit on;
And the finest linen breeches.

Espee ot chainte, et si porte .i. baston.
She wore her sword at her side, and also carried a rod.

Vers Alemaigne acoille son roion.
Hurrying along the path to Germany,

370 Tant a esré que vint a Barsillon,
She roamed so far that she came to Barsillon,

Mais point ne set entendre lor raison.
Where she could not understand the language.

En la cite a pris herbergison,
She took lodging in the city

De ses deniers despent a grant foison.
And spent her deniers freely.

La sejourna dusques en Rovinson,35
She stayed there until the Rogation,36

375 Tant c’une os vint a la ville a bandon.
When a great host marched into the city.

Dusc’a quinzaine iluec sejourneront;
They would stay there for a fortnight

---

35 Another spelling of “rovaïson.”

36 The Rogation occurs on the three days preceding the Ascension in May.
L’arriere ban iluec atenderont.
Waiting for reinforcements,

Tout droit a Romme iront au roi Oton
After which they would go straight to King Oton in Rome,

Qui a .i. roi a pris aatison,
Who had taken up arms against a king

Qui tient Castele et Espaigne environ.
Who held Castile and its Spanish surroundings.

Cil Alemant encontre lui iront.
The Germans would meet him in battle.

Yde la bele en entent la raison,
When fair Yde heard of this matter,

Mais s’ele puet, il s’en repentiront.
She decided she would make the Spanish regret it if she could.

Yde la bele de riens ne s’atarga;
The beautiful Yde did not delay.

Du roi Oton durement s’apensa,
She thought a lot about King Oton,

Et s’ele puet, par lui conseil ara.
And intended to seek his council if she could.

---

37 The related “arban” or “herban” means the tax or service which is owed to a lord by his vassals, but also, and more appropriately in this context, the summons to arms (Alan Hindley, Frederick W. Langley, and Brian J. Levy, eds., *Old French-English Dictionary* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000] 361).
As Alemans belement s’acointa.

She befriended the Germans

Ens lors ostex molt souvent se moustra.

And was often seen at their inn.

Uns Alemans belement l’apella,

One German amicably called her over.

390 “A cui iés tu? Di moi, nel celés ja.”

“A cui iés tu? Tell me, and do not hide it any longer,”

Dist a Ydain, “Biax frere, or enten cha.”

He said to Yde. “Make it known to us now, good brother.”

“Sire,” dist ele, “a celui cui plaira.

“Sir,” said Yde, “I serve whoever will have me.

Service {ki}er plus de .xv. jours a.

I have been looking for employment for fifteen days now.

En A{rrag}onne ai servi grant piecha; 38

I served in Aragon a long time ago,

395 Or est cis mors qui ici m’amena. 391'b

But the one who led me here is now dead.

Bien sai servir ne sai qui moi prendra,

I will serve faithfully whoever takes me into his service,

Mener sommier u garder .i. ceval,

Whether it is to carry loads or look after a horse.

Et s’il avient qu’en bataille on alast,

And if we should go to battle,

38 Word is effaced in the same spot as previous page on the lower right–hand corner on the recto and the lower left on the verso. Reading based on S6577.
Pour de moi je croi i avera.”

I believe there would be worse than I.”

Dist l’Alemans, “Molt grans biens t’en venra.

The German said, “And much good will come your way.

Comment as non? A moi n’en choile ja.”

What is your name? Do not hide it from me any longer.”

“J’ai non Ydés,” cele respondu a.

“My name is Ydé,” she answered.


“Brother,” he said, “you will lead my horse.

Je te retieng; nus maus ne t’en venra.”

I will retain you, and you will be under my protection.”

Ides errant l’Alemant enclina.

Ydé promptly bowed to the German,

A son ostel l’Alemans l’en mena.

Who led him to his lodgings.

Dix gart Ydain, li rois qui tout crea!

God, the King who created everything, protect Yde!

On l’a servie, mais ore servira.

She who was once served will now serve in turn.

{Or le gart Dix qui tout le mont crea}! 39

God, the king who created the whole world, preserve her!

S’on l’aperchoit, grans dolours en istra.

She will suffer greatly if she is found out.

39 The tear runs through this line.
III. jours après, si grans ost assambla;

Vers Rommenie molt bien s’acemina.

Damoisielle Yde est montee a ceval,

Qui a loi d’omme molt bien s’aparilla.

Three days later, a great army assembled

And made its way to Rome.

The lady Yde rode with them,

She who was dressed after the fashion of men.

She served so skillfully that everyone praised her.

For a month, the army trekked and marched forward,

Until the sounds of war could be heard.

They spotted a forest in a valley,

Yet fifteen long leagues ahead.

There stood more than seven thousand raiders,

Well-armed, and each mounted on a strong horse.

The Germans saw them from the other side of the valley,
Pour gaaignier, cascuns d’aus s’apresta.

And they all readied themselves to fight for victory.\(^4\)

Uns Alemans “Goutehere!” jura;

One of the Germans swore by God

S’on li court sus, il se desfendera.

That if anyone rushed at him, he would defend himself.

Et Espaignot viennent le fons d’un val;

And the Spaniards came from the bottom of the valley

As Alemans crient, “Estes coi là?

Shouting at the Germans, “Why are you here?

Tout estes mort, piés n’en escapera

You are all dead men! Not one of you will escape here alive

Se ne mes jus tout chou que d’avoir as.”

If you do not lay down everything you have.”

425 Ide respont pas nel otrïera.

Yde answered that she would not yield

Devant son maistre a brocié le ceval.

And spurred her horse on ahead of her master.

N’ot point d’escu, mais sa lance empoigna.*42

She had no shield, but she took up her lance.

. I. Espaignot feri qu’ele encontrá

One Spaniard came forward. She clashed with him,

\(^{41}\) Gaaignier has the denotation of monetary gain, perhaps implying spoils of war.

\(^{42}\) Ms. ėpoigna; S6615 espaigna
Que son escu li rompi et quassa,

Shattering his shield,

Et de son dos le hauberc li faussa.

And tearing his hauberk off his back.

Parmi le cors la lance li bouta,

She drove the lance through his body

Si l’abati, ains puis n’en releva.

And struck him down; he would never get up again.

Yde la bele sa lance resaca.

Fair Yde pulled out her lance.

Ains mais sor home a nul jour ne hurta:

She had never before this day struck a man,

Petit sot d’armes. Arriere retourna;

And she knew little of armed combat. She fell back,

Uns Alemans arriere resgarda,\(^{43}\)

And one of the Germans looked around at her

Se li a dit, “Bien ait qui t’engenra!”

And said, “Bless the one who had you!”

XI

XI

Quant la bele Yde ot l’estour commenciét,

Once the beautiful Yde had begun the battle,

\(^{43}\) The tear runs through this line but does not prohibit reading.
Cil Alemant sont aprés desrengiét. All the Germans broke rank.

445 A l’assambler ot tant escut perciet, She pierced a great many shields in the fray,

Et tant hauberc rompu et desmaillié Split and broke breastplates,

Tant Alemant a terre trebuscié. And many Germans fell.

Yde tenoit le branc amont dreciét. Yde brandished her sword high,

Cui ele ataint, tost l’a descevaucié; Unhorsing anyone who clashed with her;

Malement sont l’un a l’autre acointiét. They were cruelly met indeed.

450 Li Espaignot furent tout erragiét; The Spaniards were raging,

Li Alemant s’i sont bien ensaiét, And the Germans were put to the test,

Feru de dars et de faussas45 lanciét. Pierced with arrows and treacherous spears,

Et nonpourquant furent si atiriét. Despite being so well armed.

44 Brewka notes that this may have initially been an “r” and then corrected to a “t.” The same was not done for line 447, which should end with a past participle rather than an infinitive.

45 B6674/S6636 faussa[r]/s
455 Des Alemans n’en est escapés piés,
Not one of the Germans escaped,
Ne soient tout ocit et detrenciét.
But they were all cut down and slain.
Yde s’en fuit courant par le rocier.
Yde ran to escape the slaughter,
Montee fu sor .i. courant destrier;
Jumping on a speeding horse
N’ot fors le branc, perdu ot son espiel.
With nothing but her sword, having lost her lance.46
460 S’ele ot paour, nus n’en doit mervillier,
It is no marvel that she was afraid
Car la ne set ne voie ne sentier,
Since she knew no road or path,
N’en avoir riens qu’elle peüst mengier.
Nor did she have anything to eat.
La nuit herberge par dalés .i. ramier
At night, she slept near a wood
Dusc’au demain qu’il prist a esclairier.
Until first light the next day.
465 Toute jour a devant li cevauciét,
She rode on all day
Dusc’a la nuit qu’il prist a anuitier.
Until it started to get dark.

46 And, it would seem, her horse.
Li fains a molt son gent cors maistriét.

Her fair body was overcome by hunger.

Sor destre garde par dalés .i. rocier.

At last she looked to her right near a rock

Molt prés de li a coisi .i. fouier;

And saw a fire nearby.

Trente larron seioient au mangier.

Thirty thieves were sitting down to eat.

La damoiselle i tourna son destrier.

The young woman rode up to them,

Quant li larron le voient aprocie,

And when the thieves saw her coming,

Li uns a l’autre le prist a conseillier,

They began to whisper to each other.

“Esgart,” font il, “vesci .i. escuier.

“Look,” they said, “here comes a squire.

Ja nous laira, cui qu’en poist, son destrier.”

He will relinquish his warhorse to us at any cost.”

Et la bele Yde commencha a hucier,

And the beautiful Yde began to speak.


“May God be with you at your table,” she said.

Il m’est avis bien estes [a]aishiét.\(^{47}\)

“It seems to me that you are well off.

\(^{47}\) An “a” is added to correct the hyposyllabic line.
Se il vous plaist o vous me recueilliés,

Jou paierai mon escot volentiers.”

Et li larron qui sont outrequidiét


A il o vous serjant ne cevalier

Qui vous conduist parmi cel bos plenier?”

Dist la pucielle, “Par foit, mes grans peciés,

Il n’a o moi plus de gens, ce saciés.”

Uns des larrons s’est a son frainc lanciés,

Puis li a dit, “Icis est gaigniés;

Ferés i tout anchois que vous mengiés.

Que ne vous soit escapés cis loudiers!

Please receive me and allow me to join you,

And I will gladly pay you for my share.”

The insolent thieves answered,

“We have decided to allow it.

Do you have a sergeant or knight

Who leads you through this vast forest?”

The young woman said, “To my great sorrow,

The truth is I have no more people.”

One of the thieves threw himself at her bridle

And answered, “Then the matter is settled;

You will do what we ask before you eat.

Don’t let this scoundrel get away,
Aucuns de nous en seroit engingniés.”

Dist la pucelle, “Et pour coi vous coitiés?

En moi mourdrir arés poi gaaignié.

Je me rendrai a vous molt volentiers;

Tenés m’espee et si vous apaisiés.

J’ai tel famine, prés ne sui erragiés.

Pour l’amour Diu vous demanch a mengier!”

Li maistres dist, “Vien avant, escuiers.

Si m’aït Dix, tu n’i seras touchiés.

Ains vous donrai quanques mestiers vous iert.”

Yde respont, “.C. mercis en aiiés.”

For he might try to deceive one of us.”

The young woman said, “Why do you wish to provoke?

You would gain very little by my death.

I will surrender willingly to you;

Here is my sword, and may it appease you.

I am nearly mad with hunger,

So I ask you for the love of God to give me some food.”

The leader said, “Come forward, squire.

As God is my witness, you will not be harmed.

I will give you whatever you need.”

Yde answered, “A hundred times, thank you.”

48 The thief appears to go from addressing Yde in the previous two lines to addressing the rest of his party.

49 B6718 mangier; S6680 mègier
Au mengier va seoir par desirier.

XII

La damoiselle est au mengier assise.

Or le gart Dix, li fix Sainte Marie.

505 Ele a mengiét de chou qu’ele desirre,

Et li larron, cui le cors Diu maudie,

Aprés mengier ont lors\textsuperscript{50} nape cuellie.

Li uns a l’autre a tenciét et estrive

Pour l’escuies\textsuperscript{51} qui n’a perdu la vie.

510 Or l’ociront, que n’atenderont mie.

L’uns d’aus a dit, “Ce ne ferons nous mie.

Li escuiers est plains de courtoisie.

And she gladly sat down to eat.

XII

The young woman sat down to eat—

God, son of Saint Marie, protect her—

And ate her fill.

Then the thieves—may God curse them—

Put away their tablecloth after the meal.

They quarreled and fought among themselves

Over the squire who was still alive.

They wished to kill him and would not wait any longer,

But one of them said, “We cannot do this.

This squire is very courteous.

\textsuperscript{50} “Lors” could here be the adverb “alors” meaning “then”, though it is most likely the possessive pronoun misspelled with an “s.”

\textsuperscript{51} B6730/S6692 escuier
Quant avoec nous a pris herbergerie,
   Since he has taken refuge among us,
Embler venra o nous par compaignie,
   He will keep company and go raiding with us.
   
515 U se ce non, il perdera la vie.”
   If he refuses, then he will lose his life.”
A Ydain vont, se li prendent a dire,
   They went over to Yde and began to say,
   “Com avés non? Dites le nous biax sire.”
   “Tell us, good sir, what is your name?”
Cele respont, qui paour ot d’ocire,
   Afraid for her life, she answered,
   “J’ai a non Ydes, et sui du Pont Elye.
   “I am called Ydé from Pontarlier.
Aler cuidai tout droit en Rommenie,
   I had intended to go straight on to Rome,
   Mais cil d’Espaigne ont mort ma compaignie.
   But the Spanish killed my companions.
   Adreciés moi si ferés courtoisie,
   You would do right to make amends
   Et me rendés mon destrier de Persie.”
   By returning my Persian horse to me.”
   Li maistres dist, “Ensi n’ira il mie.
   The leader said, “That will not do.
520 Lerres serés tous les jours de vo vie;
   You will be a thief for the rest of your life.
   Pour vous sera plus fors la compaignie,
   Our band will be stronger with you among us.
U se ce non, la teste arès trencie.”

Ide respont, “Ce n’est pas courtoisie.

De larrechin ne me mellerai mie!

If you refuse, we will have your head.”

Yde answered, “It is not chivalrous.

I will not deal in thievery.

There has never been a thief in my family,

And I would not know how to deal in such matters.

Give me back my bright sword

And my destrier, which has no equal anywhere as far as Russia.

Let one of you fight me once I am mounted;

If I fail to defend myself, let him kill me,

For indeed my horse is too high a price

For your hospitality.”

The leader said, “You are bold.

I will answer your challenge and fight you myself.

If you slay me on this field,
Cuites seras de ceste compaignie.
You will be free of this company,

Et se tu ciés, ne t’en mentirai mie:
But if you fall—I will not lie to you—

N’i aras branc ne destrier de Nubie;
You will have neither blade nor Nubian horse;

Cele robe iert fors de ton dos sacie.”
Your very clothes will be torn off your back.”

545 Dist la pucelle, “Dehai qui nel otrie.”
The maiden said, “Whoever does not abide by this be damned!”

Dont est tantost du surcot despoullie.
She was immediately relieved of her surcoat

Tout li larron l’esgardent, si en rient.
As the thieves looked on in amusement.

Sor drestous est Yde bien ensaignie.
Yde, who was very clever,

Dist au larron, “Quant l’uevre avés partie,
Said to the thieves, “Since you have agreed to this,

550 Faites en la traire vo compaignie.
Have your company fall back.

S’amenés cha mon destrier de Nubie,
Bring me my Nubian horse,

52 The narrator intervenes.
53 The poet here seems to equate "Persian" and "Nubian" to simply mean "not European."
54 An idiosyncratic misspelling of “trestous.”
Et a l'archon soit m'espee fourbie.

Que j'ai piecha a prodomme oï dire

Que cis est faus qui en larron se fie.”

Chil l'ont oï, cascuns d'aus li otrie.

Ensi ont fait com la bele devize.

Et ciele vient au larron descuellie;

Parmi les flans ses bras li lace et plie.

En haut le lieve plaine paume et demie,

Puis l'a estraint encontre sa poitrine.

Samblant li fait c’a senestre l’encline,

D’autre part l’a tourné, si le sousvine.

And have my sword ready and furbished at the saddle.\textsuperscript{55}

I once heard a good man say,

That whoever trusts a thief is himself dishonest.”

They all agreed to what she said,

Then did as the fair one had devised.

She went over to the thief and, catching him off-guard,

Pinned his arms to his sides and bent them,

Then raised him a full palm and a half off the ground,

Clutching him against her chest.

She made as if to throw him to the left,

But turned him the other way and brought him down.

\textsuperscript{55} The arçon is technically one of two curved pieces of wood forming the saddle. Thanks to Dr. Noel Fallows for shedding light on this passage.

Damoiselle Yde tint par grant hardement
Entre ses bras le fort larron pullent.

A terre l’a jeté si durement,
Sor .i. perron si dolerousement,
Ens en sa bouce n’a il remés nul dent
Qui ne li duelle molt dolerousement,
Et que la teste en .ii. moitiés li fent.

Yde n’ot plus del arrester talent;
Vint au destrier, s’i monte isnelement.
L’espee traist, si crie hautement,
“Fil a putain ! Mauvais larron pullent!
Vo träïsons ne vous vorra noient.

Vers moi avés pensé vilainement; 392'b

The lady Yde held fast
The strong, foul thief,
And threw him down so hard
And so painfully on a boulder,
That every tooth in his mouth
Rattled, and the terrible ache
Nearly split his head in two.
Yde had no more wish to dally.
She got to the horse and mounted quickly,
Brandishing her sword, and shouting loudly,
“You sons of whores! Evil, rotten thieves!
Your treachery will gain you nothing.
You plotted wickedly against me,
But I think this man who fought me is regretting it.

I would not fear you if there were a hundred of you.”

Then she said softly, so that no one could hear,

“I must be strong and bold,

For I am the daughter of great King Florent.”

While she was contemplating this,

One of the thieves grabbed her rein.

Noticing him, Yde brought her naked blade down on him,

Immediately cutting off his hand.

The thief ran away bellowing in agony.

Without a second glance, Yde rode away,

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57 The tear runs through this line but does not hinder reading.

58 Brewka (line 6802) and Schweigel (line 6764) both have *sfairement* as one word.

59 This line is hyposyllabic and therefore Justifies the addition of the final “e” to the feminine pronoun “el.”
Et li cevaus l'emporte si forment,
Plus tost aloit que quariax ne destent.\(^{60}\)
Or le gart Dix a cui li mons apent!
De grant peril escapent molt de gent.
Tant a alé la bele o le cors gent,
Le bos passa, n’i arresta noient.
Vers Romme traist dont ele ot grant talent.
Dedens la ville est entree erramment;
Dusc’au palais ne s’arresta noient.
Devant le piét du grant palais descent,
Puis est montee u maistre mandement.

Her horse carrying her so swiftly
That she was going faster than a loosed arrow.
May God, to whom the world belongs, protect her!
(Indeed many people escape great peril.)\(^{62}\)
Thus went the fair one,
Beyond the woods without stopping.
She made for Rome, where she had greatly desired to go,
And soon entered the city,
Not stopping until she reached the palace.
She dismounted at the foot of the palace
And went up to ask for its lord.

\(^{60}\) B6809 *quarriax*; S6771 *quariax*
\(^{61}\) B6809/S6771 *descent*
\(^{62}\) I place this sentence between parentheses because it appears to be a proverbial generalization made by the narrator almost as an aside, as if to comfort the audience.
Le roi salue assés courtoisement,

“Cis Damledix qui maint el firmament

She greeted the king courteously,

“May God who resides in heaven

Il saut le roi que ci voi em present,

Save the king, whom I see here present,

Et ses barons et quanqu’a lui apent.”

His barons, and everything under his dominion.”

Rommain sont coi et toute l’autre gent.

The Romans were quiet, as was everyone else.

Envers Ydain cascuns d’aus tous entent.

They all listened intently to Yde

Bon gré li sevekt trestout communemente

With great admiration,

De chou qu’ele a parlé si sagement.

For she had so wisely spoken.

Li rices rois li redist son talent,

The noble King returned her greeting.

“Et Dix saut toi,” dist il molt liément.

“God save you,” he said cheerfully.

“Dont estes vous, amis, et de quel gent,

“Where are you from, friend, and who are your people?

De quel païs, et qui sont vo parent

From which country do you hail, and who are your parents,

Que ci venés si esseulés de gent?”

You who come here so wanting for company?”


“Sire,” said Yde, “you will have your answer right away.
I am a squire who owns not a single acre of land.

I served in Germany for a long time.

But it grieves me to say I have had few victories,

For the other day, I encountered a great army

Who has sworn your death.

They are secretly on their way to the king of Spain,

Having lost half of their number,

Whom I helped deliver to their death.

That is why I have come to you most urgently:

I ask you for refuge.”

When the king heard her, he looked at his people.

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63 Ms. Lalent; apparently a scribal error.
The king of Rome regarded Yde;
He saw that he was big, brawny, and well built.

For this reason, he immediately grew to like him.

At that moment, crowned King Oton’s daughter entered the hall;
There was none so beautiful in all the kingdom.

Her name was Olive, and she was full of kindness.

All the barons rose to greet her.

She sat next to Oton affectionately
And looked sweetly at the squire.

Oton called out to him proudly,
Saying to Yde, “Friend, attend to me;”

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64 We have an interesting shift in perspective in these two lines. In the previous line, the narrator refers to Yde using the feminine Ydain; however, in the following line, she is described from the king’s perspective as “grant et membru et formé,” using a series of adjectives in the masculine form.
Comment as non et de quel parenté?"  

635  “Sire,” dist ele, “on m’apelle Ydé  
De Terrascoingne, car la ai jou anté.  
Jou sui cousins au rice parenté:  
Conte Ainmeris et Namles li barbés.  
Pres apartient a l’Escot Guillemer,  
Mais banis sui pour les parens Hardré.  
Puis ai je molt de grans maus endurés.”  
Otes a dit, “T’iés de mon parenté!  
Je te retieng; en toi cuit grant fierté.  
Olive, fille, avés vous escouté?

What is your name and lineage?”  

“Sire,” she said, “they call me Ydé  
Of Tarragona, for I have a family there.  
I am cousin to some powerful people:  
Count Ainmeri and Naimes the Bearded.  
I am also closely related to Guillemer the Scot,  
But I was banished by Hardrè’s family66  
And have since endured great trials.”  
Oton said, “You are my kinsman!  
I will keep you in my service, for I sense great boldness in you.  
Olive, daughter, did you hear?

65 B6859 Ainmeris; the name is given in full as “Ainmeri” in Huon et les Géants (B8448).
66 Hardrè is mentioned in several chansons de geste as being a traitor of a line of traitors, according to Langlois’ glossary of proper names in the chansons de geste.
Pour vous retieng cel escuier lôé.
Servira vous a vostre volenté.”
Mais n’en och nul tant me venist a gré.”
Rommain l’otrient par bone volenté.
Molt volentiers ont resgardé Ydé.
Li rois l’apelle et l’a arraisonné,
“Amis,” dist il, “or me servés a gré.
J’ai une fille qui molt a de biauté.
Cele tenra ma terre et mon regné.
Or gardés bien comment vous maintenés;
Se bien le sers, il t’est bien encontré.”
“Molt volentiers, sires,” ce dist Ydés.
“J’en ferai tant, sire,” ce dist Ydés,
I will retain this praise-worthy squire for you.
He will serve at your pleasure.”
“Sire,” she said, “five hundred times thank you.
I have never heard anything that pleased me so much.”
The Romans consented to this out of good will
And gladly received Ydé.
The king called him and addressed him thus:
“Friend,” he said, “you will serve me and do my bidding.
I have a daughter who is very beautiful,
And who will inherit my land and my kingdom.
Be mindful of how you conduct yourself.
If you serve her well, you will be well rewarded.”
“Gladly, sire,” said Ydé.
“I will conduct myself in such a way,” he said,
“Que tous li mons m’en savera bon gré.”

“Que ses tu faire?” ce dist li rois Otés.

“For do you know how to do?” asked King Oton.

“Sire,” fit ele, “chou c’on set commander.

“Sire,” she said, “anything you know how to ask.

“Premiers sai bien Jhesuscrist aourer,

Firstly, I know how to worship Jesus Christ

Et a prodrome molt grant honor porter,

And deal with honorable men;

Le povre gent de mon avoir donner,

I know to give to the poor of my own property,

Et l’orguillous par) paroles mater, 393b

To put the arrogant in their place

Et le prodrome envers moi acoster,

And keep good men close;

Au grant besong, i. confanon porter,

If need be, I can carry a standard,

Et se che vient67 a bataille assambler,

And should we go to battle,

Piour de moi i porriés vous mener;

You could lead worse than me into the fray,

Bien sai i. cop emploier et donner;

For I know how to deal a good blow;

67 Ms. voient; this seems to make little sense in the context.
S'on m'a mesfait bien m'en sai deporter,
Et mon courouch dedens mon cuer celer;
Et si sai bien mon ceval establer
Et estrillier et a l'iaue mener;
Bien sai a table le mengier aporter.”

“Si m'aït Dix,” ce dist li rois Otés,
“S'en toi a tant et valour et bonté
Que je t'oi chi et dire et deviser,
Bien te doit on servir et honorer,
En haute court chier tenir et amer.

Forment sui liés quant chaiens iés entrés.
Jamais ne quier que de moi departés.”

Yde l'entent, si l'en a encliné.

And if wrong is done to me, I know how to handle myself
And hide my grievance in my heart;
I know how to stable my horse,
Groom it, and lead it to water;
And I know how to serve at table.”

“As God is my witness,” said Oton,
“If you have such skill and valor in you
As I have heard you tell,
You must be well treated and honored,
Loved and held in high esteem at court.
I am very happy that you entered this house,
And I never wish you to leave my side.”

Hearing this, Yde bowed to him.
Desor est Yde a Oton demoure.

Le gentil roi de Romme la löee
De bien servir est tous jours apensee.
Tant a ouvré et soir et matinee,
Que ses services toutes les gens agree.
Olive l’a volentiers esgardee,

Et Yde proie a la Virge honoree
Qu’ele le gart que ne soit acusee,
U se ce non, ele iert a mort livree.
La povre gent a grant honor portee,
En l’ounour Diu mainte aumosne donnee.

Quant loisir a, s’est au moustier alee.

From that time, Yde remained in Oton’s house,
And the good king of Rome rewarded her,
For she was always mindful of serving well
And worked so tirelessly day and night,
That everyone was pleased with her service.
Olive gladly watched her.
Yde prayed to the Holy Virgin
To protect her from being suspected,
Lest she be put to death.
She treated the poor with dignity
And gave many alms in God’s name.
When she had free time, she went to church,
Sovent prioit pour roi Floire, son pere,
Pour cui ele est si tainte et mascuree,
Et d’Arragonne est en fuiant tournee.
“Si m’a\textsuperscript{69} li rois de sa char engenree.”

Un mois entier s’est ensi demenee
Par dedens Romme, la fort cité l\öee;
Forment estoit grande et fors et formee.
Ens u palais est li bele arrestee.
Es vous .i. mes brochant de randonnee.

Devant le roi a sa raison moustree,

Praying often for her father, King Florent,
Because of whom she was thus so tainted and dishonored
And had to flee Aragon,
That king whose own flesh and blood she was.
She carried on thus for a whole month,
In the renowned and strong city of Rome,
Which was large, fortified, and well built.
Thus, fair Yde dwelled at the palace.
One day, there came a messenger at galloping speed
To present his case in front of the king.

“Hear me,” he said, “just Emperor.

\textsuperscript{69} B6920 \textit{l’a}; Instead of changing the pronoun from first person to third, I have added quotation marks to indicate a shift to direct speech, more effective in giving voice to Yde’s horror and grief.
Li rois d'Espaigne a vo terre embrasée. The king of Spain is burning your land.

En vo païs est si avant entree He has advanced so far into your kingdom,

Que desous Romme est ensemble arrêtee. That his army is assembling right outside Rome.

A maint Rommain on[t] la teste copee. They have already take the heads of many Romans.

Li rois d'Espaigne en a sa loi jurée, The king of Spain has sworn an oath

Anchois qu'il soit la quinzaine passé That within a fortnight

Avra par force ceste grand tor quarree, He will have taken this strong fortress

Et vostre fille a force violee, And raped your daughter,

---

70 There is some distortion of the letters “as” in “embrasee” as well as in “arrestee” two lines later, but this reading is the most sensible. Ironically, these lines were probably damaged in the fire.

71 Schweigel emends the lines to “En vo païs est avant entrée / Qui desous Romme.” (lines 6891-92). Brewka’s version reads “si [. . .] qui” (lines 6929-30). However, the original structure “si [. . .] que” does not seem out of place.

72 There is a tear and some fraying of the parchment in this spot on these two lines.

73 The Old French “tor quarré” means “square tower,” probably referring to a tower with a square base.

74 The following five lines have various tears, holes, and smudges. This section relies on S6893-97 to fill the gaps. When Brekwa had access to the manuscript, she reported tape covering the lines corresponding to 6930-34 in her edition (541). The manuscript has since been restored and the tape removed.
Et vous mêmes la teste arés copee
Pour vostre fille qui li fu refusee.
Il venist mix qu’il l’eüst espousee
Que tant de gent en fust morte et finee.
Rois, va encontre, si desfent ta contree,
U se ce non, ta ville iert deshertee.”
Quant l’entendi Otes li empereres,
Ydain manda sans plus de demoree,
Et puis li dist em parole secré,
“E gentis Ydes, et c’as tu em pensee?
Conseilliés moi de ceste meserree.
L’ost ne m’estoit par nul homm mandee

And that you yourself will be beheaded
For having refused to give her to him.
It would have been better if he had married her,
Than for so many people to die for it.\(^{75}\)
King, go meet him in battle and defend your country,
Otherwise, your city will be sacked.”
When Emperor Oton heard him,
He asked for Yde immediately
And confided in her thus:
“My good Yde, what do you think of this?
Advise me on this unfortunate matter.
I have never been asked to send my army against a man

\(^{75}\) It is unclear whether the messenger is still reporting the king of Spain’s oath, or if he himself is making a reproachful comment to Oton.
Qui a ma terre exillie et gastee."

"Si m’aït Dix, sire," ce dist Ydee,

"Jou les irai veoir la teste armee.

730 Bailliés moi gens pour faire a aus merlee."

Otes respont, “Ceste raisons m’agree.”

Errament a ses buisines sonnees.

.X. mil Rommain l’öent, errant s’armerent,

Vienent au roi, tantost se presenterent.

735 “Sire,” font il, “que vous plaist et agree?

Tout sommes prest a quanques vous agree.”

“Seignor baron,” dist Otes l’empereres,

“A vous me plaing de cele gent dervee

Qui devant Romme assalent ma contree.

Who has destroyed and laid waste to my land.”

“As God is my witness, sire,” said Yde,

“I shall go meet him armed and ready.

Give me men to lead into battle against the Spanish.”

Oton said, “Well spoken.”

He immediately ordered the trumpets to be sounded.

Ten thousand Romans heard them, armed themselves without delay,

And came to present themselves before the king.

“We are all ready at your command.”

“My lord barons,” said Emperor Oton,

“I appeal to you for justice against these madmen

Who assail my country just outside Rome.
Vesci Ydain qui a la teste armee.

Here is Ydé who is armed and ready.

Alés o lui, Ybert, la grant valee,

Go with him, Ybert, to the great valley,

Si gardés bien que n'i ait meserree.

But be wary of going astray.

Aidiés li tout au trenchant del espee,

Serve him by the strength of your arms,

U se ce non, par l’ame de mon pere,

Or else by the ghost of my father

Au revenir li donrai tel soldee,

As a reward upon his return

Dessus l'espaule iert sa teste copee.”

He will have his head cut from his shoulders.”

XVI

Ydes s’en va a bele compagnie;

Ydé rode forth in fine company,

De Romme issi la fort cité antie,

And left the great and ancient city of Rome.

76 Probably a scribal error; Otton does not know at this point that Yde is a woman, so he would not call her by her feminine name.

77 “Tout” functions as an adverb of degree.

78 Ms. revenier

79 This exchange is a bit odd as Oton appears to be threatening Yde’s life when she has just offered to save his kingdom. Dr. Jones suggests that some lines may be missing from this exchange, which could explain Oton’s seemingly harsh words.
Dessi c’au Toivre n’i ot resne sacie.

Et Espaignot mainennent grant tabourie,

Car la cité cuident avoir assise.

Une journée est li os assegie,

Mais autrement iert li ouvre partie.

Y{des} venoit a bataille regie.

Diu reclama, le fil Sainte Marie.

En .i. vert elme ot sa ciere emb[r]oncie,

Et ot se targe emprés son pis sacie.

Vers Embronchart est la bele adrecie—

En Mont Caillet tenoit grant compaignie.

He did not pull his reins until they reached the Tiber River.

The Spaniards had raised a great clamor,

For they thought they had the city under siege,

Having surrounded it for a whole day,

But the matter would be decided otherwise,

For Ydé had joined the ranks in battle.

Invoking God, the son of Mary,

He had covered his face with a brilliant helm

And lifted his shield to his chest.

The fair one went straight for Embronchart,

Who had a formidable company in Mount Caillet.

80 The ending of “Ydes” is effaced and not obvious since either the feminine or masculine nominative form of the name would work. Reading according to S6937.
81 Ms. emboncie
Niés fu le roi qui molt ot seignorie.

He was nephew to a king who lorded over a large kingdom.

Sa baniere a envers Yde adrecie,
He rushed at Yde,

Et la bele est envers lui aprocie,
And the fair one went to meet him.

Fiert Embronchart sor sa targe florie,
She struck Embronchart on his floral shield,

Ens u plus fort l'a rompue et percie,
And, with all her strength, pierced right through it,

Et le hauberc li derront et descre.
Shattering his hauberk.

Parmi le cors li met sa lance [entire],
She drove the entire lance right through his body

Du bon destrier l'abat mort et souvine.
Knocking him off his charger, and laying him dead.

Caër le voit, et puis li prent a dire,
Beholding the fallen, she proclaimed,

"Outré, cuivers! Li cors Diu te maudie!
“You are vanquished, scoundrel! May God damn you!

Mar i venis tel coze as commencie
You have begun a fight

Dont plus de mil en perderont la vie.
That will doom more than a thousand men to die,

---

82 The tear runs through this line. Word completely effaced. Reading provided by S6949.
Je vous calenc les plains de Rommenie!

For I will reclaim the plains of Rome.

Puis dist em bas la pucelle eschavie,

Then the graceful maiden said softly,

“Vrais Dix, sekeur ceste lasse caitive

“Oh, true God, help this poor wretch,

Qui pour honor est com uns hom cangie.

Who became a man to preserve her honor!

Pour le pecié m’en sui ci afüie,

I fled from sin

Et ai mon pere et sa terre laissie.

And left my father and his land.

Or me gardès, douce Virge Marie.”

Sweet Virgin Mary, protect me.”

A ices mos a l’espee sacie;

At these words, she drew her sword,

Pierron de Bus a la teste trencie,

And cut off Pierron de Bus’ head,

Et plus de .vii. en livre a tel martire.

Then delivered seven others to the same fate.

Tous un a .i. les va prendant et tire;

She cut them down one after the other,

N’i viut les bons fors des mauvais eslire.

Indiscriminate of the good and the evil.

Espaignot sont livré a discipline.

The Spaniards were being slaughtered,

En fuies tournent parmi une sapine,

So they fled into a pine forest
S’ont encontré Gualerant d’Aubespine,

Ensamble o lui de chevaliers .iii. mile.

La rest l’estours et noize commencie.

Ilueques ot tante jouste furnie,

Et d’Espaignos tante teste trenchie,

En füies tournent lors gens est desconfite.

Alars du Grong hautement lor escrie,

“And Saint Fagon, mal est l’uevre partie!

Peciés nous fist faire tele envaïe.

Cha fait cis blons a cele targe entire,

A cele crois qui si luist et {flambie}. 83

Se tel baron cuidasse en Rommenie,

Where they were met by Gualerant d’Aubépine,

Who had with him three thousand knights.

There the battle was renewed and the fighting started again.

He fought so well,

And severed so many of the Spaniards’ heads,

That they turned around and fled, their forces defeated.

Alars du Grong shouted loudly back at them,

“To Saint Fagon, this has gone badly for us!

This attack was a mistake.

This is the doing of that blond knight with the unbroken shield

And the brilliant blazing sword.

If I had known that there was such a knight in Rome,

83 The tear runs through this line.
Entrés n’i fusse en trestoute ma vie.

I would never for the life of me have come here.

Par son cors seul la bataille a furnie,

He has singlehandedly won the battle,

Et no baron en vertuour se misent.

Though our knights fought valiantly.

Le grant avoir ont cil de Rommenie.”

The Romans are indeed very fortunate.”

Ces pavillons et ces tres recuillirent.

Thus they assembled their standards and pavilions.

Yde fu molt regardee et coisie,

Yde was much beheld and admired,

Car des crestiax l’avoit veue Olive.

For Olive watched her return from the battlements.

Trestous li cors de joie li fourmie,

Her whole body tingled with joy,

Et dist em bas c’on nel e[n]tendi84 mie,

And she said softly to herself,

“Mes amis iert; ains demain li voel dire.

“He will be my love. I will speak to him tomorrow.

Ains mais ne fui d’omme si entreprise;

I have never been so taken with a man,

S’est bien raisons et drois que je li die.”

So it is fitting that I should tell him so.”

84 Ms. *etendi*
As she uttered those words, the company returned.

They told King Oton everything:

How Ydé had won the battle,

How he had cut down all his enemies with his gleaming sword,

And how there was no such knight as far as the sea of Greece.

When King Oton heard the whole story

And what a valiant man his vassal Ydé was,

Who had so bravely rid him of the Spaniards,

The strong crowned king greatly rejoiced

And honored Ydé immensely.

He had proven himself within a single year
Que son païs a il tout aquité.

And delivered the whole country.

Les uns a mors et les autres navrés,

He had killed some men and wounded others,

Et s’en a tant em prison amenés,

And taken so many prisoners

Qu’il aquità la terre et la regné.

That he had ensured the safety of the land and the kingdom.

825 La fille au roi l’a si fort enamé\(^{86}\)

The king’s daughter was so enamored of him

Qu’èle li dist—ne li pot plus celer.

That she confessed it to him, for she could no longer hide it.

.I. jour avoit rois Otes assamblé

One day, King Oton assembled

Les pers de Romme, et les postaus mandés.

The peers of Rome and called upon the powerful.

“Baron,” dist il, “or oiés mon penser.

“My lords,” he said, “hear my thoughts.

830 J’ai une fille qui molt fait a lôer.

I have a daughter who is most worthy of praise.

Ains que je muire le vorrai marier.

I want to see her married before I die,

Si le donrai mon chevalier Ydé;

So I will give her to my knight, Ydé,

\(^{86}\) Ms. en amé
Romme ait avoec et ma grant roiauté, And with her Rome and my vast kingdom,
Car jou ne sai nul tel baron qu’Idé.” For I know no other man like him.”

Romain s'i sont volentiers acordé, The Romans all assented to this gladly
Dont l'accolla par molt grant amisté. And embraced him in friendship.

Dist li rois Otes “Or m’entendés, Ydé. King Oton said, “Listen to me, Ydé.
Vous m’avés tout mon païs aquité. You have delivered my whole kingdom,
Le guerredon vous en voel ci donner: And I wish to reward you.

J’ai une fille qui tant a de biauté; I have a very beautiful daughter;
Vous l’averés a moulier et a per, You will have her as your wife and companion,
Et mon roiaume quant jou ere finés.” As well as my kingdom, when I am gone.”

“Mercit, bons rois. Pour Diu de maïsté, “Thank you, good king, but by God in his majesty,
Jou n’ai u mont vaillant .i. ail pelé. I have not a penny to my name.$^7$

---

$^7$ Literally translates to “I have nothing that is worth more than a peeled clove of garlic,” an expression used to say that something is worthless (Frédéric Eugène Godefroy, Complément du dictionnaire de l’ancien langue français [Paris, 1885–1902], 1:58); similar to the
It would be a shame if you married your daughter Without considering more carefully.

I have no wish to marry, for I am a poor man,

Always seeking service to earn my wages.”

“What?” said Oton. “What could you be thinking?

Would you then refuse my daughter And the country that I have offered you?”

“No, by God, sire,” said Ydé,

“I will take her gladly and willingly,

If that is her wish.

common expression “œuf pelé” (Hindley, Langley, and Levy, Old French–English Dictionary, 474). There could be a play on the word “pelee” which might be a reference to male genitalia (Godefroy, Complément, 6:67).

88 S703 en pensé

89 The referent of the pronoun “le” is ambiguous; however, the following line seems to imply that it should be “enfant.”
Faites errant la pucelle mander.”

Call the maiden here right now.”

Et cele i vint, n’i a pas demouré,

And the young woman came without delay.

Adont l’apelle Otes li couronnés,

Now crowned Oton spoke to her thus:

“Ma bele fille,” dist li rois, “entendés.

“My fair daughter,” the king said, “listen.

Il vous convient orendroit créanter

It would behoove you now to promise

Que vous ferés toute ma volenté.

That you will do as I wish,

Et vous tenrés aprés moi mon regné.

For you are next in line to hold the throne.

Se je sui mors, point n’avés d’avoué.

If I die, you would have no protector.

Tout mi baron ont pour bien esgardé

All my barons have seen it fit

Que vous prendrés mon chevalier Ydé;

That you should marry my knight Ydé,

Si sera rois de ceste roiauté.”

And that he should become king of this realm.”

Dist la pucele, “Ore ai ma volenté.

The maiden said, “Now my wishes are fulfilled.

N’ai pas mon tans en cest siecle gasté

Indeed, my time on this earth will not have been wasted

Quant j’arai chou que tant ai désiré.”

Since I will be granted what I have so desired.”
As piés son pere a a genous alé.

She knelt in front of her father,

Au redrecier a hautement crié,

And, straightening back up, she proclaimed loudly,

“Peres,” dist ele, “or pensés du haster;

“Father,” she said, “please consider making haste,

Tous jours me samble que il s’en doie aler.”

For every day, it feels like he will leave.”

Quant li baron ont la bele escouté,

The barons all rejoiced,

Grant joie en ont tout ensamble mené.

To hear the fair one speak thus.

Puis dist li rois, “Venés avant, Ydé, 90

Then the king said, “Step forward, Ydé,

Se fianciés ma fille en loiauté.

And promise yourself faithfully to my daughter;

Je le vous doins avoec ma roiauté.

I give her to you, along with my kingdom.

De vo service m’est hui bien ramenbré,

Today I have paid you back well for your services

De ce c’avés mon païs aquité;

And for freeing my country;

Or vous sera molt bien guerredonné.”

I daresay you are well rewarded for it.”

90 The nominative case should be used here rather than the objective.
When Yde heard him, her blood ran cold.

She did not know what to do,

For she had no member which would allow her to dwell with Olive.

She often invoked our Lord, saying,

“Glorious God who resides in Trinity,

Have pity on this wretch

Who is being forced to marry.

Oh! Florent, father, how badly you erred

By not marrying me to some lord,

And instead thinking to take me as your own wife.

Better to have had me burned!

---

91 The Old French “abiter” can mean “to touch,” sometimes conflated with “habiter,” which means “to live” or “to have sexual relations with someone.” The sense here is that Yde is lacking what is necessary for her to live with Olive as husband and wife or to be with her in a physical way.
Jou m’en fuï, pour la honte eskiver, I fled your land
De ton païs, par ton pecié mortel. To escape the shame of your mortal sin,
En maint peril a puis mes cors esté. And I have since then faced many perils.
Or me cuidai dedens Romme garder, I finally thought myself safe in Rome,
Mais jou voi bien mes cors ert encusés. But now I find myself again betrayed,
La fille aroi a mon cors enamé; For the king’s daughter has fallen in love with me;
Or ne sai jou comment puisse escaper. I do not know how I can escape this.
Se jou lor di femme sui [en ve]rté,92 If I tell them that I am really a woman,
Tantost m’aront ochis et decopé, They will tear me to pieces,
U a mon pere diront la verité. Or tell my father the truth.
Il me rara molt tost se ci me set, He will take me back no sooner than he finds out,
U il m’estuet fuïr outre la mer. And I will have to escape across the sea.

92 S7082 par verté; the text is partly effaced and difficult to make out, but this is the most plausible current reading.
Comment qu’il voist, malvais plait ai tourné,
No matter how I look at it, I have gotten myself into a real plight,

905 Et nonpourquant jou ai dit fausseté.
For despite everything else, I have told lies.

Puis que j’ai Romme et l’onour conquésté,
Since I have won both Rome and honor,

J’espouserai la fille au couronné;
I will marry the crowned king’s daughter,

Si face Dix de moi sa volenté.”
And put myself in God’s hands.”

Dont dist au roi, “Jou ferai a vo gré.”
So she said to the king, “I will do as you command.”

Droit au moustier Saint Pierre en sont alé.
They went straight to Saint Peter’s Church,

Yde pluevi, grant joie ont demené.
Where Yde pledged herself to Olive, to everyone’s delight;

Chil damoisel behordent tout armé,
The young men jousted in full armor,

Pucelles ont treskiét et karolé.
And maidens danced and caroled.

.I mois entier a le feste duré.
The feast lasted a whole month,

915 Li tans aproce c’on les doit espouzer.
And the time to have them wed was drawing near.

De chevaliers i ot molt grant plenté;
There were knights in great numbers
D’Idé veoir sont en grant volenté. Who were eager to see Ydé.

Droit au moustier en sont .i. jour alé; One day they went to the church

Rommain adestrent Olive o le vis cler. Where the Romans escorted Olive with the fair face.

920 Ydes est devant, grans souspirs a jetés. Ydé was in the front, sighing heavily;

Dusc’au moustier n’i ot point arresté. Nevertheless, he proceeded until they reached the church,

Le jour li font la pucelle espouzer. And that day they had him marry the maiden.

Olive a prise a moullier et a per; He took Olive for his wife and companion.

Or a sa fille li rois femme donné, The king had given his daughter to a woman

925 Car il cuidoit que ce fust hom d’Ydé. Because he thought Ydé was a man.

Maint siglaton ont le jour endossé, Many fine brocades were worn that day,

Maint drap de soie et maint mantel forré. Silk garments, and fur coats;

93 Idé is accented here because, even though the meter does not call for it, the guests think they are there to see a bridegroom, not a bride in disguise.

94 The initial O is effaced.
Au grant palais ont le mangier donné.

Li jongleour ont grant joie mené,

Harpes, vielles oïst on sonner,

Dames, pucelles trespier et caroler,

Et ces dansiax noblement demener.

Aprés mangier, quant il orent soupe,

En est cascuns ralés a son ostel.

XVIII

Grans fu la joie ens la sale pavee.

And they feasted at the palace

While the minstrels entertained them.

Harps and vielles were heard playing,

Ladies and maidens dancing and caroling,

And young men behaving very gallantly indeed.

After the feast, when they had eaten,

They all went back to their lodgings.

XVIII

There was great joy in the paved hall.

95 Inversion of subject and verb: “on i oïst sonner.”
96 There is a gilded miniature at the top of the second column of f. 394v containing two panels, the first depicting a marriage ceremony and the second a couple in bed with an onlooker standing at the foot of the bed. A caption at the top of the page written in red ink reads “Ensi que Ydes fille Flourent d’Arragon espousa Olive la fille Otheuiien l’empereur de Roume” [Thus Ydes, daughter of Florent of Aragon, married Olive, daughter of Othon the emperor of Rome]. As with the other illuminations in the Ms., the frame is a castle with walls, towers, and battlements. Laisse 18 begins right under it, and the initial “G” is elaborately decorated and gilded. It is extremely fortunate that this folio is almost perfectly preserved—with all the gliding almost intact—as the folio directly following it is badly damaged.
Tante candaille i avoit alumee,
So many candles burned

Toute la ville sambloit estre embrasee.
That the whole city seemed ablaze.

Acesmé sont a l’us de lor contree.
The guests were appareled in the fashions of their countries.

Quant ont mengié, la grant table ont oste[e],
When they had eaten, the great table was removed,

Olive mainnent en la cambre pavee.
And they led Olive to the paved chamber,

Coucie l’ont, et puis l’ont enclinee.
Laying her down and reclining her on the bed.

Es vous Ydain\(^7\) qui vient toute esplourée.
Yde came into the chamber, in tears.

La cambre a bien veroullié et fermée,
Securing and locking the room,

Puis vint au lit u estoit s’espousee.
She came to the bed where her wife lay

Si l’apella coiement a celee,
And spoke to her privately thus:

“Ma douce amie et loiaus mariée,
“My sweet love and faithful bride,

La bone nuis vous soit anuit donnee,
I must bid you good night,

\(^7\) The nominative Yde should follow “es vous,” but the objective Ydain was necessary for the epic caesura.
Car jou l’arai molt griés si com jou bee; For mine will be difficult, I believe;

Jou ai .i. mal dont j’ai ciere tourblee.” I have an ailment that troubles me greatly.”

A ices mos fu Olive accollee. With these words, she embraced Olive,

Cele respont qui bien fu avisee, Who, being very wise, answered,

“Biax dous amis, ci sommes a celee; “Fair, sweet friend, we are here in private,

S’estes la riens que plus ai desirree And you are what I have desired most of all

Pour la bonté que j’ai en vous trouvee. Because of the goodness I have seen in you.

Ne cuidiés pas que jou aie pensee Do not think that I have thought

Que jouer voelle a la pate levee.98 About wanting to take our pleasure.

Onques de chou ne fui entalente. I have never had an interest in such things,

98 Brewka does not have an explanation for “jouer a la pate levee,” but she thinks it clearly refers to sexual intercourse (542). Cazanave comments on it thus: “la compréhensive jeune fille repousse au loin l’idée qu’elle ait pu ne serait-ce qu’envisager un peu de gymnastique, l’expression “jouer à la pate levee ” [. . .] apportant, dans sa première attestation repérable, la dose d’eufémisme pittoresque exigée pour pouvoir être prononcée dans la bouche d’une fille de roi bien élevée et, qui plus est, pucelle.” (The clever young woman rejects the idea that she would even expect this bit of gymnastic, the expression “jouer à la pate levee” bringing in its pleonastic appearance the dose of quaint euphemism necessary for it to be pronounced by a well-mannered king’s daughter, and a virgin no less) (153).
Mais vous m’aiés .xv. jours deportee
Rather I ask that you give me a reprieve of fifteen days

Tant que la gens soit de chi destornee,
Until the guests have left,

960 Que jou n’en soie escarnie et gabee.
So that I won’t be teased and chided for it.

A no deduit arons bien recouvree.
By then we will have recovered our spirits.

Tant sench bonté en vo cors arrestee
I sense that your virtues are arrested,\(^9\)

Que, s’il vous plaist, je serai deportee
So, if you please, I would be exempted from everything

Fors du baisier; bien voel estre accolee,
But kisses. I would like to be embraced,

965 Mais de l’amour c’on dist qui est privee
But as for that love they call intimate,

Vous requier jou que soie deportee.”\(^{100}\)
I ask you to release me from it.”

\(^9\) In other words, “your sexual desires are blocked”, according to a note by Cazanave (154).

\(^{100}\) The punctuation of these five lines is suggested by Caroline Cazanave (154) as an alternative to Brewka’s punctuation below, which significantly changes the meaning of the passage:

\(Tant \text{ sench bonté en vo cors arrestee}\)
\(Que, s’il vous plaist, je serai deportee.\)
\(Fors du baisier bien voel estre accolee,\)
\(Mais de l’amour c’on dist qui est privee\)
\(Vous requier jou que soie deportee. (B7183–87)\)
Yde respont, “France dame honoree,
Jou vous {otroi tout chou qu’il vous agree}.”
Dont ont l’un l’autre baisé et {accolée};
En cele {nuit n’i ot cri} ne mellee.
La nuis {passa, si revint la} journee.
Au {matinet est} la bele levee,
Et ricement vestue et acesmee,
Et la roïne est aprés li alee.
Otes l’a molt au matin esgardee
S’elle s’estoit cangie ne müee.

Yde answered, “Noble and honored lady,
I will do whatever you ask.”
And with that they kissed and embraced one another,
But no cries of battle were heard that night,
Which passed thus until day came again.
In the morning, the fair one got up,
Dressed and adorned herself lavishly,
And the queen went after her.

Otes l’a molt au matin esgardee
S’elle s’estoit cangie ne müee.

Notes:

101 Lines 968-73 are partly effaced or badly smudged, so I rely on S7151-56 to confirm my reading.
102 Olive is queen-to-be, as confirmed through her recent marriage.
103 B 197 se elle; S7159 selle
“Fille,” fait il, “comment iés mariée?”

“Sire,” dist ele, “ensi com moi agree.”

Adont ot il u palais grant risee.

Olive fu ricement estrinee.

.VIII. jours tous plains a la feste duree.

Departi sont et vont en lors contree

Quant la quinzaine fu plainnement passee.

Et Yde jut avoecques s’espousee.

Ne l’a nient plus que soloit aparlee;

Devers les rains pointe ne adesee.105

Olive s’est durement mespensee;

Sa compaignie a sacie et boutee,

Daughter,” he said, “how do you find yourself married?”104

“Sire,” she said, “exactly to my liking.”

At that, there was a great burst of laughter in the palace,

And Olive was showered with gifts.

The feast lasted eight whole days,

Then the guest went back to their countries.

When the fortnight had fully passed,

And Yde lay with her wife;

She did nothing more than talk to her as she was wont to do,

But did not touch her intimately.

Olive doubted herself harshly,

And she pressed and prodded her companion.

104 In other words, “coupled” or “united,” referring specifically to the sexual union between Olive and Yde.

105 The verb “adeser,” meaning “to touch or approach,” has clear sexual connotations (Godefroy, Complément, 1:100).
Et Yde set molt bien u elle bee.

Yde knew very well what she was after,

Vers li tourna, plus ne li fist celee.
So she turned toward her and no longer hid the truth from her.

De cief en cief li a l'uevre contee:
She told her the whole story from beginning to end:

Que femme estoit—merci li a criée!—

That she was woman—begging for mercy—

Et que fuë estoit pour le sien pere,

That she had run away from her father,

Hors de son liu par estranges contree.

Away from her home, and into strange lands.

Olive l'ot, s'en fu espöentee;

Olive was alarmed when she heard this

Ydain a molt doucement confortee,

And gently comforted Yde,

Et si li jure par la Virge honoree,

Swearing to her by the holy Virgin,

Ja nel dira au roi Oton, son pere,

“I will not tell my father, King Oton,

“Le mien seignour qui a vous m’a donnee.

My lord, who gave me to you.

Mais or soiés toute rasseüree,

Take comfort,

Puis que vous estes pour loiauté gardee.

For you are safe in loyalty.

{Ensa}mble o vous prendrai ma destinee.”

I will face my destiny together with you.”
Uns garchons a oï lor devisee.

Il jure Diu demain iert acusee,

Et qu'Yde ara l'ame du cors sevree.

La nuit passa, si vint la matinee.

Les dames sont au matinet levees.

Et li garchons—mal de l'ame son pere!—

{En} vint au roi en la sale pavee.106

{S}e li a bien la parole contee:

{Que} femme est Yde cui sa fille a donnee,

Et {R]ommenie} et toute sa contree.

L[i rois] l'entent, s’a la coulour müee. 395'b

Dit a[u] garchon, “Saint[e] Vierge107 honoree,

A valet overheard their conversation

And swore to God that the next day Yde would stand accused,

And that she would have her soul severed from her body.

The night passed, and the dawn came.

The ladies rose in the morning,

And the boy—cursed be his father’s soul!—

Came to the king in the paved hall.

He told him what he had heard:

That Yde, to whom he had given his daughter,

Rome, and his whole dominion, was a woman.

When the king heard him, his color changed.

He said to the boy, “By the holy sainted Virgin,

106 There is smudging in the Ms. which has effaced some parts of the following four lines.

107 Ms. saint vierge
C’as dit ribaus, mauvais traîtres, leres?

Se ce n’es[t] voirs, la teste aras colpee!”

“Sire,” dist il, “c’est verités prouvee.

Gardés que soit de par vous esprouvee.”

Li rois ploura, la ciere a enclinee,

Dont s’apensa comment iert esprouvee.

.1. baing fait faire en la sale pavee.

Dedens entra, puis a Yde mandee,¹⁰⁸

Et elle i vint. Li rois l’a commandee,

“Despoulliés vous sans point de demoree.

Venés o moi baignier, ensi m’agree.”

Cele respont qui fu espöentee.

What did you say, you scoundrel, wretched traitor, ruffian?

If you speak lies, I will have your head!”

“Sire,” he said, “it is the honest truth.

You should look into the matter yourself.”

The king lamented this, and, bowing his head,

Thought about how the truth could be found out.

He devised to have a bath prepared in the paved hall.

He got in it and called for Yde.

When she came in, the king commanded her,

“Disrobe, and do not delay.

It would please me for you to come bathe with me.”

She answered, frightened.

¹⁰⁸ The objective “Ydain” would be more grammatical here.
“Biax sires, rois,” dist Yde au cors mollé,

“Et s’il vous plaist, de chou me deportés.”

Li rois respon, “Tous les dras osterés.

S’il est ensi que on m’a devisét,

Je vous ferai ambe .ii. embraser!”

Yde trambla, Olive a souspiré;

A genoullions a Diu merci crïé.

Li rois a tout son barnage mandé.

Devant aus tous ceste cose a conté.

Tout em plourant a cascun escrié,

“Seignour,” dist il, “quel conseil me donrés?”

“Fa[i] les ardoir!” cascuns li a crié.

Ensi com Yde a de paour tramblé,

“The king answered, “You will remove all your clothes.

If what I was told is true,

I will have you both burned at the stake.”

Yde trembled, and Olive gasped.

Falling to her knees, she begged God for mercy.

The king summoned all his barons,

And related the whole matter to them.

He lamented to them,

“Lords, what would you counsel me?”

“Have them burned!” they all shouted.

As Yde was shaking with fear,
Devers le ciel descent une clartés.

Ce fu uns angles; Dix le fist avaler.

Au roi Oton a dit, “Tout cois estés.

Jhesus te mande, li rois de maïsté,

Que tu te baignes, et si lai chou ester,

Car jou te di en bonne verité,

Bon chevalier a u vassal Ydé.

Dix li envoie et donne par bonté

Tout chou c'uns hom a de s'umanité.

Lai le garchon,” dist li angles, “aler;

Il vous avoit dit voir, mais c'est passé.

Hui main iert feme, or est uns hom carnés.

Dix a partout poissance et pöesté.

Otes, bons rois, dedens .viii. jours, venrés

A light came down from the sky.

It was an angel, sent down by God.

The angel said to Oton, “Peace.

The King in majesty, Jesus Christ, commands

You to bathe and let the matter be,

For I am telling you in truth

That you have a good knight in your vassal, Ydé.

God in his benevolence has given him

Everything that makes a man.

And let the boy go,” the angel added,

“He spoke truthfully to you, but all that is past.

This morning she was a woman, but now he is a man incarnate.

For God has power and might over everything.

Oton, good king, in eight days’ time,
En l’autre siecle, de cestui partirés.

You will depart this world and come into the next,

Et vostre fille avoec Ydain lairés.

And you will leave your daughter with Yde.

.I. fil aront, Croissans iert apellés.

They will have a son who will be called Croissant.

En sen venir, fera molt de bontés

In his coming, he will do much good

A molt de gent dont il iert poi amés,

For people by whom he will be little loved,

A molt de gent dont il iert poi amés,

And he will suffer from great poverty.”

Et si ara molt de grans povertés.”

With these words, the angel,

A ices mos, s’en est l’angles tournés

Who had so comforted the people of Rome, left.

Qui bien les a en Romme confortés.

And on that day, Croissant was conceived.

Et en cel jour fu Croissans engenrés.

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109 Even though the angel has just confirmed that Yde is a man, he still refers to him/her in the feminine.
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