

Miscellany of Poetry, including verses by NICAISE LADAM (“SONGEUR DE BETHUNE”); JEAN MOLINET and many anonymous or unidentified authors  
In French and some Latin and Flemish, manuscript on paper  
France, Picardie or Artois (Arras), c. 1530-1540

*5 independent quires (collation: i<sup>3</sup> [of a quire of 4, missing ii]; ii<sup>28</sup>, iii<sup>22</sup>, iv<sup>3</sup> [of 6, missing iii-vi], v<sup>4</sup> [of 8, unstitched, detached from a bigger quire]), with independent foliation, on paper, a variety of watermarks (quire I, Briquet, “Pot à anse”: close to no. 12672, Chalons-sur-Marne, 1537; quire II, Briquet, “Lettres et monogrammes”: close to no. 9834, Lille, 1527-1529, Abbaye de Bonne-Espérance, 1526; quire III, “Pot à une anse”: close to no. 12831, Paris, 1528, Chalons-sur-Marne, 1536, Arras, 1529-1564; quire IV, same paper stock as quire III; quire V, same paper stock as quire II), written in a French cursive script, by at least hands (band A, quire I; quire II, pp. 27-49; most of quire III; quire IV; band B, quire II, pp. 1-27; band C, quire V (perhaps simply a version of band A)), texts copied in brown ink, on up to 30 lines, a few headings underlined in red. Gatherings unbound, perhaps once sewn together in a miscellany. Dimensions of each gathering provided below.*

This compilation of verse and some prose, now unbound, represents a wonderful discovery and unpublished source for pre-1550 French poetry. Probably once part of a larger miscellany and with French-Flanders linguistic features, the ballads, epistles, songs, and political and historical pieces reveal an ideological slant that is resolutely pro-Burgundian. The miscellany fits in the Northern “Grands rhétoriciens” literary movement, including such authors as Jean Molinet, Nicaise Ladam, and others.

## PROVENANCE

1. Copied in the second quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as per style of script and watermarks, which all point to Northern France (French Flanders and Artois) as a place of origin for these unbound quires. It is plausible that the quires were once bound together, with other leaves, to compose a miscellany of multi-author verse and prose. There are a few dates mentioned in the different quires, the later ones being “1530” (quire 2, p. 32); “1532” (quire 3, p. 16v).

There are many examples of Northern French linguistic features, with clear French Flanders forms such as “franchoyts” (quire 2, p. 3); “fachillement” (quire 2, p. 56); “medechin” (quire 3, f. 4); “chiel” (quire 4, f. 1v) etc.

2. European Continental Collection.

## TEXT

The present quires are copied by at least three different hands, if not more. Nonetheless, they seem to have once been part of a same miscellany or anthology of verse and a little prose, now dismembered. There are a large number of ballads and songs, mottoes and sayings, historical and political pieces. The ballads are quite interesting and clearly merit attention, editing and hopefully better identification in relation to other anthologies of sixteenth-century ballads.

It is the historical and political pieces that clearly reveal a pro-Burgundian position with titles such as *Le In manis de Therouane*, *La complainte de la ville d'Arras*, *Dictiers nouveaux de la victoire de Charles empereur...*, *L'adieu de ceulx de Tournay au partement des francois* etc. There are a few pieces that can be identified, by authors tied to the Burgundian court and culture, however all redacted in French. Noteworthy is the unknown piece by Nicaise Ladam, an author who has received renewed scholarly interest of late, but is still understudied (an Arras native, he was a herald and close to the inner circle of the Emperor Charles V). Another author represented is Jean Molinet, poet and chronicler of the Burgundian court, librarian of Margaret of Austria. Generally speaking, the present poetical works are to be associated with the literary group known as the "Grands rhétoriqueurs" active in the last quarter of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth century, tied to Northern France, Flanders, and the Duchy of Burgundy.

The regions discussed in the political and historical verses in this miscellany are provinces constantly torn, traded off, invaded by either the French or the Burgundians and Holy Roman Emperor. Cities like Arras, Tournai, and Théroouane were alternatively under French rule or Burgundian Rule. Arras for instance went from being French in 1482 (previously Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy owned Picardy, Artois, Franche-Comté and Burgundy) to being resolutely Burgundian in 1529 after Charles V captured Francis I at Pavia, and France relinquished its ancient claim on Flanders in 1528. Charles V annexed Tournai, Artois, Utrecht, Groningen and Guelders. By the treaty of Cambrai called the "Paix des Dames" [Peace of the Ladies] because it was negotiated by Louise of Savoy, mother of Francis, who had acted as regent during his absences, and Margaret of Austria, aunt of Charles and regent of the Netherlands, Francis, King of France, renounced his claims in Italy and his rights as overlord in Flanders and Artois. In exchange, Charles agreed not to advance his claims to Burgundy at that time but instead accepted money as ransom for the two French princes he held.

The majority of these pieces, composed after the early 1530s, reflect the shifting political identity of the border towns of Arras, Tournai and Théroouane. One would have to analyze also the ideological slant or political sympathies expressed in the ballads.

**I. Quire 1: Six ballads, 3 ff., unbound leaves (no stitching), on paper. Dimensions: 215 x 145 mm.**

f. 1, *Balade*, incipit, "Gentilz bergiers juez de voz musettes...";

ff. 1v-2, *Balade*, incipit, "Trompes, tambours et [tinpane] argentine...";

f. 2, *Balade* (begins incomplete), incipit, "[...] monstrant qu'ila dessoubz son chaperon / ung grand valloir et petite puissance";

ff. 2-2v, *Balade*, incipit "Après regretz pleurs et gemissemens...";

ff. 2v-3, *Aultre balade*, incipit, "Celle en qui se volt homme former...";

ff. 3-3v, *Aultre balade*, incipit, "Le gendre humain pour qui la mort je endure..."; Latin saying on Death copied at the end: "O vos omnes qui transitis hic per viam attendite et videte si est dolor mens sicut est dolor vester."

None of these ballads are apparently published, to the best of our knowledge, but might very well be found in other miscellanies and/or anthologies still in manuscript form, of which there are of course many for the sixteenth century.

**II. Quire 2: Miscellany of poetry, 56 pp., single quire of 28 ff., on paper. Dimensions: 213 x 145 mm.**

[pagination added by a later hand followed below]

pp. 1-3, *Ballade nouvelle*, incipit, "Quiconcques veult en soy rememorier / Les faitz haultains des victorieux roix...";

pp. 3-5, *Magnificat du roy franchoys*, incipit, "Anima mea dominum / Magnificat selon raison...";

pp. 5-7, *Le Nunc dimittis du roy franchois*, incipit, "Nunc dimittis servum tuum / Infortuné pays de France...";

pp. 7-9, *Le In manis de Therouane*, incipit, "In manis tuas puissant Roy / Henry tresnoble d'Angleterre...";

pp. 10-15, *La complainte de la ville d'Arras*, incipit, "Arras je suis la simple et quoyt / Manante en toute humilité...";

This piece has been studied by J. Lemaire, "Poésie politique et histoire: *La Complainte d'Arras*" (2005) and he provides a modern critical edition (pp. 342-356). It was first published in 1857 by E. Liot de Nobécourt in *Bulletin historique de la Société des Antiquaires de la Morinie* 2 (1847), pp. 471-475, based on a "recueil de poésies composées en Artois par Jean de Haffreges" [anthology of poetry composed in Artois by Jean de Haffreges] (Lemaire, 2005, p. 338). This present location of this manuscript is now unknown (Lemaire believes the manuscript to be in a private collection) but it cannot be the present quire because the errors made by the scribe in the Liot de Nobécourt codex are not found here. There is another copy of this *Complainte de la ville d'Arras* in Brussels, BR, MS IV 541 which is a miscellany of historical pieces concerning Hainault, Northern France and Artois.

Liot de Nobécourt attributed the work to Jean Molinet and dated it circa January-March 1477. This date cannot be retained and is questioned by Lemaire (2005, pp. 338-339). In all likelihood, the author of the *Complainte de la ville d'Arras* was a cleric from Arras. The work was probably composed circa 1507-1508 and there is a reference to the injunction addressed by Louis XII to the inhabitants of Arras that they recognize Margaret of Austria as their regent (27 July 1507). The Peace of Cambrai (10 Dec. 1508) concluded a temporary peace between France and the regent of the Habsburg Netherlands (Margaret of Austria, aunt of Charles V), which is evoked in the last verses of this text.

Arras is at the center of this poem, having particularly suffered from the wars waged between France and the Empire, invaded by the troops of Louis XI in 1477, and was placed under (fluctuating) French domination until 1526-1529. This *Complainte de la ville d'Arras* is clearly in

favor of Margaret of Austria, regent of Arras, and wishes that she maintains peace in the region. In this, the work is something of a "pacifist" manifesto (see Lemaire, p. 342; see also J. Devaux, "Arras, terre de concorde : fortune littéraire d'un thème pacifiste," in *Arras et la diplomatie européenne XV<sup>e</sup>-XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*).

pp. 15-17, *Chanson de Hesdin et de Monsieur de Pont de Remy*, incipit, "Gentilz gallans et gens..";

pp. 17-18, *Aultre chanson sur la voix "Je me complains que amours,"* incipit, "Reveillez vous flammengs et bourguignons / De la victoire qu'a fait le duc de Bourbon...";

There is a song beginning "Reveillez vous Piccars et Bourguignons..." found in Paris, BnF, MS fr. 12744.

pp. 18-20, *Ballade nouvelle*, incipit, "Chante cler le fait heroiqueulx / Et belliqueulx des gentilz bourguignons...";

pp. 20-21, *Autre ballade*, incipit, "Dedans Cambray me gambioye..."; .

pp. 21-23, *Lamentationes super regum francorum*, incipit, "Aleph. Quomodo sedet solus rex sine populo factus est quasi orphanus...";

pp. 24-27, *Dictiers nouveaux de la victoire de Charles empereur toujours augmentateur de la sainte foy catholique*, incipit, "Se j'eusse plume ou langue poeticque / La pratique de Tite Live et stile...";

Verses in favor of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor.

pp. 27- 31, Nicaise Ladam, *Epistre de la cité de Rhodes envoyée a la sainte foy catholique*; colophon: "La precedente epistre est faite et composée par **Songeur dict de Bethune** herault d'armes de l'empereur Charles d'Austriche et intitulé **Grenade** demorant a present en la ville d'Arras etc.";

This *Epistre* is apparently unpublished. Nicaise Ladam (1465-c.1547) was born in Béthune, and died in Arras. Herald, then King of Arms of the Hapsburg Emperors, Nicaise Ladam composed a French verse *Chronique* pertaining to the Burgundian court during the Valois-Austrian reign, between 1488 and 1546. The text is known in two versions: the longer version (Arras, BM, 1082; Brussels, BR, MSS 14864-5; Brussels, BR, MSS 21687-91) relates the events in Burgundy between 1488 and 1545; the briefer one (Arras, BM, MS 682 (187): "Cronicque abregiet avecques aulcunes oeupvres et recoeil, mises et redigées en escript par Nicaise Ladam, roy d'armes à l'empereur nostre sire, intitulé Grenade..." (see *Catalogue général des manuscrits...tome IV, Arras...*, p. 86). Nicaise Ladam was in line to replace Jean Molinet as official "indiciaire" (a prestigious function that included historiographer, ambassador, and official poet) at the Burgundian Court, but the position was granted instead to Jean Lemaire de Belges. He was to become "roi d'armes" for Charles V, and changed nickname, from "Songeur de Béthune" to "Grenade." Both names are used in the small colophon at the end of the work allowing us to attribute this piece firmly to Nicaise Ladam.

pp. 32-38, *Dictiers nouveaulx de la paix et alliance d'entre l'esgle et la fleur de lys par le moien de treshaulte et treillustre princesse Madame Alienor royne de France etc.*, incipit, "Comme il ait pleu a la grand prudence /

Par grace immense epaulier les clameurs..."; [signed] Feaulx es en lard. Finis laus deo;

pp. 39-44, *Les regretz du pape clement septiesme de ce nom etc.*; incipit, "[Le pape]. O fortune qui tant m'as fait de tort... [L'empereur ad ce repond] O pere seigneur qui Clement vous nommez / Vous vous plaindez a tort et sans raison..."

pp. 44-45, *Ballade*, incipit, "Nature et raison peult aprendre / Qu'on doibt d'aultruy avoir pité...";

p. 45, *Laus francorum en recullon* [composé par Mollinet], incipit, "France est gracieuse non frere / Charitable non ennieuse / France lealle non legiere..."; at the end: "Se tu veulx entendre ses vers lisiez les tout a revers";

This is a type of palindrome verse. Jean Molinet (1435-1507) was first secretary of George Chastelain, and then replaced him as historiographer ("indiciaire") of the Duke of Burgundy. He is a fine representative of the literary movement called "grands rhétoriciens." On Jean Molinet, see J. Devaux, *Jean Molinet, indiciaire bourguignon*, Paris, 1996.

pp. 46-47, *Refrain moralizé*, incipit, "Ung grant veneur feist congregation / De braconniers jusques a une douzaine...";

p. 48, *Ballade*, incipit, "Le ardant brandon de l'ardante fournaige / De l'espoir ma penetré le coeur..."

p. 49, *De gestis romanorum*, incipit, ".iii. P.P.P. Pater patrie profectus est in .S.S.S. sapientia..."

p. 50, *Du singe*, incipit, "Tout par le cul du singe passe / Pourtant de cul c'est l'outrepasse / Entendez la fachen comment / Les usuriers [...] / Menguent les bons laboureurs...";

pp. 51-53, *Champ roial. Ballade sur la croix de saint Andrieu*, incipit, "On nous parle des chevaliers errans / De Lancelot, d'Hector, d'Arthur de Troye...Les confreres de la croix saint Andrieu...";

p. 53, *Aultre*, incipit, "De coeur je souspire / De douleur et de yre...";

p. 54, Four verses in Flemish, heading, *Aultre motet*, incipit, "Daec de scouthete taxeert den ubyn...";

p. 55, *Recepte pour guerir de l'epidemie / Mais que l'on ny croye mye*, incipit, "Deux bourgoingnons de conscience / Et deux bretons de sapience..."; heading announced, left unfinished, *Aultre joieuse recepte*;

A form of these verses are found in another manuscript Paris, BnF, MS fr. 2375 (f. 186), under the title "Favras" and attributed to Jean Molinet (1435-1507). This text is also attributed to a certain Jean de Pleure, an inhabitant of Troyes who left a miscellany of poetry and prose, as published in *Oeuvres inédites de P.J. Grosley*, Paris, 1813, tome II: "Mémoires sur les troyens célèbres," p. 321. This Jean de Pleure most likely is not the author, simply the one who copied the text in his own personal compilation of verse and prose.

p. 56, Pentrials and inscriptions, "Dathe de la paix de Cambray / Vocaberis camera pacis et concordie / Anno 1508"; "Pour plus fachillement comprendre l'entendement de la [...] qui s'ensuit..."; "Que la lys signiffie le roy des fleurs de lys qui est le roy de france / L'aigle denote l'empereur...".

### III. Quire 3: Ballads, verses and historical events, single quire of 22 ff., on paper. Dimensions: 220 x 160 mm.

f. 1, Ballad, incipit, "[...] Trop tost marchier mect gens d'armes en biere..." (wanting the beginning);

ff. 1-1v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Selon mon sens et comme je procuere...";

ff. 1v-2, *Ballade*, incipit, "Plusieurs langais remplis de inscipience...";

ff. 2-3, *Ballade*, incipit, "On peult trouver lisant en l'escripture...";

ff. 3-3v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Se ung homme quiert de vivre a sa plaisance...";

ff. 3v-4, *Ballade*, incipit, "Se ung homme volloie avoir vengeance...";

ff. 4-5, *Ballade*, incipit, "Ung medechin de pampelunne...";

ff. 4v-5, *Aultre ballade*, incipit, "Margot que vous fault il Thibault...";

ff. 5-5v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Aulcunes visent a espargner...";

ff. 6-6v, *Ballade morale*, incipit, "Vraye amoue a une prerogative...";

ff. 6v-7, *Ballade morale amoureuse*, incipit, "Sur toutes choses en la vie presente...";

ff. 7-7v, *Aultre ballade*, incipit, "Parfaicte amour comme je presuppose...";

ff. 7v-8v, *Aultre ballade*, incipit, "On voit plusieurs curez et gens d'eglise...";

ff. 8v-9, *Ballade morale*, incipit, "Homme mortel entendement rusticque...";

ff. 9-9v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Salomon dict comme mect l'escripture...";

ff. 9v-10, *Ballade*, incipit, "A ung corbeau lotz et bruit sepulcral...";

ff. 10v-10v, *Aultre ballade*, incipit, "Je suis bien femme fortunee...";

ff. 11-11v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Ung povre sot de notre vinaige (?) / A sa femmelette disoit...";

ff. 11v-12, *Ballade*, incipit, "Une femme fort eschauffée / Disoit hier a ung procureur ..."

ff. 12-12v, *Ballade*, incipit, "A ce matin ung viel sot fantasticque...";

ff. 12v-13, *Ballade*, incipit, "Quand ung homme pretend a mariage...";

ff. 13-14, *Aultre ballade*, incipit, "Dont vient honneur, los, bruyt, joye plaisance...";

ff. 14-14v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Dont vient enemy (?) tristesse desplaisance..."

ff. 14v-15, *Ballade*, incipit, "Se Vulcains en son ardant forge...";

ff. 15-16, *Ballade*, incipit, "Je suis tousiours en coeur lyé et joieulx..."

ff. 16-16v, *Ballade [morale]*, "Dieu feist de riens par son saint verbe unicque..."; explicit, "Ce fut fait le jour saint Valentin a l'hostel de monsieur le vicaire de Tournay et estoit lors prince son chappellain nommé Simon Barra anno 1532."

There is a Simon Barat who was priest and "chappellain" in the Church of Notre-Dame at Tournai. He founded two obits in 1539: "Venerable et discret maitre Simon Barat, prebtre, chappellain des haultes fourmes en l'église Nostre-Dame..." (see *Obituaire de la paroisse de Saint-Piat (Tournai)*, Archives de Tournai, 62; as found in *Bulletin de la société historique et littéraire de Tournai*, 11 avril 1889, p. 55).

ff. 17-18, [Anonymous], *L'adieu de ceulx de Tournay au partement des franchois*, incipit, "Triste de coeur, je prens congé a France...".

Being a frontier city between France and the Burgundian States, Tournai went from one camp to another in the late fifteenth and throughout the sixteenth centuries. In 1513, Tournai was ruled by the English, until 1519 when the city was bought back by Francis I of France. Less than two years after, the city was then placed under siege by Charles V in 1521, thus becoming part of the Burgundian Netherlands. This piece was thus composed after 1521 and the successful siege conducted by Charles V.

pp. 18v-20, Excerpts from a selection of authors and Gospel extracts: *Catbo [Caton]*; *Saint Pol*; *Saint Augustin*; *XXIe du premier des Roix [Livre des Rois]*; *Ovide des Fastes*; *Joannes Picus*; *Au premier des Ecclesiastes [Bible, Livre des Ecclesiastes]*; *Anthoines en ses cronicques*; *Dictier veritable pour ce temps*: "Viennent sans argent / Homere et Virgille...".

f. 20v, *A Schotte (?)*; incipit, "Remonstrer soit l'amour ... / Dont jadis mons. Appollo fut datif..."; *De la deffense de lire la sainte escripture en langue vulgaire*, incipit, "Noz grandz docteurs au cherubin visaige / Ont deffendu que homme ne ait plus a voir / La Sainte Bible en vulgaire langaige...";

f. 21, *Épitaphe de Messire Pierre Lyset grand champion*, incipit, "Hercules desconfit jadis / Serpens grans et aultres bestes / Rolland, Olivier, Amadis...";

Born in Villemur en Auvergne, Pierre Liset (1482-1554) was close to the Chancellor Antoine du Prat. He was appointed "premier président" of the Parlement de Paris in 1529, position he held until 1550. He was an ardent defender of the Catholic faith, against the reformists (see J.K.

Farge, *Le Parti conservateur au XVIe siècle. Université et Parlement de Paris à l'époque de la Renaissance et de la Réforme*, Paris, 1992; see also *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises, XVIe s.*, p. 751).

ff. 21v-22v, *Sensuivent plusieurs dathes...Date du siege des anglois devant Therouanne par l'empereur Maximilien an 1513 [...] Du siege d'Arras; Date du partement d'Arras; Date de la paix de Cambray, anno 1508; [...] Date du renouvellement de la thoisson d'or en Tournay 1531; Date de la mort dudit Bourbon; Date de la derniere paix de Cambray.*

These historical dates provide a *terminus post quem* for this quire. The "Paix de Cambrai" (Truce or Peace of Cambrai) is dated 1529, also known as the "Paix des dames" concluded between Louise de Savoie and Margaret of Austria. Even later is the mention of the *Date du renouvellement de la thoisson d'or en Tournay 1531* [Renewal of the Golden Fleece in Tournai, 1531].

#### IV. Quire IV: Six ballads, 3 loose ff., on paper. Dimensions: 215 x 160 mm.

f. 1, [Ballade] (wanting beginning), incipit, "[...] De lettre d'or escript bien richement / Boire comment qui sa mere ne allette...";

f. 1v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Dieu met les bons au chiel par sa puissance / L'oraige met tourment en terre et mer...";

ff. 2-2v, *Ballade*, incipit, "Cocquin qui veult sienne cocquinerie / Ne doit estre honteulx de demander...";

ff. 2v-3, *Ballade*, incipit, "Mon temps est desia fort passé / Et se n'ay guerre de chevance (?)...";

ff. 3-3v, *Aultre ballade*, incipit, "Boire d'autant selon ma couverture / Et devant Dieu mortelle offension...";

f. 3v, *Aultre ballade contraire a la dessudite* (wanting the end), incipit, "Avez vous point cy oy sans mesure / Tel ont bourdeur, belistre, barbeter..."

#### V. Quire V: Mottos and adages, 4 loose ff., on paper. Dimensions: 205 x 145 mm.

ff. 1-4v, *Dictiers et adages*, incipit, "Du cuyr d'aultruy on fait larges coroyes / Tel cuide prendre qu'il est prins"; explicit, "[...] Aveugle est tel qui a vos yeulx / Les corps vont dont ilz sont venuz."

### LITERATURE

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

On the Grand Rhétoriciens:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grands\\_Rh%C3%A9toriciens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grands_Rh%C3%A9toriciens)

On Nicaise Ladam, poet and King of Arms for Charles V:

<http://plusoultre.free.fr/blog/post/2009/05/26/Les-h%C3%A9rauts,-des-techniciens-de-quoi-au-fait>

[http://www.paulonline.brill.nl/entries/encyclopedia-of-the-medieval-chronicle/ladam-nicaise-SIM\\_01914?s.num=1](http://www.paulonline.brill.nl/entries/encyclopedia-of-the-medieval-chronicle/ladam-nicaise-SIM_01914?s.num=1)

Nicaise Ladam and the triptyque of St-Jean en Ronville, Arras (Nicaise Ladam portrayed):

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k56147664/f7.image>

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