Robert Garnier's *Bradamante*: An English Translation of Act V

An Honors Thesis

by

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Abstract

My thesis is a partial translation of *Bradamante* (1582) by Robert Garnier, from French to English, in conjunction with other honors students and under the direction of Dr. Donald Gilman. As a base text for the translation, the edition and commentary by Raymond Lebègue (Paris, 1949) proved accurate and useful. I have amended my translation of Act V with a few endnotes to clarify places and names with which the reader may not be familiar. Any English speaker with an interest in theater or French history could benefit from our collective translation of the play, as *Bradamante* is an exceptionally well written and influential play.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my fellow honors students Nathan, Megan, and Erika for their help throughout the translation process. It’s amazing how much more you can accomplish with a balance of perspectives. I would also like to thank Dr. Gilman for his inspiration and of course his guidance and skill in translation. Finally, I thank my wife Audra for proofreading and the times she helped me find just the right word.
Introduction

Robert Garnier’s *Bradamante* is a vastly influential work in French literary history. Written in the 1582, it is the first French tragicomedy, and many authors followed Garnier’s model, directly or indirectly, in writing their own tragic comedies. While *Bradamante* is not his most famous piece (*Les Juives* takes that distinction), it is a beautiful and culturally important play that should be accessible to anyone with an interest in literature. It is for this reason that Dr. Gilman chose *Bradamante* for translation. My task was to translate Act V, based upon the edition and commentary prepared by Raymond Lebègue.

There were a number of difficulties associated with Bradamante’s place in history. Just as with English, the French language has changed dramatically in the last 500 years. The first problem I encountered was the difference in spelling between modern French and that of the sixteenth century. Some of it was as simple as “moy” instead of “moi”; but, as I read through the act, I noticed that some words had alternate spellings. Fortunately, by figuring out what phonemes composed each word, I was often able to find their modern French equivalents. In the translation of the French text into English, Cotgrave’s *A Dictionarie o/the French and English Tongues*, published in 1611, was invaluable. At first, I relied on an enormous, ancient copy from Ball State University’s Bracken Library, but one of my classmates pointed me to a scanned online version, compiled by Greg Lindahl, which proved much quicker to use.

After discerning the literal meanings of the words Garnier used, my two main difficulties in translating the French into readable English were the verb tenses and the syntax. First of all, I had never seen many of the verb forms used in Garnier’s text. However, most of them have corresponding forms in modern French, so it was only a matter of figuring out what the names
for each tense were. The sometimes frustrating exception to this rule was the historical present. Many times when a character tells a story, the bulk of the action is recounted in present tense. In most of these situations, I elected to render the English in the present tense.

The syntax used in Bradamante is often convoluted, and often sentences are much longer than normal modern English (or French) sentences. One reason for the difficult syntax is cultural: complex sentences were considered elevated and necessary for distinguished writing. The main reason, though, is that Garnier was constrained by meter and rhyme. In order to compensate for the unnatural sounding translations that resulted from a literal rendering, I often had to take generous liberty with my English wording.

I had invaluable help with my English wording (and every step of the translation process) from Dr. Gilman and my fellow honors students. During our approximately weekly sessions, we collaborated to develop the best possible translation which was both accurate and fluid. First, I would e-mail a section to Dr. Gilman, and he would mark it with his preliminary corrections. Next, the group would meet and work through all problematic spots. After I implemented all the corrections at home, I e-mailed Dr. Gilman with some final questions, and he helped me with those difficulties as well. I am confident that my final version of the translation, although not perfect, is more than sufficiently accessible for an English reader. I am happy to have played a part in keeping Garnier’s work alive today.
Bibliography


French Version

ACT V SCÈNE I
LEON, ROGER

Leon
Dea mon frère, et pourquoi ne me l’avez-vous dit?
Pensez-vous qu’en cela je vous eusse desdit?
Que j’eusse voulu perdre, après un tel merite,
Le meilleur chevalier qui sur la terre habite ?
Vous m’avez fait grand tort de douter de ma foi,
Et d’avoir eu besoin de ce qui est à moy.

Roger
Invincible Cesar, je n’eusse osé vous dire
La cause de mon duel, & de mon long martyre.
Las ! vous eussé-je dit que j’avoy nom Roger,
Que j’estoy là venu pour vous endommager ?
Que j’estoy le souci de vostre belle Dame,
Brûlé du mesme feu qui consomme vostre ame ?

Leon
Je fus de vostre amour si ardemment épris
Pour vos faits valeureux, que quand vous fustes pris,
Si j’eusse eu de vostre estre & dessein connoissance,
Je ne vous eusse moins porté de bien veillance.
Mais depuis, que privant vostre cceur de son bien,
Au prix de votre vie avez basti le mien,
Vous ne deviez douter que mon ame obligée
Ne fust de vostre mort durement affligée,
Et que plus tôt qu’en estre autheur, j’eusse quitté
Non l’amour, ou le bien, mais la douce clarté.

Roger
Ne vous privez pour moy d’une telle maistresse :
Ayez-la, prenez-la.

Leon
Non, non, je vous la laisse.

Roger
Ne me destoumez point de ce constant desir.
La mort ne mettra guere à me venir saisir.
Je suis plus que demy dans la barque legere.
Mon ame veut sortir de sa geole ordinaire ;
Ne la renfermez point ; n’enviez son repos ;
Ma mort à vos desirs viendra bien à propos.
Car tant que je vivray, celle qui vous enflame
Vous ne pouvez avoir pour legitime femme :
Il y a mariage entre nous accordé,
Dont vous avez l’effet jusqu’ici retardé.

English Version

ACT V SCENE I
LEON, ROGER

Leon
Verily my brother, why in God’s name didn’t you tell me?
Did you think that I would have forsaken you?
That I would have wanted to lose, after such a noble act,
The best knight on earth?
You greatly misjudged me in questioning my loyalty,
And to have required what is mine.

Roger
Invincible Caesar, I wouldn’t have dared to tell you
The cause of my grief, and of my extended martyrdom.
Oh! What if I had told you that my name was Roger,
That I had come there to harm you?
That I was the beloved of your beautiful Lady,
Burnt by the same fire which consumes your soul?

Leon
I was so feverishly excited by your love
For your valorous feats, that when you were taken,
If I had known about your situation and plan,
I would have exercised less goodwill for you.
But since that time, in depriving your heart of your beloved,
At the price of your life you have built mine,
You shouldn’t doubt that my indebted soul
Would be extremely afflicted by your death
And that rather than creating it, I had left
Neither love, nor goodness, but compassion.

Roger
Don’t deprive yourself of such a lady for me:
Have her, take her.

Leon
No, no, I concede her to you.

Roger
Don’t turn me away from this constant desire.
Death will hardly overcome me.
I am more than halfway in the small boat.
My soul wants to flee this natural cage;
Don’t close it up again; don’t refuse its repose;
My death is well in line with your desires
For as long as I live,
You cannot have her who enflames you for a legitimate wife.
We have agreed on a marriage,
Of which you have delayed until now.
Or ma mort dissoudra ce contract miserable,  
Et ne restera rien qui vous doit dommageable.

Leon

Je ne veux pas mon aise avoir par le trespas  
Du meilleur chevalier qui se trouve icy bas.  
Car combien que je l'aime autant que mon œur mesme,  
Plus qu'elle toutefois votre vaillance j'aime.  
Ayez-la pour espouse, et n'y soit désormais  
Fait obstacle pour moy qui ne l'auray jamais !  
Je vous cede mon droit ; prenez-le à la bonne heure  
Que sans plus différer votre amour vous demeure.

Roger

Je supply' le bon Dieu que sans juste loyer  
Longuement ne demeure un amour si entier,  
Et que j'aye cet heure de quelquefois despendre  
Cette vie pour vous que vous me venez rendre  
Pour la seconde fois. J'en voudrois avoir deux  
Pour en votre service en estre hasardeux.  
Je vy deux fois par vous ; mais combient que l'on rende  
Les biensfaits qu'on reçoit avec usure grande,  
Je ne puis toutefois les rendre que demis,  
Car de les rendre entiers il ne m'est pas permis.  
Vostre amour m'a donné, par deux fois opportune,  
Deux vies, & (malheur !) je n'en puis mourir qu'une.

Leon

Laissons-là ces propos ; plus grands sont les biensfaits  
Que eet Empire est grand en biens & en honneurs !  
Que cette Cour est grosse & pleine de seigneurs !  
Que je voy de beautez ! sont-ce des immortelles ?  
J'estime que le ciel n'a point choses si belles,  
Le Soleil ne luist point si agreable aux yeux,  
Et le Printemps floril n'est point si gracieux  
Que leurs divins regars, que leurs beautez decloses,  
Que leurs visages saints, fait de lis et de roses.  
Durant la bnme nuit les celestes flambeaux.  
Qui brillent escartez, n'éclaireront point si beaux.  
Vray Dieu que ce n'est rien de nostre Bulgarie !  
Ce n'est ma foy, ce n'est que pure barbarie.

Now my death will undo this sad contract,  
And there is nothing else which can hurt you.

Leon

I don't want my interests to be the cause of the death  
Of the best knight who is right here.  
For though I love her as much as my own heart,  
I love your courage more.  
Have her as your wife, and from now on may I,  
Who will never have her, not be an obstacle.  
I concede my right to you; take it with pleasure,  
May your love abide with you without any more delay.

Roger

I beg gracious God that such a perfect love  
May not remain for any time without proper consummation.  
And may I have the fortune of sometimes spending  
For you this life for you that you come and give me for  
A second time. I wanted to have two,  
In order to venture into your service  
I live two times through you; but however much one gives  
Good deeds that one receives at a great cost,  
I can nevertheless only return half,  
For it is not permitted for me to render all of them.  
Your love gave me, through two opportune times,  
Two lives, and (what misfortune!) I can only die once.

Leon

Let's leave these words there; greater are the good deeds  
That I received from you than those which I did.  
Let's return to the house so you can collect yourself,  
Then let us go to the castle to finalize your marriage.

SCÈNE II
LES AMBASSADEURS BULGARES,  
CHARLEMAGNE

Les Ambassadeurs

Que cet Empire est grand en biens & en honneurs !  
Que cette Cour est grosse & pleine de seigneurs !  
Que je voy de beautez ! sont-ce des immortelles ?  
J'estime que le ciel n'a point choses si belles,  
Le Soleil ne luist point si agreeable aux yeux,  
Et le Printemps floril n'est point si gracieux  
Que leurs divins regars, que leurs beautez decloses,  
Que leurs visages saints, fait de lis et de roses.  
Durant la bnme nuit les celestes flambeaux.  
Qui brillent escartez, n'éclaireront point si beaux.  
Vray Dieu que ce n'est rien de nostre Bulgarie !  
Ce n'est ma foy, ce n'est que pure barbarie.

The Ambassadors

O, how this Empire is greatly blessed and honored!  
How this Crown is grand and full of lords!  
I see so much splendor! Are these everlasting?  
I think that the sky doesn’t contain anything so beautiful,  
The Sun’s rays aren’t as comely to the eyes,  
And Spring’s flowers are not nearly as graceful  
As their divine expressions, as their beauties disclosed.  
As their holy faces, made with lilies and roses.  
During the dusky night the flaming stars,  
Do not shine nearly as beautifully!  
Truly our Bulgaria is nothing like this!  
It's, I must say, it’s only pure barbarism.

SCÈNE II
THE BULGARIAN AMBASSADORS,  
CHARLEMAGNE
Auprès de ce pays : la douceur et l’amour,  
La richesse et l’honneur font à Paris sejour.  

Sire, nos Palatins ont sur nostre province,  
Depuis le dur trespas de Vatran nostre prince,  
Un Chevalier esleu pour nous commandar Roy,  
Qui n’a par tout le monde homme pareil à soy.  
Il nous est inconnu, lors à son brand qui tranche,  
Et à son Escu peint d’une licorne blanche.  

Naguères Constantin avec Leon, son fils,  
Aux plains de Belgrade eust nos gens deconfis  
Sans ce brave guerrier, qui leur donna courage,  
Et des Grecs ennemis fit un sanglant carnage.  
Sueil il les repoussa, terraifiant par milliers,  
Au creur de leurs scadrons, les soldats plus guerriers ;  
Il en couvrit la terre en leur sang ondoyante,  
Et du Danube fut la claire eau rougissante.

L’effroy, l’horreur, le meurtre it ses costez marchoyent,  
Et, quulle part qu’il fust, ennemis trebuxs.  
 Ils se mirent en route, & la nuit tenebreuse  
Couvrit de son bandeau leur fuitte vergongneuse.

La noblesse, le peuple, et ceux qui à l’autel  
Font devote priere au grand Dieu immortel,  
Prosternez it ses pieds, humbles Ie mercierent,  
Et que Ie sceptre il print d’un accord Ie prierent.

Mais luy, les refeusant, ne daigna sejourner,  
Et personne depuis ne l’a veu retourner.  
Les Estats toutefois l’ont tous eleu pour maistre,  
Ne voulans autre roy que luy sell Ie reconnoistre.

Ores nous Ie cherchons par royaLlmes divers.  
Et pource qu’il n’est Cour en tout cet Univers  
Qui soit en chavaliers tant que la vostre belle,  
Nous y sommes venus pour en ouir nouvelle.

Charlemagne  
De ce preux Chevalier sçavez-vous point Ie nom?  

Les Ambassadeurs  
Nous ne l’eussions points sceu, ne le disant, sinon  
Que par son Escuyer depuis nostre entreprise  
Nous avons entendu que c’est Roger de Rist.

Charlemagne  
Hà puisque c’est Roger, lon ne s’est pas mespris:  
C’est un grand chevalier, d’inestimable prix,  
Il n’est pas maintenant en ceste Cour de France.  
Sa sœur Marphise y est qui a pris sa defense:  
Retirez-vous vers elle, elle pourra sçavoir  
Quand & en quel endroit vous le pourrez revoir.

Compared to this country; a trip to Paris is  
Sweetness and love, riches and honor.  

Sire, since the difficult death of Vatran our prince,  
Our Knights have selected for our province,  
A Knight chosen to command us as King,  
Who has no equal throughout the world.  
He is unknown to us, except for his sharp sword,  
And his shield displaying a white unicorn.  
Not long ago Constantine, with his son, Leon,  
Had routed our men on the plains of Belgrade  
Without this brave warrior, who instilled them with courage,  
And massacred the Greek enemies.  
Alone he repelled them, beating down thousands,  
Into the heart of their battalions, there he covered  
The earth with the flowing blood of their fiercest warriors,  
And turned the clear Danube’s water red.  
Terror, horror, and murder were prevailing on all sides,  
And, everywhere he went, enemies fell.  
They fled in every direction, and the dark night  
Covered their shameful flight blindfolded.

Nobles, commoners, and those at the altar  
Offered devout prayers to the great immortal God,  
Knelt at his feet, humbly they thanked him,  
And prayed together that he would take up the scepter.  
But he, refusing them, did not deign to stay there,  
And no one has seen him return since.  
Nevertheless, the States have elected him as leader,  
Not wanting to recognize any king other than him.  
We are already looking for him across various kingdoms.  
And since there isn’t a Court in all of this Universe  
With knights as magnificent as yours,  
We came there to hear news of him.

Charlemagne  
Do you know the name of this valiant Knight?

The Ambassadors  
We would have had no idea, as he did not say, except  
That through his squire, after our undertaking,  
We have heard that it is Roger de Rist.

Charlemagne  
Ha! Since this is Roger, you are not mistaken:  
This is a great knight, of inestimable worth,  
He is not in this Court of France now.  
His sister Marphise who has taken up his defense is there:  
Go to her; she will know  
When and where you will be able to see him again.
SCENE III  
CHARLES, AYMON, BEATRIX

Charles
Que c'est de la vertu ! Dieu, que sa force est grande !
Elle vainc la fortune, & grave luy commande.
» Les biens & les honneurs prés d'elle ne sont rien
» Quiconque est vertueux n'a point faute de bien;
» Il est connu par tout, tout le monde l'honore ;
» soit qu'il soit en Scythie, ou sur la terre More,
» Aux Bactres, aux Indois, il fait bruire son nom,
» Et tousjours sa vertu luy acquiert du renom.
» Les sceptres luy sont vils, & les richesses blesmes.
» Ne luy chaut de porter au front des diadèmes,
» S'enfermer de soudars, & se voir au milieu
» Des peuples amassez reverer comme un dieu.
» Il fait de tels honneurs moindre cas que de fange.
» Son cœur ne va beant qu'à la seule louange.
Tel est ce preux Roger qui n'ayant rien
Voh des peuples felons s'asservir a sa loy,
Luy offrir leur eouronne, et it grande despense,
L'en faire importuner jusques au creur de France.
Qu'en dites-vous, Aymon ?

Aymon
J'en fay bien plus de cas,
Le voyant recherché, que je ne faisois pas.

Charles
Puisque votre guerriere entre tous le desire,
Il seroit bon qu'il l'eust.

Aymon
Je le voudrois bien, Sire.

Charles
Mesme si vous saviez qu'ils s'entre soient promis.

Aymon
Mais nous aurons Leon & son père ennemis.

Charles
Nous n'aurons pas, peut-estre, ains plus tost est croyable
Que Leon se voyant moins que l'autre agreable,
Luy porte moindre amour, et possible voudroit,
Content de sa victoire, entendre en autre endroit.

Aymon
J'en auroy grand desir.
**Beatrix**

Je n’en serois marrie,
Puis qu’il est maintenant Roy de la Bulgarie.

**Charles**

Voici Leon qui vient en magnifique arroy.
Il meun un chevalier tout armé quant & soy.
Sont ses armes qu’il a : mais quoy ? que veut-il dire,
De faire ainsi porter les armes de l’Empire ?

**SCÈNE IV**
LEON, CHARLEMAGNE, M ARPHISE, AYMON, BEATRIX, LES AMBASSADEURS, ROGER

**Leon**

Voici le Chevalier d’incroyable vertu,
Qui en champ clos naguier a si bien combattu.
Puisqu’il a surmonté la pucelle en bataille,
Sire, c’est la raison qu’espouse on la luy baille.
Vous ne voudriez vous-mesme enfeindre vostre ban,
Le fraudant de sa Dame, honneur de Montauban.
Nul autre tant que luy merite Bradamante,
Soit en digne valeur, soit en amour aradante.
S’il en presente aucun qui Ie vuielle nier,
Le subsequent sur l’e Il de verifier.

**Charlemagne**

Et n’estoit-ce pas vous qui combatiez naguier,
Et qui estes vainqueur sorti de la barriere ?
Nous l’avons ainsi creu. Qui est donc cestuy-ci,
Qui pour vous combattant nous a trompez ainsi ?

**Leon**

C’est un bon Chevalier de qui la
dextre est prest
de defendre en taus lieux l’droit de sa conqueste.

**Aymon**

Qui est cet abuseur? d’où nous est-il venu ?
Je ne veux que ma fille ait un homme inconnu.

**Marphise**

Puisque, mon frère absent, cetuy-ci veut pretendre
Sa femme meriter, je suis pour le defendre : Je mourray sur la place, ou luy feray sentir
Qu’on a de l’offenser un soudain repentir.
Il ne faut différer ; que ce soit à ceste heure,
Que sans bouger d’icy l’un ou l’autre y demeure.

**Leon**

Il n’est point incogneu, voyez-le sur le front:
Pleines de son renom toutes les terres sont.

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**SCÈNE IV**
LEON, CHARLEMAGNE, M ARPHISE, AYMON, BEATRIX, THE AMBASSADORS, ROGER

**Leon**

Here is Leon who comes in magnificent array.
He is a knight well armed and dignified.
The arms that he has: but what? What does he wish to say,
To have us thus bear the arms of the empire?

**Beatrix**

I would not be saddened by it,
Because he is now the king of Bulgaria.

**Charles**

Here is Leon who comes in magnificent array.
He is a knight well armed and dignified.
The arms that he has: but what? What does he wish to say,
To have us thus bear the arms of the empire?

**Leon**

Here is the Knight of incredible virtue,
Who has just fought so well on the field of battle.
Since he has surpassed the maiden in combat,
Sire, this is the reason that we give her to him in marriage.
You would not want to nullify your edict,
Cheating him from his Lady, honor of Montauban.
No one else besides him deserves Bradamante,
Whether by noble valor or ardent love.
If anyone wishing to deny him this comes forward,
He is ready to prove himself on the battlefield.

**Charlemagne**

And wasn’t this you who fought not long ago,
And who left the battleground as victor?
We have thus believed this. Therefore who is this man,
Who, fighting for you, has tricked us so?

**Leon**

It is a good Knight, whose right hand is ready
To defend the rights of his conquest anywhere.

**Aymon**

Who is this imposter? Where did he come from?
I don’t want my daughter to have a man who has not proved himself.

**Marphise**

Since, my brother being absent, this man wants to claim
That he merits his wife, I will defend Roger:
I will die right here, or I will make him
Swiftly repent for offending him.
There’s no need to disagree; whatever the time
May one or the other remain here without budging.
Marphise
Hà mon frère, est-ce vous? est-ce vous, ma lumière?
Je vous pensois enclos en une triste biere.
Pourquoi vous celvez-vous à vostre chere soeur?
Pourquoi vous celvez-vous à vostre tendre cœur,
A vostre Bradamante? hé mon frere, hé mon frere,
Luy vouliez-vous ourdir une mort olontaire?
Que je vous baise encore; je ne me puis lasser
De vous baiser sans cesse & de vous embrasser.
Roger
Ne m'en accusez point, ma soeur, ce n'est ma faute.
Sire, puisse toujours vostre Majeste haute
Prosperer en tout bien, & l'Empire Romain
Paisible reverer vostre indomtable main.
Vous, Princes, Chevaliers, estonnement du monde,
Dont vole dans le ciel la gloire vagabonde,
Soyez toujours prisez, soyez toujours heureux,
Et durent eternels vos faicts chevaleureux.
Charlemagne
Mais dites-moy, mon fils, pourquoi Roger de Rise
De combatre pour vousa-t-il la charge prise,
Contre son propre amour? où l'avez-vous trouvé?
Aviez-vous quelquefois sa valeur esprouvé?
Leon
Magnanime Empereur, & vous asters de France,
Vous connoistrez combien l'amour ha de puissance
Qui sourd de la vertu, par l'estrange accident
De Roger en Bulgare arrivé d'Occident.
Charlemagne
J'entendray volontiers cette estrange avanture,
Si de la nous conter ne vous est chose dure.
Leon
Aux champs Bulgariens mon père guerroyoit,
Et d'hommes & chevaux la campagne effroyoit.
Pour recouvrer Belgrade à l'empire ravie.
Vatran, leur Roy Vatran, se l'estoit asservie
Et la vouloit defendre, ayant de toutes pars
Pour tenir la campagne amassé des soudars.
Ils sortent dessus nous d'une ardeur animee,
Renversant, terrassant la plus part de l'armee.
Jusqu'à tant que Vatran de ma main abatu
Leur fist perdre, mourant, le cœur & la vertu.
Lors nous les repoussons, les hachant mille à mille,
Et fussions pesle-mesle entrez dedans la ville,
Sans Roger, qui survint aux deux parts inconnu.
He is praised everywhere on earth.
Marphise
Ha! Brother, is that you speaking? Is it you, my star? I thought you were enclosed in a melancholy coffin. Why do you hide yourself from your dear sister? Why do you hide yourself from your tender heart, From your Bradamante? Hey brother, brother, Did you want to contrive a swift death for her? May I kiss you again, I never tire of Kissing and embracing you.
Roger
Don't even accuse me of that, my dear sister; it isn't my fault. Sire, may your high Majesty always Prosper in all goodness, and the peaceful Roman empire Revere your indomitable hand. You, Princes, Knights, astonishment of the world, Whose glory extends to every corner of the earth, Be always appreciated, be always happy, And may your chivalrous feats live on forever.
Charlemagne
But tell me, my son, why did Roger de Rise Take the responsibility of fighting for you, Against his own love? Where did you find him? Had you ever tested his valor?
Leon
Great Emperor and your stars of France, You will know the extent of the power of love Which springs from virtue, through the strange accident Of Roger arriving in Bulgaria from the West.
Charlemagne
I will willingly listen to this unusual tale, If it is not too difficult for you to tell.
Leon
My father fought on the Bulgarian battlefields, And terrorized the countryside, with both men and horses. In order to return Belgrade to the shattered empire. Vatran, their King Vatran, had made himself subject to it And wanted to defend it, having amassed Soldiers from every area in order to hold the land. They descended upon us with a frenzied spirit, Overturning and overthrowing most of the army, Until the moment that Vatran, beaten down by my hand, Made them lose courage and strength as he lay dying.
Then, we repelled them, chopping them down by the thousands,
Par qui de nos soudars fut l’effort retenu.
Il fit tant de beaux faicts, de prouesses si grandes,
Qu’il rompit, qu’il chassa nos vainqueurasses bandes.
Je le vey dans les rangs foudroyer tout ainsi
Qu’en un blé prest à tendre un orage obscurci.
Je le prins en amour, bien qu’il nous fist outrage,
Et l’e fousjeours depuis gravé dans mon courage.
Nous retirons nos gens pour nos maisons revoir.
Mais Roger, qui eut lors de m’occire vouloir,
Vint jusqu’en Novengrade, où cogneu d’avanture
Fut prins & devalé dans une fosse obscure.
On le condämne à mort : dont estant adverci
Du chasteau de mon ere en secret je parti.
J’entre dans la prison, les fers je luy arrache ;
Je le meine en ma chambre ou long temps je le cache.
Aussi tost fut le ban de Bradamante ouy,
Dont, pour avoir Roger, je fus fort resjouy,
Esperant que pour moy, comme il me feit promesse,
I il roit au combat & vaincroit ma maistresse.
Nous arrivons icy, sans qu’aucun de nous sceust
Son nom, sa qualité, ny que Roger il fist.
Il entre dans la lice, il combat, il surmonte,
Retourne en mon logis, & sur son cheval monte,
S’en part secrettement, entre en un bois espais,
Voulant s’y confiner & n’en sortir jamais.
Or ayant malgré moy la bataille entreprise,
Pou& maintenir mon droit, contre sa cœur Marphise,
Ne le retrouvant plus, façché, je cours apres,
Et le trouve en ce fort confit en durs regrets,
Résolu de mourir d’une faim languissante,
Pour m’avoir surmonté sa chère Bradamante ;
Me conte son malheur, son estre & son dessein,
Me pry’ de l’e laisser consommer par la faim.
Je demeure épemdu d’entendre telle chose,
Puis a le consoler mon esprit je dispose,
Luy redonne sa Dame,
Sire, elle est toute & jurant, luy promets,
Plustost qu’il en ait mal, n’y pretende jamais.
Sire, elle est toute à luy ; ne tardez d’avantage
De faire consommer un si bon mariage.

Charlemagne
Je le veux, je le veux. Qu’en dites-vous, Aymon ?

Aymon
Je le veux bien aussi, je le trouve tresbon.
Roger mon cher enfant, ça que je vous embrasse !
J’ay grand peur que je sois en vostremale-grace :
Pardonnez-moy, mon fils, si j’ay si longuement
Tenu par ma rigueur vos amours en tourment

And we would have entered the city helter skelter,
Without Roger, who arrived unexpectedly in two places,
Through whom our soldiers found the strength to remain.
He performs so many wonderful feats, such acts of prowess,
That he tore apart and drove away our conquerors.
I see him bear down on the ranks like
A dark storm about to mow down a wheat field.
I accept him in love, even though he has outraged us,
And has etched himself in my heart ever since.

We will withdraw our people in order to see our homes
again.
But Roger, who wanted to kill me then,
Came to Novengrade, where, known by chance,
He was taken and cast down into a dark pit.
He is condemned to death: being told,
About him I left my father’s castle secretly.
I enter the prison, I release him from his chains;
I keep him in my room where I have been hiding him for a
time long.

As soon as Bradamante’s proclamation was made,
Of which, in order to have Roger, I was overjoyed,
Hoping for myself, as he had promised me,
He would go into battle on my behalf and defeat my mistress.
We arrive here, without any one of us knowing
Either his name or his title, nor that he was indeed Roger.
He enters the tournament, fights, triumphs,
Returns to my house, and climbs onto his horse.
He leaves there secretly and enters a thick forest.
Wanting to stay there and never leave.

Now, having fought the battle in spite of myself,
In order to defend my right, against his sister Marphise,
No longer able to find him, angered I run after him,
And find him consumed by harsh regrets,
Determined to die of a languishing hunger,
So that his dear Bradamante would defeat me;
He tells me of his misfortune, his situation, and his plan,
And he entreats me to leave him to be consumed by hunger.
I remain overcome from hearing such a story,
Then, in order to console him, I give up my joy,
Returning his Lady to him, and, taking an oath, I promise,
Rather than ever hurt him, never to claim her.
Sire, she is completely his: don’t delay
Such a good marriage any longer.

Charlemagne
This is indeed what I want. What do you say about it.
Aymon?

Aymon
I would also really like this, I think it is tremendous.
Roger, my dear child, how I embrace you!
Les Ambassadeurs
Nous, premier Paladins de la grand’ Bulgarie,
Venons offrir aux pieds de vostre seigneurie
Nos personnes, nos biens, nos honneurs, nostre foy,
Vous ayant d’un accord eleu pour nostre Roy.

Roger
J’accepte Ie present qui me fait la province:
Soyez-moy bons sujets, je vous seray bon prince.
Je maintiendray Ie peuple en une heureuse paix,
Faisant justice droicte à bons & à mauvais.
Je me consacre it vous, et promets vous defendre
Contre tous ennemis qui voudront vous offendre.

Les Ambassadeurs
Constantin l’empereur leve de to utes parts
Pour domter Ie Royaume un monde de soudars.
Le peuple est en effroy, la frontiere s’estonne.
Nous n’avons plus voisin qui ne nous abandonne.
Mais vous nous conduisant hardis nous passerons,
Jusqu’au sein de la Grece, & l’en dechasserons.

Roger
S’il plait à nostre Dieu, qui toute chose ordonne,
J’iray dans peu de mois recevoir la couronne,
Pour avec le conseil & l’appuy de vous tous
Empescher l’ennemy d’entreprendre sur vous.

Leon
Il n’en sera besoin, que cela ne vous presse:
Car puis qu’ils sont à vous, je leur feray promesse,
Et sous loy d’Empereur, qu’ils seront demors
De la part de mon père assurez à jamais.
Vivez en doux repos, & que dans vostre teste
Ne reste aucun souci qui trouble vostre feste.

Beatrix
Puisque Roger est roy, j’ay mon esprit contant.
Qu’on mande tost ma fille : et qu’est-ce qu’on attend ?
Dites-luy qu’elle est royne, et qu’on la marie
A son amy Roger, le Roy de Bulgarie ;
Qu’elle se face belle, et reprenne son teint,
Qui par ses longues pleurs estoit si fort desteint.

I am greatly afraid that I am out of your good graces:
Forgive me, my son, if I have hindered
Your love for so long through my narrow-mindedness.

The Ambassadors
We, preeminent Paladins of great Bulgaria,
Come to offer at the feet of your great lordship,
Ourselves, our wealth, our men, our loyalty,
Having unanimously elected you as our King.
Please do not refuse our humble servitude:
We have sought you in earnest pursuit
Through many regions, to have a lord
Who can bring to our people both wealth and honor.

Roger
I accept this present which in essence gives me the kingdom:
Be my good subjects; I will be your good prince.
I will uphold a happy peace for the people,
Dealing exact justice to the good and the wicked.
I devote myself to you and promise to defend you
From all enemies who would attack you.

The Ambassadors
Constantine the Emperor recruits from every region
Legions of soldiers to overcome the Kingdom.
The people are frightened, the border is astonished.
We no longer have any neighbors who will not abandon us,
But with you bravely leading us, we will invade
The heart of Greece, and drive his army from there.

Roger
If it pleases our God, who ordains all things,
I will go in a few months to be crowned
In order to receive counsel and the support of all of you,
In order to prevent the enemy from attacking you.

Leon
There will be no need for this, for that doesn’t affect you:
For since they are yours, I will promise them,
In accordance with the Emperor’s word, that they will be from now on
Secure forever thanks to my father.
Live in quiet peace, and may in your mind
There remain no worry which disturbs your celebration.

Beatrix
Since Roger is king, my mind is at rest.
Now send someone to call for my daughter: what are you waiting for?
Tell her that she is queen, and that she is to marry
Her friend Roger, King of Bulgaria;
SCÈNE V
HIPPALQUE, BRADAMANTE

Hippalque
Vray Dieu, qu’ j’ay de joie! ô l’heureuse journee! Heureuse Bradamante! ô moy bien fortunee! Jesus, que je suis aise! & qu’ aise je me voy! Je ne scay que je fais, tant je suis hors de moy! Qui eust jamais pensé d’une amère tristesse Voir sourdre tout soudain une telle liesse? Tout estoit desastreux, chetif, infortunée. Mon âme n’eust deux jours en mon corps sejoumee Si le mal eust eu cours, car avec ma maistresse J’eussie triste rompu le fil de ma jeunesse. Heavens, how much evil has she been through! Love burns her heart. Driving her to despair, anger, malice, It torments her without ceasing, and the miserable lady Continually cries out for death. From her beautiful complexion, where the weathered alabaster has yellowed, From her rosy lips, where the color has faded, Grace is worn away; a deathly pallor, Eating away at her, extinguishes all her beauty. Yet now, thanks to our God, our good God, the weariness Which stirred up this affliction in her is destroyed today. I go to her with news powerful enough To reclaim her lifeless body from its musty tomb. What joy she’ll have! He, on the grim scaffold about to lose his life, Who, condemned, receives the grace of his King I believe is not as relieved as she will be! But I see her come! Alas! What pity! She is so afflicted! O cruel love! She crosses her arms, and looks up at the sky. She sighs “alas!” I’m completely beside myself. I go to be with her, for I truly cannot bear it, I cannot see her any longer in such a sad state. Why do you make yourself the prey of sadness, Even now when everyone is overtaken with joy. Though everyone is laughing, though everyone is dancing? You must leave behind these tears, And these heavy sighs that are companions of sorrows.

BRADAMANTE
Las qui vous meut Hippalque? estes-vous en vous-meme ?

May she be beautiful, and regain her radiance, Which her tears have faded for so long.

SCÈNE V
HIPPALQUE, BRADAMANTE

Hippalque
True God, I am so joyful! O happy day! Happy Bradamante! I am so fortunate! Jesus, how satisfied am I! And what satisfaction I see! I do not know what I am doing, I’m so beside myself! Who would have ever expected to see such gladness Suddenly spring forth from bitter sadness? All was disastrous, miserable, unfortunate. My soul wouldn’t have remained two days in my wandering body If evil had run its course; with my mistress I would have sadly unraveled the thread of my youth.

Yet now, thanks to our God, our good God, the weariness Which stirred up this affliction in her is destroyed today. I go to her with news powerful enough To reclaim her lifeless body from its musty tomb. What joy she’ll have! He, on the grim scaffold about to lose his life, Who, condemned, receives the grace of his King I believe is not as relieved as she will be! But I see her come! Alas! What pity! She is so afflicted! O cruel love! She crosses her arms, and looks up at the sky. She sighs “alas!” I’m completely beside myself. I go to be with her, for I truly cannot bear it, I cannot see her any longer in such a sad state. Why do you make yourself the prey of sadness, Even now when everyone is overtaken with joy. Though everyone is laughing, though everyone is dancing? You must leave behind these tears, And these heavy sighs that are companions of sorrows.

BRADAMANTE
Alas, Hippalque, what moves you? Are you yourself?

15
Hippalque
Je ne veux plus vous voir le visage ainsi blesme.
Reprenez votre teint de rose et de lis.
Ne vous torturez plus : vos malheurs sont faillis.
Il nous faut nous ébatre.

Bradamante
Et qu’est-ce que vous dites?

Hippalque
Qu’il nous faut despouiller ces tristesses maudites.

Bradamante
Hà Dieu!

Hippalque
Ne plorez plus, tout est hors de danger.

Bradamante
Voire, rien n’est à craindre.

Hippalque
On vous donne Roger.

Bradamante
Me venez-vous moquer en destresse si grande?

Hippalque
Je ne vous moque point, allons, on vous demande;
L’Empereur vous attend & vostre père aussi
Avec votre Roger.

Bradamante
Roger?

Hippalque
Il est ainsi.

Bradamante
Dites-moy seurement, sans de mon mal vous rire.

Hippalque
Je ne puis mar ma foy plus au vray vous le dire.

Bradamante
Que Roger est ici?

Hippalque
Voire.
Vous m’abusez.
Il est avec Aymon qui veut que l’espousez

Mon Dieu! le sens me trouble! Est-ce point quelque [songe ?

Non, ce que je vous dy n’est songe ne mensonge.

Mais dy-moy, ma soeurte, est mon Roger venu?

Il est dans le chasteau.

Mais l’as-tu bien connu?

Si j’ay connu Roger? Vous le pouvez bien croire.

Que dit-il de Leon, d’avoir eu la victoire?

C’est Leon qui le guide & qui parle pour luy.

Quoy? Leon auroit-il combat? Pour autruy?

Non, aïnçois c’est Roger qui vous a combatue.

C’est Roger, c’est Roger qui m’a tantost vaincue?

C’est Roger voirement.

J’ay le Coeur tout transi.

Mais comment le sçait-on ?

Leon le conte ainsi.
Bradamante
O chose merveilleuse!

Hippalque
Ell’ l’est bien plus encore.
Que vous ne pensez pas: Royne vous estes ores.

Bradamante
Voire de mille ennuis.

Hippalque
Non, d’un people estranger
Qui a naguere eleu pour son prince, Roger.
Encor les Palatins en ceste cour sejoument ;
Vous les pourrez-bien voir devant qu’ils s’en retournent.

Bradamante
Hé Dieu que dit mon pere?

Hippalque
Il saute de plaisir.

Bradamante
Et ma mere si dure?

Hippalque
Elle a tout son desir.
Ils brûlent devous voir : allons je vous supplie.

Bradamante
Hà ma soeur que tu m’as de liesse remplie!
Que j’ay d’aise en mon cœur ! Je ne le puis porter ;
Je me sens, je me sens hors de moy transporter.
Tout ce que j’eus jamais en amour de malaise
Ne sçauroit egaler le moindre de mon aise.
Onques je n’eusse osé seulement concevoir
Tant de biens qu’en un coup Dieu m’en fait recevoir.
Son nom en soit benist, et me donne la grace
De ne le mescognoistre en chose que je face.

SCÈNE VI

Melisse
Du grand moteur du ciel merveilleux sont les faits,
Que ne comprennent point nos discours imparfaits :
» Lors qu’on n’y pense point, son pouvoir il découvre :
» En faits desesperez miraculeux il ouvre.
» C’est pourquoi nous faillons, quand par faute de foy
» Nous ne l’invoquions point en un trop grand esmoy
» Nous pensons nostre mal estre irremediable,
» Comme s’il n’estoit pas en ses faits merveilleux,

Hippalque
It is still better than you realize:
You are a queen now.

Bradamante
Why must you still deceive me?

Hippalque
No, not long ago a foreign nation
Elected Roger its prince.
The Paladins are still residing in the court;
You will indeed see them before they leave.

Bradamante
O Lord, what does my father say?

Hippalque
He’s leaping for joy.

Bradamante
And my ever-difficult mother?

Hippalque
She has everything she desires.
They are dying to see you: please let’s go.

Bradamante
Oh, my sister how you’ve filled me with glee!
How my heart is at peace! I can’t bear it;
I feel, oh how I feel so ecstatic.
All the pain I’ve ever had in love
Would not equal the smallest fraction of my contentment.
Never would I have dared to even conceive
That God would give me so many blessings at once.
May his name be praised for this, and may He give me the grace
Not to forget Him in all that I do.

SCENE VI

Melisse
Marvelous are the feats of the great designer in the sky,
Which our imperfect ponderings do not comprehend at all:
» When we expect it least, he reveals his power:
» In hopeless circumstances he creates miracles.
» This is why we fail when, through lack of faith.
» We do not call upon him with enough zeal.
» We think our problems are unable to be solved.
» That he could not do all things, and that his hands
» Would hurt one more than the other, just like us humans.
No one ever expected to see, without miracles,
» Qu’il ne peust toute chose, & peinassent ses mains
» À l’une plus qu’à l’autre, ainsi que nous humains.

On n’eust jamais pensé voir sans quelques miracles
Ce mariage faict, tant y avoit d’obstacles :
Toutefois tout soudain, lors qu’on l’espoirt moins,
Ils sont prests, grace à Dieu, d’ estre ensemble conjoins.
Qu’il en viendra de bien à nostre foy Chrestienne !
Que de mal au contraire en aura la Payenne !
Que de sang coulera du gosier Sarasin
Au rivage d’Afrique & au bord Palestìn !
La France en est heureuse avec la Bulgarie,
Et heureuse en sera l’une & l’autre Hesperie.
Tout chacun en est aise,
& je croy fermement
Que l’air, l’onde & la terre en ont contentement.

SCÈNE VII
CHARLEMAGNE, AYMON, BEATRIX LEON, ROGER, BRADAMANTE

Charlemagne
Grace à Dieu qui le ciel et la terre tempere,
Je voy qu’en ceste Cour toute chose prospere.
Bradamante & Roger sont conjoints à la fin,
Après avoir dompté les rigueurs du destin.
Je suis aussi contant d’une telle alliance
Que de bienfaict de Dieu qu’ait receu nostre France.
Mon cœur en nage d’aise ; en verité
Que les peres n’en sont plus resjouis que moy.

Aymon
Sire, vostre bonlc s’est toujours fait cognoistre
A vouloir en hOil11eurs & en biens nous acroistre.

Charlemagne
Les merites sont grands des vostres & de vous.
La France sans leurs mains se verroit à tous coups
De Sarasins couverte : elle n’a guere adresse
Après l’aide du ciel qu’à leur grande prouesse,
Et outre je prevoix qu’à l’empire Chrestien
De ce nuptage icy n’adviendra que du bien.
Escoutez mes Enfans : vos nocces ordonnees
De tout temps ont esté dans le ciel destinees.
Merlin, ce grand prophete à qui Dieu n’a celé
 Ses conseils plus secrets, m’a jadis revelé
Que de vostre lignee, en Demidieux feconde,
Il naistoit des enfans qui regiroient le monde.
 Ils seront de mon sang comme du vostre issus ;
 Ils luiront eletans d’héroïques vertus ;
Les monstres ils vaincrot, indomtables Alcides,
Et seront le support des vierges Pierides.
Or vivez bien-heureux, & vostre sainte amour

This marriage happen, since there were so many obstacles:
However, suddenly, when it was least expected,
They are about to be joined together, thanks to God.
May we be blessed in our Christian faith!
May (by contrast) the Pagans be cursed!
May blood flow from the Sarasin’ throats
To the African shore and the Palestine border!
France and Bulgaria are happy together,
And happy will be one and the other Hesperia. 5
Everyone is at peace, and I truly believe
That the sky, sea, and earth are at rest.

SCENE VII
CHARLEMAGNE, AYMON, BEATRIX LEON, ROGER, BRADAMANTE

Charlemagne
Thanks be to God who pacifies heaven and earth,
I see that everything prospers in this Court.
Bradamante and Roger are united in the end,
After having overcome the challenges of destiny.
I also say such an alliance
Is God’s blessing which France receives.
My heart is filled with calm; I truly believe
That our fathers are not any more joyful than me.

Aymon
Sire, your goodness will always be known,
Your desire to multiply honors and blessings for us.

Charlemagne
You and your followers merit much commendation.
France without their hands would find itself
Overrun by Sarasins; it scarcely has any resource
Other than heaven’s help, besides their great prowess in battle,
And furthermore I predict that thanks to this marriage.
Only good will come to pass in our Christian Empire.
Listen, my children: your marriage has been ordained
In heaven since the beginning of all time.
Merlin, that great prophet from whom God did not hide
His most secret counsel, revealed to me in times past.
That from your lineage, rich with Demigods,
Children would be born who would rule the world.
They will be of my blood as they are bred of yours:
They will shine, bursting forth with heroic virtues;
They will defeat monsters, indomitable Alcides. 6
And will be the support of the Pieride virgins. 7

Now live happily, and may your holy love
Increase day to day without regret or disagreement.
Sans chagrin ne debat croisse de jour en jour.

Roger
Dieu face prosperer à jamais vostre Empire,
Et qu’onque ennemy n’ait pouvoir de vous nuire.

Aymon
Sire, vous plais-il pas pour la feste combler,
Léonor, vostre fille, à Leon assembler
Sous les loix d’Hymence ? à cela son merite
Et l’auguste grandeur de sa race m’incite.

Roger
Je vous en suppli, Sire.

Bradamante
Et moy, tres humblement.

Beatrix
On ne la peut placer plus honorablement.

Charlemagne
Vraiment je le veux bien: que ma fille on appelle.

Leon
Sire, vous m’honorez & obligez plus qu’elle.

Charlemagne
Il faut d’un fort lien nos empires unir,
Pour contre les Payens nous entremaintenir.

Leon
Quel heur le Dieu du cil insperém ent me donne !
Oncq, je croy, sa bonté n’en feit tant à personne.
O que je suis heureux ! Je vaincrey désormais
L’heur des mieux fortunez qui vesquirent jamais.

FIN

Roger
May God prosper your Empire forever,
And may no enemy ever have power to hurt you.

Aymon
Sire, does it not please you to fulfill this celebration,
By bringing together Léonor, your daughter, with Leon
Under the laws of Hymen⁸? His merit
And the noble grandeur of his lineage compel me to say this.

Roger
I beg you, Sire.

Bradamante
And me, with all humility.

Beatrix
We cannot put her in a more honorable place.

Charlemagne
Truly, I indeed want it: that she will be called my daughter.

Leon
Sire, you honor me and I am indebted more than she.

Charlemagne
We must unite our empires with a strong link,
In order for us to stand against the Pagans.

Leon
What happiness God in heaven gives me unexpectedly!
Never, I believe, has he blessed anyone so much.
O how happy I am! From now on I will know a greater
happiness than the most fortunate who have ever lived.

THE END

¹ Scythia was a vast expanse of land inhabited by the nomadic Scythians, found in southeastern Europe.
² Bactria, or Bactriana in Greek, was a province in the Persian empire.
³ Montauban is an ancient town, capital of the Tarn-et-Garonne department in southwestern France.
⁴ Sarassins were inhabitants of Castel-Sarassin, a major Jewish town in Tarn-et-Garonne.
⁵ Hespera lit. means “the western land” in Greek. Originally referred to Italy, but Roman poets later used it to refer to Spain.
⁶ Alcides is an alternate Greek name for Heracles, or more popularly, Hercules. Note the name is used as a plural here.
⁷ The Pierides, who were named after the nine Muses, were the nine daughters of Pieride.
⁸ Hymen, or Hymenaeus, is the Greek god of marriage.