

Jones, G. F., The Ethos of the Song of Roland (Johns Hopkins Press: Balt.) 1963

p. 164 (cont'd) or, after his death, present in memory"; and Paul Aebischer seconds him in this view.¹¹ Using the same reasoning, we could say that the Lay of the Nibelungs should be called the Lay of Siegfried, since Siegfried dominates the first half and the vengeance of his murder dominates the second half. Thomas Greene (p. 200) maintains that "it might be said that the whole poem belongs essentially to Roland, even though a considerable part of the action occurs after his death; Charlemagne's victory would thus be read as a response to Roland's defeat. This is a defensible reading but so is the contrary - that the poem belongs essentially to Charlemagne, with whom it begins and ends, and that Roland's defeat should be seen as a peripety in his liege's larger, circumscribing career. Both readings are legitimate; to the degree that they conflict, the poem could be called complex."

p. 165 It has been stated that the "religious theme" is more prominent in the Baligant episode than elsewhere in the SR, but it might be argued that the religious element in the Baligant episode sometimes seems extraneous and not entirely assimilated into the literary style of the rest of the song. The various classical and / biblical reminiscences in the earlier portions of the song are so well-digested and blended into the poet's idiom that scholars have been unable to prove a single literary borrowing.¹⁴ In general Turolde seems to have expressed his ideas and sentiments spontaneously, unaware that he has found some of his thoughts, or at least his means of expressing them, already formulated in Latin literature and oral tradition.

Turolde adapted most of his literary sources so thoroughly that they reappeared as completely original creations when transformed by his genius . . .

Nevertheless, this rule does not hold for some of the prayers in, and just before, the Baligant episode. . . .^{p. 167} If Turolde or some other continuator added the Baligant episode subsequently, he could also have interpolated Roland's prayer and various other religious passages into the Roncevaux episode, which had until then been predominately secular in tone . . .