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Compounds in Romance

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NEW COMPOUNDS FROM THE OLD:
AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE OF VERB + NOUN COMPOUNDS IN ROMANCE

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This paper argues for a direct link between several Romance Verb + Noun compounds and their verb-final counterparts, e.g., Sp. (15th c.) cantamisanu 'priest', Occitan-Catalan (16th c.) lligacama 'garter', as against earlier and synonymous Sp. (11th c.) misacantano ['Mass' + 'sing'], Occ.-Cat. (14th c.) camalliga ['leg' + 'bind'], respectively. (*) Such pairs highlight the importance of the paradigmatic aspect of word formation processes, inviting close attention to pressures exerted on derivational patterns by other patterns. The following corpus results from more than five years of research into Romance compounding, during which there have come to my attention pairs of compounds whose members share oppositely ordered lexical elements: e.g., in addition to camalliga/lligacama, Raeto-Rom. (Valais) mē[n]pa 'sustenance for Alpen shepherds' (from Med.L. manūpāstus ['hand' + 'fed'] '[member of one's] household; servant')/Raeto-Rom. (Engad.) paschamaint 'head cowman's third helper'; Occ. peltirar ['hair' + 'pull'] 'to pull by the hair or clothes'/fa à tiro-piaus idem; Gasc. arre-bau ['nothing' + 'is worth']/bau-arré 'good for nothing, lazy'; and Cat. feina-fuig ['flee' + 'work'] 'lazy'/Occ. fuglòbra idem. These pairs, each with a V + N member, differ widely in their relative morphological comparability and semantic identity. Among the vast numbers of Romance V + N compounds, it is true, few appear to result from reversal, such that version X, with pattern X, undergoes restructuring or remodeling (perhaps "renovation") into version Y. Yet evidence of deliberate one-way inversion is available in the corpus below; I identify, as the source of that reversal, pressure from the higher frequency of Romance pattern Y, Verb + Noun, which has yielded an unexpected corpus of novel nominal, adjectival, and adverbial compounds derived from existing verb-final formations.

An early parallel for camalliga/lligacama 'garter' occurs in Greek personal names: nike-phóros ['victory' + 'bear']/phéré-nikos lit. "victory-bearing". (1) The use of actual verb stems as first constituents was traced by Brugmann to reinterpretation of originally nominal stems, e.g., Gk. philo(s) 'dear' --> 'loving', in philó-xenos 'to whom a stranger is dear, loving a stranger, hospitable' (1891:\$29). In his study of Greek word formation, Albert Debrunner (1917:80, §160) mentions in passing, only to ultimately reject, the possibility of direct reversal of elements, e.g., Gk. borboro-táraxis 'mud-stirrer', against which is cited not a exact converse, but Aristophanes' taraxi-kárdios 'heart-troubling' ['disturb' + 'heart'], with V + N structure. Debrunner's conclusion: the syntactic relationship between constituents must ultimately be considered unclear.

Mirror-image pairs occur in Latin as well, e.g., aequanimus 'mentally calm, composed', as against animaequus. According to Françoise Bader (1962:398-99), it is Greek which provides the most likely source of Latin VO-type compounds whose first element governs the second; beyond animaequus, other rare examples include Plautus' Conterebromius 'where Bromius (= 'god of the grape') is crushed', flexanimus 'persuasive; distracted', verticordia 'the changer of hearts' (= Venus), and other forebears of the compound pattern today most typical of Romance.

Central to my discussion of mirror-image lexical items must be the factor of relative chronology, which furnishes cogent support for a claim of deliberate reversal in compounds. Oppositely-ordered patterns correspond to earlier vs. later states of a given language or members of a language family. Compound patterns depend at an elementary level upon syntax, hence can represent syntactic patterns otherwise fallen into disuse in the wake of language change (Kurylowicz 1976). New compounds, nonetheless, can be formed from older models, just as older syntactic structures may long survive in evolving languages. Patterns corresponding to older states of syntax may retain, or regain, stylistic prestige, or alternatively may find themselves reinforced by adstratum influence: the apparent preference for Adj + N ordering in Northern, as against Southern, Gallo-Romance, is as likely to hinge on adstratal pressure from Germanic as on the greater archaicity of prenominal adjective placement (Fernández González 1981).

In the search to document chronological progression in compositional patterns, studies of Romance are privileged to draw upon the copious evidence of ancestral Latin. Within a typological perspective, Romance N + V compounds represent the verb-final OV structure typical of Indo-European and Classical Latin, whereas V + N coincides with VO structure in modern Romance. Misacantano and camalliga represent a type of compositional activity not predictable for languages with unmarked (S)VO order, although their pattern is still unexpectedly well-represented in Western Romance (Klingebiel 1985, forthcoming). Compounds of the V + N type have functioned as naming devices since their earliest attestations in Romance. They continue to arise in response to on-going social and technological developments: Fr. (12th c.) couvre-chef ['cover' + 'head'] 'kerchief', gratte-ciel ['scrape' + 'sky'] 'skyscraper', lave-vaisselle ['wash' + 'dishes'] 'dishwasher', It. lavapiatti idem, Sp. limpiabotas ['clean' + 'boots'] 'bootblack, shoeshine boy'.

The Romance V + N pattern, traceable back to 9th-c. Tenegaudia, a toponym in Latin guise (Le Testament d'Abbon, A.D. 805), has received extensive attention. The plethora of studies of V + N compounding, whether comparative or devoted to individual Romance languages, fails to ask whether V + N compounds ever result from the restructuring of older compounds. Arsène Darmesteter, in his definitive study of French compounding, never explicitly links V + N with N + V. Nor does the historical Catalan grammar of Antoni

Badia i Margarit (1962:§352), with its concurrent handling of the two patterns.

In my survey of the literature devoted to French, Occitan, Catalan, and Spanish compounding, I found a sole attempt to account for the parallel existence of mirror-image compounds through an appeal to reversal. With specific reference to the Occitan dialects, as well as appropriate cross-references to Greek and Latin, Jules Ronjat (1980:473, §734 delta) discusses Gasc. bau-arré/arré-bau 'good-for-nothing, lazy' in this light, although he does not seek to motivate the actual inversion. Ronjat emphasizes the eventual loss of imperative flavor in the verb, such that third-person singular forms of verbs in which the imperative is lacking (Occ. valer, Gasc. bale 'to be worth', verbal constituent of bau-arré/arré-bau) could eventually find their way into V + N compounds. (2) It is important to specify, with Ronjat, that in this pair the logical relation between verbal bau '[X] is worth' and nominal arré 'nothing' (cf. Fr. vaurien idem) remains unchanged despite the reversal of surface ordering; there is clear contrast with logically dissimilar compounds of the type sled dog/dog sled), which play no part in the present corpus.

Given the great regularity with which a certain number of verbs appear in V + N compounds (lever, lier, porter, tenir, tourner, virer 'to raise, bind, carry, hold, turn' respectively; see Bierbach 1982:165-405), cases of purely coincidental resemblance are inevitable. A number of compounds having identical nominal and verbal elements lack formal or semantic comparability to such a degree as to warrant their exclusion from consideration. No direct relationship appears to link Béar. nas-tapà ['nose' + 'seize'] 'to catch cold' with tape-nas 'muffler; part of a bridle'. Only the long arm of coincidence seems responsible for any resemblance between Gasc. nas-lhebà ['nose' + 'raise'] 'to be proud' and 16th-c. Fr. lève-nez 'movement of raising the head', (3) although structurally parallel Haut Lim. levona 'insolent, impudent' appears to correspond semantically to the compound verb. With their less-than-fully comparable elements, these few examples, which cross both chronological and political/cultural lines, stand against the following corpus in which a concatenation of internal and external factors points to a more than casual relationship between members.

Mirror-image formations occur in a number of compositional patterns, extending to onomatopoeic pairs such as Gasc. bire-bare, bare-bire ("ha toustems bire-bare, bare-bire" 'he's always changing his mind') 'fickle, changing' (Lespy), in which logical relations are barely discernible. (4) Fr. grand-mère/mère-grand 'grandmother' (Harris) document a highly visible instance of deliberate inversion, these variants remaining in competition into the 17th century, when the Adj 'grand' + N 'mother' version prevailed. In southern Gallo-Romance, this formal ambivalence is still apparent in Gasc. grand-mai/Niçois mai-grand 'grandmother' (Mistral), as well as Gasc. grand-paire, grand-pai, Niçois gran père (Mistral) vs. Niçois, Gasc. paigran, peregran 'grandfather'

(Pellegrini). While the Adj + N variants echo French, and are influenced by it, in either case the N + Adj pattern predominates across the modern Occitan dialects. Additional nominal + adjectival examples: Belg. pî-stant/stant-pî ['standing' + 'foot'] 'standing, on foot' (FEW, s.v. "stare"), and Fr. vif-argent ['quick' + 'silver']/OPr. argen viéu (Mistral), Gasc. (from 14th c.) argent-biu 'mercury' (Lespy). (5) This introductory slice of material concludes with a lone N + N pair in which inversion functions to distinguish two varieties of fig: Gasc. higue-esloù ['fig' + 'flower'] 'July fig'/esloù-higue ['flower' + 'fig'] 'figue avortée' (d'Estalenx). These phytonyms stand against the remainder of the corpus, in which no semantic distinctions are achieved through reversal; to borrow a phrase, "c'est bonnet blanc, blanc bonnet"--it's one and the same.

Among compounds with a verbal constituent, I first recall Gasc. arré-bau/bau-arré 'good-for-nothing, lazy'. The members of this Adv + V/V + Adv pair are semantically equivalent; moreover, they are morphologically comparable, in respect of both constituents and also resultant part of speech. Similar formal alternation within a chronological progression occurs in OPr. porregitar ['far' + 'throw'], synonymous with gietar porre 'to project forward, neglect, waste' (similarly OFr., MFr. jeter puer 'to throw far away'), continued by Mod. Occ. pourre-jita/jita-pourre, jita à pourre idem (FEW, s.v. "porro"). (6)

Among pairs contrasting an N + V past participle structure with a demonstrably more recent V + N compound, consider a pair of items which have survived in the pastoral terminology of outlying Gallo-Romance: through Lat. manūpāstus, OFr. (13th c.) mainpast 'member of one's household, servant' (REW §5338 *manūpāstus, §6263 pāscēre), Raeto-Rom. (Valais) mē[n]pa 'sustenance for Alpen shepherds' contrasts with (Engad.) paschamaint 'head cowman's third helper'. (7) Here, as in a small number of additional compounds, e.g., pî-stant 'standing, on foot', palavira 'to (turn over with a) shovel', the nominal element functions as an adverbial complement to the verb; in the majority of cases, however, the relationship is one of patient, or more rarely, agent to verb.

Contrastive structures with nominal + verbal elements furnish the most cohesive body of compounds on which to base a hypothesis of direct reversal. Verb-final Occ. peltirar ['hair' + 'pull'], Béar. peutira, has spawned mirror-image periphrases: jouga à la péu-tiro 'to pull s.o.'s hair or clothing', against synonymous fâ à tiro-piaus, Béar. ha a tire-peu (Mistral [péu-tiro, tiro-péu 'hair-pulling']; FEW, s.v. "martyrium"). Occ. coullèvo ['butt' + 'raise'] 'seesaw', one of a number of N + V-structured variants occurring across the Occitan domain, contrasts with Prov. lèvo-quioul idem (Azais), the pair distinguished by semantic identity, if not strict formal parallelism. V + N structures fall into two primary types, the first of which pairs an N + V compound verb with an inverted nominal formation:

- Lim. chaplavar ['head' + 'wash'] 'to scold'/Béar. labe-cap 'reprimand' (FEW, s.v. "lavare");
- Aude gorjo-badà ['throat' + 'open'] 'to open wide one's mouth'/Loire bada-gorgi 'gawker, on-looker', Auv. bado-gorjo 'fool, silly, inane; nitwit, simpleton' (Becquevort);
- Béar. came-poudà-s ['leg' + 'break'] 'to break one's leg'/poude-comes 'fatiguing task';
- Gasc. sang-birar ['blood' + 'turn'] 'to upset (morally), be troubled'/Gasc. bire-sang 'violent emotion' (d'Estalenx);
- Béar. pè-pic ['foot' + 'strike'] 'club-foot' (FEW, s.v. "pikkare"; cf. Béar. pè-picà 'to walk, striking one's heel')/picapè 'club-foot';
- Gasc. cot-birà ['neck' + 'turn'] 'to twist one's neck'/Lang. viro-col 'stiff neck', Gasc. bire-còt 'movement of turning the neck; dangerous passage' (d'Estalenx);
- Occ. talh-virar ['cutting edge' + 'turn'] 'to blunt the cutting edge (of a knifeblade)'/Gasc. bire-talh 'whetstone for the woodsman's cutting tool' (Arnaudin). (8)

A facetious flavor, discernible in, e.g., bada-gorgi, bado-gorjo 'gawker, on-looker, fool, nitwit, simpleton', is frequently identifiable with the naming function of V + N-structured nominals. For the most part, verb-final compounds in the corpus above function as verbs, noun-final as nouns, adjectives, and occasionally adverbs. The following verb-final compounds stand against V + N adverbs:

- Gasc. bie-passà ['way' + 'pass'] 'to go one's way; go too far, exceed', as against a passe-bie 'on the way' (Palay);
- Occ. cambo-tirar ['leg' + 'pull'] 'to trip someone'/a tire-comes 'as fast as one's legs will go' (FEW, s.v. "camba");
- Fr. (17th-18th c.) à main-tourner ['hand' + 'turn']/Fr. (16th c.) en moins d'un tourne-main, (mod.) en un tourne-main 'immediately' (FEW, s.v. "tornare") (for corroboration of the first member of this set, cf. Fr. sans coup férir, sans bourse délier, and other frozen syntagmata);
- Occ. palavirar ['shovel' + 'turn'] 'to (turn over with a) shovel' is flanked by contrasting derivations: a palavira/a viro-palados 'by the shovelful, in profusion' (note the characteristic plural noun of Occitan V + N) (Mistral, Alibert).

If a process of reversal or inversion can be shown to obtain, it must be no mirage imposable upon the records of disparate speech communities by a willing disregard for spatial and chronological realities. Among the small number of compounds set forth in the beginning section of this paper, dates of attestation once again enhance formal, logical, and semantic continuity to support a claim for direct and deliberate reversal. OCat. (13th c.) lloctinent ['place' + 'holding'] precedes (14th c.) tinentlloc 'lieutenant', as do Cat. camalliga, -lrigues 'garter' vis-à-vis lligacama, -comes (echoed in borrowed 16th-c. Sp. liga-gamba).

Within the series of 'garter' compounds, an additional type of relationship becomes visible in novel compounds with one divergent element. These are independent creations with close ties to back formation: e.g., babysit, with subsequent babytend, babysquat (Pennanen 1966). Against Lang. cambalié, Fr-Pr. chambaille stand both V + N-structured lie-chambo ['bind' + 'leg'] 'garter', dating back to OPr. liecamba, and also novel lie-causso ['bind' + 'stocking'], with post-nominal liocaussar, Lim. liétssaussà 'to don garters'; I note that no 'leg' + 'bind' compounds occur through chaining. (9) Last, and perhaps most interestingly, Sp. (11th c.) misacantano ['Mass' + 'sing'] and Andal., Mex. (post-15th-c.) cantamisano 'priest' document chronological stratification, semantic identity, and reversal of nominal and verbal elements in the actual presence of a suffix. It is clear that interchanging of constituent elements necessarily involves a high degree of morphological transparency, implicitly present in any instance of replacement or reversal. (10)

This study cannot fail to highlight the paradigmatic dimension of the compositional process. Van Marle's 1985 work on Dutch word formation, an attempt to integrate European structuralism with a rule-based approach to word formation, intersects neatly with on-going discussion of morpheme- vs. word-based studies in the literature. Halle, Aronoff, and others have defended an approach through word formation rules, although an alternate trend, toward a model in which morphemes are concatenated in accordance with subcategorization frames, is now recognizable (Scalise 1984, Jensen 1987). Van Marle argues against any mono-relational approach, which would exclude other systematic inter-word relationships, particularly the paradigmatic.

Linguists working within the framework of Gallo-Romance have presented independent evidence of paradigmatic support for the creation of novel compounds. In his 1953 monograph on plant names in the Central Pyrenees, Jean Séguy coined the term "enchaînement associatif", or associative chaining, for the process which allows replacement of either element of a compound by other elements within a given semantic series, e.g., Occ. canta-loubo, canta-merle, etc. Pierre Guiraud's (1967) set of 'turn, spin around' compounds with tautological V + V structure, e.g., Fr. tournevirer, exemplifies a Northern Gallo-Romance environment conducive to chaining. In the realm of N + V, Medieval Latin and Romance compounds representing 'Lent' straddle learned and vernacular vocabularies; in this series, seven verbs (laxāre 'to release', levāre 'to raise', ligāre 'to bind', privāre 'to deprive', siccāre 'to dry', tollere 'to remove', vetāre 'to forbid') are compounded with unchanging carnem 'meat' (Klingebiel 1985, forthcoming: Chapter 3). (11) In each case, semantic content comes to be identified with a given two-part structure, providing a pattern for creation of new compounds.

Associative chaining is easily documented in the various types of compounds discussed above. (12) Against Gasc. arré-bau 'ne'er-do-well' (13) there occur synonymous bau-arré, Gasc. bau-

poc, bau-chic. OPr. liecamba 'garter', mod. lie-chambo is paralleled by lie-causso idem. Cat. feina-fuig ['work' + 'flee'], apparently a modern creation despite its N + V structure, stands opposite Occ. fuglòbra ['flee' + 'work'] 'lazy' (Alibert), flanked in turn by Occ. deilobra ['leave' + 'work'] and Niçois fugefatica ['flee' + 'work'].

The inter-word relationship argued in this paper takes a different form, constituents being inverted rather than individually replaced as they are through associative chaining. Constituents remain transparent, often identical; semantic shifts, if any, remain minimal; pattern pressure is of paramount importance. A select number of N + V-ordered compounds provide clear parallels--formal, logical, semantic--with novel V + N formations. Reversal in such cases involves not merely restructuring, but actual renovation, judging from available dates of attestation. While N + V compounds themselves derive from a variety of formative processes equally identifiable in V + N--calquing, back-formation, analogical remodeling, associative chaining--reversals to V + N result from paradigmatic pressure exerted by the widespread, highly productive verb-initial pattern of Romance, in the presence of concomitant (S)VO ordering.

Notes

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(1) Also pheré-karpis 'yielding fruit' / karpo-phóros 'fruit-bearing'; arké-polis/poliarkos 'ruler of a city, prince'.

(2) The exact nature of the verbal element in V + N compounds continues to excite discussion; the question remains vexed.

(3) Equally coincidental are: Occ. (12th c.) manlevar 'to borrow, bail out, swear on raised hand' as against Fr. (16th c.) lève-main ("...[un] serment lève-main...", Bierbach); Béar. pe-lhèbe 'lever' (pè-levà 'to raise the foot, raise with a lever'/Fr. (19th c.) lève-pieds 'stairs, ladder'; Béar. pan-minjant 'day laborer' (who breaks bread at another's table, rather than eating only bread)/OBéar. estadge deu minye-paa '[upper] storey where humans eat' (also bearing a chance resemblance to 14th-c. MFr. mange-pain 'one who eats only bread') (FEW, s.v. "manducare"); Fr. à chiffe-tirer 'in disagreement' (FEW, s.v., "martyrium")/(20th-c.) tire-chiffons 'hunting accessory' (Bierbach); Occ. peltirar 'to pull someone's hair or clothing' (FEW, s.v. "martyrium")/Fr. (16th c.) tire-poil 'tweezers' (Bierbach).

(4) Clearly onomatopoeic motivation is shared by Mod.Fr. chantepleure 'funnel (with a long tube)', Occ. cantaplorà 'siphon' (used in olive oil-making process), Cat./Sp. cantimplora 'siphon'. There may be no direct derivational link with older OFr. plorechante 'who cries in this world, sings in the next'/OFr. chantepleure 'singer at plays' (lit. '(s)he cries and sings'), 'complaint', OPr. can-plor 'type of poetry' (Levy).

(5) Additional examples of Adjective (including past participle) + Noun:

Prov. bouan rubi/rubi-bouan 'marube blanc ou noir' (plant of the labiate genus) (Garcin);
 Occ. (Périgord) chaitord/tord-chai 'stiff neck', 'torticolis';
 Fr. (14th c.) à coeur jeun/dial. Fr. (15th c.) à jeun-coeur 'on an empty stomach';
 Fr. col tors person with a twisted or stiff neck'/MFr. tort col idem (cf. also It. coditremola/tremacoa [ornith.] 'wryneck');
 Occ. Diéu-Dounat, Dounadiéu, family names (Mistral);
 Fr. a droit fil/Gasc. a fil droit 'with the grain (of a material)' (J.B.L.);
 MFr. (16th c.) failli coeur 'lacking courage'/Pic., northern dial. Fr. coeur failli 'lazy, soft' (cf. Occ. cor-fali[t] 'fainted; impressed') (FEW, s.v. "fallere");
 Béar. pè-tort 'club-foot, one who limps'/(hap.) Fr. (15th c.) tortpiéd (nom.) 'stumble', 'croque-en-jambe';
 Prov. pisso-caudo (cf. Fr. chaude-pisse)/caudo-pisso 'gonorrhea';
 Drôme roussé-pon, pon-roussé 'brown bread' (Boissier);
 Occ. sajo-femo (cf. OPr. sabia femna, Fr. sage-femme)/Gasc. (Bazas) fama-saja 'midwife' (Mistral).

(6) The placement of short, common adverbs (mal, bien) remains relatively free: Prov. (en) mauprenent 'getting hurt', 'en prenent mau [sic]' (Achard) is inconclusive as regards reversal.

(7) OPr. (14th-15th c.) salpres 'salt pork', also with N + V past participle structure, is linked by a common signifier with MFr. (16th c.) prinsel 'salt beef, jerky' (FEW s.v., "prehendere").

(8) A significant degree of semantic divergence led Wartburg to warn against linking the following oppositely-structured nominal elements: OPr. mantenen 'balustrade', Béar. maa-tien 'handle', with MFr. (15th-17th c.) tienmain 'banister, hand-rail', (mod.) dial. Fr. tient-main 'hand-hold' (FEW, s.v. "manu tenere"). The pair is otherwise less than fully satisfying, given the variety of chronological and spatial distribution. Other N + verbal N compounds include Fr. mainmise/OFr. misemain (legal) 'seizure, confiscation' and Occ. (14th c.) manobra 'manual labor, worker'/OPr. obre-mâ 'worker'.

(9) Occasionally a derived verb with V + N + -ar structure appears by back-formation from the noun-final nominal form; e.g., Gasc. lengua-birà-s/virolengà 'to become tongue-tied, trip over one's tongue' (Lespy); Occ. pato-virà/viropatà 'to trip'.

(10) Two sets of adjectival 16th-c. French-language calques, coined in the experimental heyday of the Pléiade, give evidence of deliberate reversal of elements in artistic compounds: Fr. (16th c.) loin-tirant, tire-loin lit. "far-throwing"; and lierre-porte, porte-lierre 'ivy-bearing' (Marty-Laveaux).

(11) 'Lent':

- a. (+ laxāre 'to release') Med.L. carnemlaxare, OIt. carlasciare;
- b. (+ levāre 'to remove') Med.L. carnelevamine; It. carnelevale, carnavale (borrowed into Fr., Occ., Cat., and Sp. in the 16th century; cf. also OFr. [13th c.] quarnivalle);
- c. (+ liga, ligāre 'to bind') Rum. cîrnele(a)gă (REW §1706 "carō");
- d. (+ prīvārī 'to deprive') Med.L. carniprivium, carnisprivium;
- e. (+ siccāre 'to dry') Sard. carrasecare;
- f. (+ tollēre 'to remove') Med.L. carneſtoltas 'abstinence from meat'; OCat. fer carneſtoltas 'to abstain from meat'; OCat. carneſtoltes 'Lent', OSp. carneſtolendas;
- g. (+ vetāre 'to forbid') OBéar. carn-bedar.

(12) One additional source can be found in the shady area of overlap between verb and verbal noun. During the Middle Ages, OV-ordered L. terrae motus 'earthquake' found itself reinterpreted or calqued, with no change of meaning, both as OV and as VO compounds: vernacular OFr. (11th c.) terremote, OPr. (13th c.) terramovemen, (14th c.) terra tremol, Gasc. (16th c.) terrotrem, MFr. (17th c.) terre-tremble, as against MFr. (16th c.) tremble-terre. The latter compound corresponds structurally to std. Fr. tremblement de terre, with N + N structure attested as early as OFr. [hap.] tremble de terre (FEW, s.v."terra").

(13) Cf. also Gasc. (Béar.) poc balé 'to be worth little', with identical verb.

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