



Jherusalem, grant damage me fais

(RS 191)

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Anonymous (Jehan de Nuevile ?)

I

Jherusalem, grant damage me fais
qui m'as tolu ce que je pluz amoie!
Sachiez de voir: ne vos amerai maiz
4 quar c'est la rienz dont j'ai pluz male joie!
Et bien sovent en souspir et pantais,
si qu'a bien pou que vers Deu ne m'irais,
qui m'a osté de grant joie ou j'estoie.

II

8 Biauz dous amis, com porroiz endurer
la grant painne por moi en mer salee,
quant rienz qui soit ne porroit deviser
la grant dolor qui m'est el cuer entree?
12 Quant me remembre del douz viaire cler
que je soloie baisier et acoler,
granz merveille est que je ne sui dervee.

III

Si m'aït Dex, ne puis pas eschaper:
16 morir m'estuet! Teus est ma destinee.
Si sai de voir que qui muert por amer
trusques a Deu n'a pas c'une jornee,
lasse! mieuz vueil en tel jornee entrer!
20 Que je puisse mon douz ami trover,
que je ne vueill ci remaindre esguaree.

I

Jerusalem, you do me great harm in robbing me of
the one I loved most in the world! Be assured I
shall nevermore love you, for he is the creature
who brings me the saddest joy. And time and time
again I sigh in anguish so that I am on the point of
railing at God, who has withdrawn me from the
great joy in which I used to live.

II

Fair sweet love, how can you endure the great pain
you feel for love of me on the salt sea, when
nothing in the world could describe the great grief
that has entered my heart? When I remember the
sweet bright face I used to kiss and caress, it is a
miracle I have not gone mad.

III

God help me, I cannot escape: I shall die, it is my
destiny. But I know well that anyone who dies for
love is a long way off reaching God, and I, alas!
would rather start on the journey towards my sweet
love than remain here alone and abandoned.

Notes

According to Bédier 1909, 277, the song should contain six *coblas doblas*; among the three missing would be the first stanza: 'Les strophes que nous avons sont les strophes II, III, IV'. His text therefore begins with stanza II. In contrast Dronke, p. 106, n. 1, declares: 'intuitively, I feel it is perfect as it stands, and would only be spoilt by the addition of further stanzas (...). Or is this a purely subjective and anachronistic judgement?'

- 1 *Jherusalem, grant damage me fais*. The (opening?) address to Jerusalem is a *unicum* in the corpus of Old French crusade songs, where the personified holy city recurs three times more: in the refrain of the song *Pour lou pueple resconforteir* (RS 886) of Maître Renaut at the time of the 1189 crusade: 'Jerusalem plaint et ploure / lou secors, ke trop demoure', in the song *Jerusalem se plaint et li pais* of Huon de Saint-Quentin (RS 1576), after the failure of the fifth crusade, and the anonymous *sirventes* composed after Saint Louis' *votum crucis*, *Un serventois, plaît de déduit, de joie* (RS 1729), vv. 19-20: 'Jérusalem, tant es desconfortee / sur toi en est li damages venuz'. In a Castilian setting it can be placed alongside the anonymous lament *Ay, Iherusalem!* or *Planto por la caída de Jerusalén* of the mid-XIIIth c., on which see Asensio 1960 (who dates it between 1272 and 1276) and Franceschini 2005 (who dates it between 1245 and 1252). The specific motif from *chansons d'ami* and *de départie* of the imprecation against the one who has caused the distancing of the lover slides in this stanza from the lament directed at Jerusalem to anger against God, in v. 6: 'si qu'a bien pou que vers Deu ne m'irais', which is also found in the probably contemporaneous *chanson de femme* of Guiot de Dijon, *Chanterai por mon corage* (RS 21), where the girl turns to God with the same complaining lines: 'Sire Deus, por que-l feïs? / Quant l'une a l'autre atalente, / por coi nos as departis?' (vv. 30-32). Rinaldo d'Aquino in his lament for crusaders' departure *Giamäi non mi conforto* (7.6, Comes 2008) employs the same motif, but here the girl's complaint is addressed to Frederick II who is taking the lover away: 'Lo 'mperadore con pace / tuto lo mondo mantene / ed a meve guerra face, / che m'à tolta la mia speme' (v. 33-36). In this case the reference to Frederick's crusade allows us to date the text to 1228 (cfr. Antonelli 2008, XXXVIII). But the motif is above all present in *A la fontana del vergier* of Marcabru (BdT 293.1), in lines 17-21: "'Jhesus", dis elha, "reys del mon, / per vos mi creys ma gran dolors, / quar vostra anta mi cofon, / quar li mellor de tot est mon / vos van servir, mas a vos platz". In the following stanza the imprecation against Louis VII in v. 26 ("Ay! mala fos reys Lozoïcx") is evidently the ultimate source. The presence of the stanza with melody of Maroie de Dregnau de Lille in the same section of M, although not contiguous with RS 191, probably encouraged Dronke 19963, 106, n. 1, to think of assigning the composition of this lament for the departure on crusade to a woman: 'I think it quite possible that the author was a woman'.
- 3 *sachiez, vos*. The passage from the 2nd p. singular to 2nd p. plural may seem incongruous; the reason is perhaps to be found in the song's declamatory character, as if it were an extemporary address to the public.
- 8 *porroiz*: Lindelöff-Wallensköld, p. 98 print *porrez*.
- 12-13 Bédier, following Lindelöf and Wallensköld, shortens the two lines 'pour en écartier la "césure épique"', printing: 'Quant me membre del douz viaire cler / que soloie baisier et acoler'. Rosenberg 1981, 108, restores the ms. reading limiting himself to signalling the choices of previous editors. Mölk 1989, 217, considers syllabic normalisation unnecessary.
- 14 *dervee*: the motif of the madness of the crusading lover is also found in Guiot de Dijon (RS 21), vv. 3-4: 'car avec mon grant damage / ne vueill morir n'afoler'; and in Rinaldo d'Aquino, *Giamäi non mi conforto* (7.6), vv. 25-26: 'La croce salva la gente / e me face disviäre'.

17-18 *Si sai de voir que qui muert por amer / trusques a Deu n'a pas c'une jornee*. The girl places love for her beloved above love of God and is aware this will cost her direct access to Paradise. Bédier translates: 'a plus d'une étape à fournir pour aller jusqu'à Dieu'. On the construction's ambiguity, see Rosenberg 1981, p. 108: 'it is not clear whether *n'a pas c'une* is to be understood, as in Bédier-Aubry, in its modern sense, "does not have only one", or in the earlier sense, "has only one"'. In his re-edition of 1998, 215, Rosenberg translates 'Has more than one day's journey to God', followed by Doss-Quinby et al. 2001, p. 146. For Dijkstra 1995, 160 vv. 17-18 'suggèrent que celui qui meurt par amour doit s'attendre à un long séjour au purgatoire avant d'être admis au paradis'.

19 'lasse! mieuz vueil en tel jornee entrer!' is another echo of Marcabru's *A la fontana dal vergier* (BdT 293.1): "'Senher", dis elha, "ben o crey / que Dieus aya de mi mercey / en l'autre segle per jassey, / quon assatz d'autres peccadors; / mas say mi tolh aquela rey / don joy mi crec; mas pauc mi tey, / que trop s'es de mi alonhatz"' (vv. 36-42).

Text

Anna Radaelli, 2014.

Mss.

(1). M 180bc (*Gautiers despinau*). The Table attributes the song to *Jehans de nueuile* .

Versification and music

10ab'ab'aab' (MW 626,3 = Frank 215:1); the possible models are to be found in *Plaindre m'estuet de la bele en chantant* (RS 319) of Robert de Reins, who probably belonged to the first generation of Old French trouvères composing between the end of the XIIth and the early years of the XIIIth centuries (see Roncaglia 1991, 396-97), or in *En chantant veul ma dolor descobrir* (RS 1397) of Thibaut de Champagne. The troubadour model is the song *Be m'an perdut lai enves Ventadorn* of BnVent (BdT 70.12) also structured in *coblas doblas* ; 3 *coblas doblas* (1+2); rhyme a: - *ais* , - *er* ; rhyme b: - *oie* , - *ee* ; lyric caesura: vv. 9, 14, 20; epic caesura: vv. 12, 13; elision: vv. 7, 19, 21; blank staves above stanza I. The song appears incomplete, to judge by the blank space left at the end of the column allowing room for at least two further stanzas, and by the succession of stanzas II and III whose identical rhymes suggest a missing stanza in a structure of *coblas doblas* (Bédier 1909, 277, see the Notes below). The way in which the text is set out with blank spaces and the exact estimation of the necessary number of lines for the transcription of possible missing stanzas is found in the manuscript as a whole.

Previous editions

Du Ménil 1850, 334; Schultz 1891, 237; Lindelöf-Wallensköld 1901, 98; Bédier-Aubry 1909, 277-79; Rosenberg-Tischler 1981, 107-108; Mölk 1989, 92 e 216; Kasten 1990, 190; Rosenberg, Tischler, Grossel 1995, 250; Rosenberg, Switten, Le Vot 1998, 214; Doss-Quinby et al. 2001, 146-47.

Analysis of the manuscript tradition

The song is ascribed to Gautier d'Espinal by Du Ménil 1850 («une de ses plus jolies chansons») and Schultz 1891 («das hübsche Lied»). Lindelöf and Wallensköld 1901, 60, place it in an appendix among the *chansons incertaines* , considering this attribution as «plus que douteuse» and also basing their rejection of this attribution on the presence of the two epic caesuras in vv. 12 and 13, these being the only examples in the Lorraine trouvère's corpus which they regularise into lyric caesuras, and are

followed in this by Bédier 1909. Lindelöf and Wallensköld 1901 attribute the text to Jehan de Nuevile, to whom the song is assigned in the Table at the beginning of the songbook. However, this attribution was in turn rejected by Richter 1904, 15-16. The song is now generally regarded as anonymous, with recent editors taking this view. The Table records 18 songs under *Jehans de Nuevile* but the ms. redistributes these songs between the two trouvères who are contiguous with Jehan de Nuevile in the sequence of authors: Gujot de Dijon (for the two songs RS 1885 and RS 771) and Gautier d'Espinal (for the group of five songs RS 501, 104, 191, 1988, 1816, all unica in M bar the last one which is also found, classed as anonymous, in ms. C). The song *Jherusalem, grant damage me fais* is transcribed in the last part (fasc. XXV, ff. 178-85) of the section where ms. M orders songs by author, in a sub-section comprising composers of Old French lyrics of the Picard-Artois tradition, datable to the second half of the XIIIth c. The sequence presents the corpus of the nine songs attributed to Gautier d'Espinal (ff. 178v-181r) immediately after the last section devoted to *Guios de Digon* (ff. 176r-178r); after the insertion into f. 181r of the stanza with musical notation *Mout m'abelist quant ie voi revenir* (RS 1451), attributed to the *trouveresse* Maroie de Dregnau de Lille and not recorded in the Table, the sequence continues with the transcription of the corpus of the eight songs attributed to Jehan de Nuevile (ff. 181v-183v). If the Table is to be believed, the five texts which conclude Gautier's corpus (including RS 191) should be ascribed to Jehan de Nuevile, adding to the substantial group of eight texts belonging to this trouvère. Since the ordering of the texts may have been influenced by material factors such as a change of source, their displacement with respect to the order in the Table would have occurred at the time of compilation, giving rise to the divergence of attributions (cfr. Battelli 1993, 287, n. 17). I am therefore inclined to rescue from anonymity this woman's lament for her departed lover (a « *planh* d'une femme» for Bédier 1909) and to legitimise its assignment in the Table to the repertory of Jehan de Nuevile, an exponent of the municipal poetic school of Arras of the second half of the XIIIth c., whose collection of songs contains numerous unica preserved by M from an individual source (see also Lindelöf and Wallensköld, p. 26).

Historical context and dating

It is not possible to identify the crusade referred to in this text, but it is likely to date from the time between the expedition of Frederick II (1228) and that of Thibaut de Champagne (1239-1240), and hence from the second quarter of the XIIIth c.