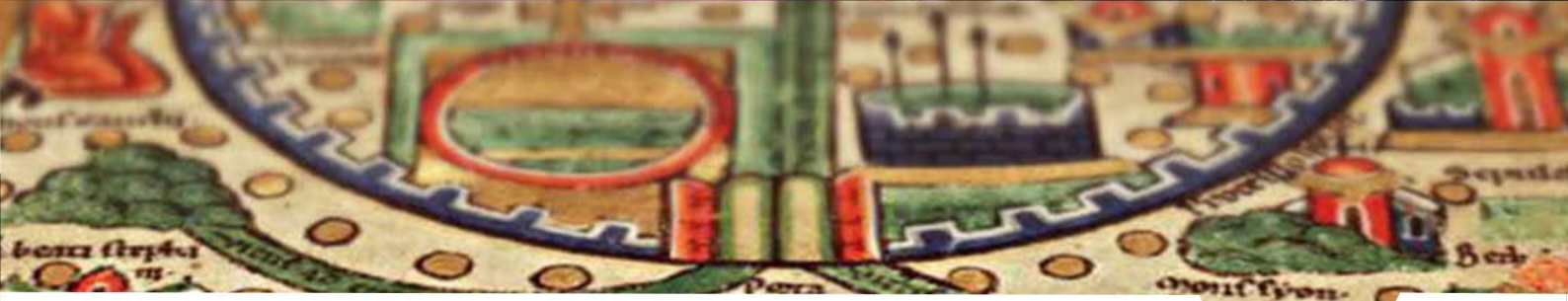

Ja nus homs pris ne dira sa raison

(RS 1891)

Author:	**Roi Richart**
Version:	**English**
Principal Investigator:	**Linda Paterson**
Text Editor:	**Linda Paterson**
English Translation:	**Linda Paterson**
Reviewer:	**Charmaine Lee**
Text Encoding:	**Steve Ranford/Mike Paterson**

Published by: French Department, University of Warwick, 2015

Digital Edition:
https://warwick.ac.uk/crusadelyrics/texts/of/1891

Roi Richart

I

Ja nus homs pris ne dira sa raison
Adroitement si con hon dolanz non;
Mes par confort puet il fere chanzon.
Pro ai d'amis mes povre sont li don;
Honte i auront se por ma raençon
Sui ça deus ivers pris.

II

Ce sevent bien mi home e mi baron,
Englais, Normant, Poitevin et Gascon,
Qe je n'avoie si povre conpaignon
Qe je laissasse por avoir en prison.
Je nel di pas por nulle retraçon,
Mes encor sui je pris.

III

Or sai je bien de voir certainement
Qe morz ne pris n'a ami ne parent,
Qant hom me lait por or ne por argent.
Molt m'est de moi, mes plus m'est de ma gent,
Q'apres ma mort auront reprocement,
Se longement sui pris.

IV

N'est pas merveille se j'ai le cor dolent
Qant mi sires met ma terre en torment.
Se li menbrast de nostre serement
Qe nos feïmes amdui comunaument,
Bien sai de voir qe ja plus longement
Ne seroie ça pris.

I

No prisoner will speak his mind fittingly unless he does so as a man in sorrow; but he can, for consolation, make a song. I have friends enough but the gifts are few; they will be shamed if for want of my ransom I am here for two winters a prisoner.

II

This my men and my barons – English, Norman, Poitevin and Gascon – know full well: I never had a companion so poor I would leave him in prison for the sake of wealth. I do not say this as a reproach, but I am still a prisoner.

III

Now I well and truly know for certain that a dead man or a prisoner has no friend or family, since I am left here for the sake of gold or silver. I fear for myself, but even more so for my people, for after my death they will be dishonoured, if I am held prisoner for a long time.

IV

It is no wonder I have a grieving heart when my lord causes havoc in my land. If he were to remember our oath which we both made together, I know for sure that I would no longer be a prisoner here.

V

Ce sevent bien Angevin et Torain,
Cil bachaler qi sont delivre e sain,
Q'engonbrez sui loing d'eus en autrui main;
Forment m'aidassent mes il ne voient grain.
De belles armes sont ore vuit li plain
Por ce qe je sui pris.

VI

Mi conpagnon qe je amoie e qe j'ain,
Cil de Chaieu e cil de Percerain,
Chanzon, di lor q'il ne sont pas certain:
Q'onques vers els ne oi faus cuer ne vain.
S'or me gerroient trop feront qe vilain
Tant con je soie pris.

VII

Contesse soer, vostre pris soverain
Vos saut et gart cil a cui je me claim
E por cui je sui pris.

VIII

Je nel di pas por celle de Chartrain,
La mere Loeÿs.

V

The men of Anjou and Touraine, those youths who are free and healthy, know full well that I am held far from them in another's hands; they would help me greatly but see no money coming. The plains are now empty of fine arms because I am a prisoner.

VI

My companions whom I loved and love still – the lords of Cayeux and of Perche – tell them, Song, that they are not men to rely on: the heart I had for them was never false nor faltering. If they now wage war on me, they will act most basely, as long as I were to remain a prisoner.

VII

Countess sister, may the one to whom I appeal and on whose account I am a prisoner save and guard your sovereign worth for you.

VIII

I do not say this about the one in Chartres, The mother of Louis.

Notes

Though a plea for payment of Richard's ransom, the poem has recourse to the motifs of the love song, more specifically to those of the "prisoner of love" motif, as later exemplified by Froissart's *Prison d'amour*, for instance, but already employed by a troubadour such as Bernart de Ventadorn, *Non es meravelha s'eu chan* (BdT 70.31), 21-23: *Eu que·n posc mais, s'Amors me pren / e las charcers en que m'a mes, / no pot claus obrir mas merces* [what can I do if love has captured me and the prison in which he has put me can be opened by no other key but mercy]. Richard uses the language of the love song throughout the poem: he may find comfort in composing a song (l. 3); his heart is grieving: *N'est pas merveille se j'ai le cuer dolent* (l. 19); he remembers a past agreement: *Si li menbrast de nostre serement* (l. 21), reminiscent of the truce between lovers evoked by William IX, *Ab la dolchor del temps novel* (BdT 183.1), 19-20: *Enquer me menbra d'un mati / que nos fezem de guerra fi* [I can still remember the morning in which we put an end to our dispute]. Some of the errors present in the different manuscripts, most notably in the first *tornada* in Pza and especially f, are probably due to the scribes or their models rewriting the text as a love song, being unaware of its political implications: za = *Contese soer vestre pris soverain / Vos saut et gart celle por cui mi claim / E por cui je sui pris* [Countess sister, may she to whom I appeal and on whose account I am a prisoner save and guard your sovereign worth]; f = *Suer comtesa vostre pres sobeiran / sal Dieus e guart la bella qu'ieu iam tant ni per cui soy gi pris* [Countess sister, may God save your sovereign worth and guard the beauty whom I love so much, and on whose account I am a prisoner].

1-6 With the opening lines of the poem exploiting the motifs and lexicon of the love song, l. 3 *confort* is preferable to *effort* in KNOX: the lover may seek comfort in composing a song, since, as the troubadours believed, poetry springs from the heart. After lamenting his condition as a prisoner, in terms of a love song, Richard moves on to the real reasons he is being kept in prison and the political background to this. This becomes clear at the end of the first stanza which mentions the ransom. The term also belongs to the prisoner of love motif, but here acts as a hinge on which the matter of the song turns since, as we know, Richard is talking about the huge ransom for his release which took some time to be collected and paid. From here onwards the song is an appeal to his subjects and his friends to collect the amount requested.

1-7 Stanzas II and III develop the theme of the ransom and are addressed to the whole of the Angevin Empire, much of which had rebelled in Richard's absence: the English, the Normans, the Poitevins, and the Gascons; they are reminded of the consequences were the ransom not to be paid. The manuscripts offer deviant readings in ll. 14-16: l. 14 = confusion between *pris* 'prisoner' and *prisier* 'to value': KNOX read *que je ne pris ne ami ne parent* (I value neither friend nor relative) when Richard is making a general comment, essentially equating death and imprisonment. A partial move toward this deviant reading is in U *que mors ne priset ne amin ne parant* (a dead man values neither friend nor relative); l. 15 = CU *lait* 'leave, abandon', KNOXza *faut* 'fail'. I would agree with Spetia (1996, p. 113) here that *faut* may be a misreading for *lait*, with the latter reflected in the Occitan manuscripts: f *laisson*, P *laissent*; l. 16 = CUPza *ma mort*, KNO *lor (leur) mort*, fX *la mort*. Richard's vassals will be blamed if he were to die, thus 'after my death' and not after theirs.

19-24 As said before stanza IV opens with a line reminiscent of the love song, but soon reveals the real reason for Richard's broken heart which is not a lover's inner turmoil, but the turmoil brought to his lands by those who should have protected them while he was away serving God; *misires* refers to Philip Augustus, who was Richard's lord for his French lands, and the *serement* to the pact of non aggression made by the two kings before and during the Crusade. za shows signs of Italian influence in this stanza: l. 19 *s'eo hai* for *se j'ai*, l. 20 *terra* for *terre*. This could also include *cor* and *mi* in *misires*, but both are possible in French. Fragment S begins at l. 20.

21 KNOXza *menbrast* 'if he were to remember' with the imperfect subjunctive rather than indicative as CU *menbroit* (*manbroit*), or present in the Occitan manuscripts: f *membre*, P *menbra*, S *remenbra*.

22 *amdui* 'both' with *cas sujet* as in CKNOUX rather than za *amdeus*; *comunaument* 'together' as in fKP, rather than *comunement* CNOX(S?), which is probably *facilior*; the term is most likely also reflected in U *comunament*.

25-36 Stanzas V and VI are the most problematic. To begin with their order changes; the order followed here is that of CO rather than PSUza. It might also have been the order of the model for KNX, but stanza 6 is missing in these manuscripts. Both stanzas are missing in f, perhaps (see 'Historical context and dating') because the rhymes in *-ain* were difficult to turn into Occitan. The order given in this edition would seem to be the most satisfactory because stanza VI basically functions as an *envoi*: the song must as act as messenger to the lords of Cayeux and Perche, thus it makes more sense to place it in final position. Moreover, since the general movement of the poem is for it to move from larger entities (England, Normandy, Poitou, Gascony) to smaller areas, in stanza V Richard turns to the heart of the Angevin Empire: Anjou and Touraine and then appeals to the companions who have abandoned him, the lords of Cayeux and Perche (stanza VI). Once this has been established, stanza V offers fewer difficulties.

26 This line has a constellation of variants: CKNOX *riche*, PS *legier*, U *fort*; za *delivre* 'free' makes more sense since it opposes the state of *cil bachaler* to Richard who is not free. Fragment S ends at l. 26, but includes the whole of stanza VI since it has the inverse order for these stanzas.

27 PCUza *autrui* 'another's' rather than KNOX *autre* 'other'.

28 za *bien* for CKNOUX *forment* (P *il*) which eliminates the epic caesura, a common feature of the text; KNUX *ne voient*, C *ne m'ainme*, O *nen oient*, P *no ve un*, za *n'avoient*: the passage is problematic and the reading proposed here is based on the closeness of za and the fact that the verb *veoir* 'to see' is also present in P. However Spetia (1996, p. 128) suggests this may be a case of diffraction *in absentia* and the line should read *n'envoient* 'they do not send' with further reference to the ransom that is not being paid. Though possible, the question remains as to the sense of the line, if 'they would help me greatly' surely they would send something, but the impression here is that they cannot see anything, that is they can see no money arriving and therefore are unable to help Richard.

29 Spetia (1990, p. 129), who has examined za closely, describes the rather complex correction in the second half of this line: *sont ore vuit] or, r* written over *i*, *en* added in the right-hand margin, *s* written over a sign that has been erased, the first *u* in *uuit* has become part of the verb *sun* with a titulus to mark the presence of *n: "o[>r] \\en// [-/s]u(n)uit"*, thus*: de belles armes or en sun uit li plain.* The addition of *en* restores the epic caesura, which the scribe does not always seem to understand, as occurred in l. 28.

31-36 The fact that stanza VI is missing in several manuscripts could be due to the presence of the two *tornadas* which may have made the stanza seem superfluous, to which may be added the rather complex morphology and syntax which has not always been understood by the scribes. A first difficulty involves the case used to refer to the lords of Cayeux and Perche: *cas sujet* in PSza *mi compagnon* against the *cas régime*, that is object, in OCU *mes compaignons*. From a strictly grammatical point of view, OCU would seem correct, with ll. 31-32 anticipating *lor* in l. 33. Nevertheless the implied subject of the stanza, its topic, are the companions who are abandoning Richard, the subject of *il ne sont pas certain* (l. 33). Thus ll. 31 and 32 are a *cas sujet* for the verb in l. 33, as well as acting as a vocative case, which also justifies the use of the nominative, which stands as a *lectio difficilior* with respect to the *facilior cas régime*. This fits the style of the poem which proceeds syntactically with left dislocation at the beginning of each stanza: *Ja nus hons* (rather than *Nus hons pris ne dira ja sa raison*); *Ce sevent bien*, l. 7 which anticipates l. 9; *Or sai-je bien*, l. 13; *Ce sevent bien*, l. 25. This stylistic feature reaches its peak in stanza VI, which presents an anacoluthon beginning with the appeal to the men of Cayeux and Perche, using the *cas sujet* as the vocative, then continuing with a further subject, the song, to which the poet appeals to act as messenger. Who exactly are the men to whom the poet is appealing here? As often happens for place-names, the scribes have produced different versions. Despite the variants: C *percheraim*, O *percherain*, P *persarain*, S *perseran* U *porcherain*, za *p[er]cerain*, the text clearly implies *percherain*, 'from Perche', one of the strategic border areas in the struggle between Richard and Philip Augustus, south west of Paris between French and Angevin territory. The other place-name is more uncertain and has led to different interpretations, many of which based on C *caheu* and O *chaeu*, understood as 'Caen', taking *u* as a misreading of *n*; this is the interpretation given for example by Bartsch 1920, Mary 1967, Goldin 1973, Lepage 1993, Rosenberg-Tischler 1995, Spetia 1996. Yet Spetia studied za which reads *chaieu*, translated by Archibald, 1974 as 'Cayeux' in his glossary for that manuscript. This latter interpretation is that of previous editors such as Paris-Langlois 1897, as well as Gillingham 1999 in his biography of Richard. A further suggestion, offered by Leroux de Lincy 1841 is 'Cahors'. The correct interpretation must be 'Cayeux' and the passage makes a precise reference to the political situation here. While Richard was away John and Philip Augustus had been busy trying to erode support for him: there was trouble in Normandy, Toulouse and Angoulême had rebelled. Concerned about his kingdom, Richard appeals to the centre of the Angevin Empire: l. 25 *Angevin et Tourain*, which he hoped would support him, but it was also essential that the marcher lords remain loyal to him, since the rumour spread by John that he would never return had led some to change sides, like the strategic castle of Gisors. Two other important marcher lords whose allegiance was wavering were Geoffrey of Perche and William of Cayeux, who had been Richard's companions during the Crusade. Moreover, Geoffrey of Perche was married to Richard's niece Matilda of Saxony, so Richard would have been particularly affected by a change of side. It is on the basis of these fairly precise references that Gillingham (1999, pp. 239-243) dates the poem to the spring of 1193. Thus Cayeux seems the obvious choice as reflected in za *chaieu*, to which may be likened PS *chaill,* where *ll* could be a misreading of *u*, and U *cahuil*. A similar scribal error is also to be found in the manuscript tradition of Henri de Valenciennes' *Histoire de l'Empereur Henri de Constantinople*, where *chaeu* 'Cayeux' is replaced by *kaen* in one manuscript but there is no doubt that the place-name in question is Cayeux (Schirato 2012, p. 188). Finally, it is likely that here Richard is not generically calling upon the men of Cayeux and Perche in the plural, but specifically to William of Cayeux and Geoffrey of Perche, who answer precisely to the description of the faithful companions whose loyalty is no longer guaranteed. Thus, *cil* in PSza should be taken as a nominative singular, as it is in French though not in Occitan, rather than the *facilior* OU *ces* or C *ceaulx*, plural *cas régime*.

37-41 The two *tornadas* are addressed to Richard's two half-sisters, daughters of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Louis VII of France. The first is addressed to Marie de Champagne, with whom he had a close relationship, and whose son Henry II of Champagne he had sponsored as King of Jerusalem after the death of Conrad of Monferrat in April 1192. The second is addressed to Alix of Blois, with whom he did not have a good relationship. Alix's son Louis I of Blois, count since 1191, was an enemy of Richard's and had accepted lordship over the Vendôme in January 1194 from John, at a time when the latter was attempting to prove his loyalty to Philip Augustus by giving away parts of the Angevin Empire. Both *tornadas* are missing in K and have been added by another hand in U. The morphology and syntax of the first *tornada* again is complicated and has been misinterpreted by the different scribes. It has a similar structure to stanza VI, in this case with double complements where the nominative *Contesse suer* (not *seror*) anticipates the indirect object *vos*. As Spetia (1996, p. 114) comments, "*vostre pris soverain* may be seen as the direct object and *vos* as an ethic dative both depending on the synonyms *sault et gairt*, whose subject is *cil*", which refers to the Emperor Henry VI. Pza and especially f, as said before, have shifted the meaning to that of the love song so that *cil* has become: za *celle* and f *la belle*, while in fP the invocation is for God to save the countess' sovereign worth: *sal dieus* (P *deus*). Italianisms in za l. 37 *vestre*, l. 38 *mi*. The second *tornada* is the only part of the song in which the *mot refrain* is changed from *pris* to *Louis*, which seems to underscore Richard's disappointment with his nephew's betrayal. In l. 41 the name *Loeÿs* requires 3 syllables as are probably present in C *loweis*, OX *loeys*, perhaps N *looys* (U *loweiis* is added by a more modern hand), while fPza read *loys* (2 syllables), with f correcting: *la maire de loys*.

Text

Charmaine Lee, 2015.

Mss.

French chansonniers (7): C 103v-104r (*li rois richar*), K p. 398, N 180ra-180va, O 62va-63r, U 104va-105r, X 252rb-252vb, za 137r; Occitan chansonniers (3): f 43v (*lo rei Richart*), P 22rb (*Reis Rizard*), S 1 (fragment: 1437 Catalogue of the Este family's library: "Libro uno chiamado re Riçardo, in francexe" [One book called King Richard, in French], refers to S?).

Versification and music

10aaaaa6b (MW 73,1 = Frank 17,1); 6 *coblas doblas* and two *tornadas* of 3 and 2 lines; rhymes: *-on* , *-ent* , *-ain* , rhyme b = refrain-rhyme-word: *pris* ; epic caesura ll. 5, 9, 10, 19, 22, 28, 29, 35. Melody in CKNOX. *Sirventes-canso* : the poem is sometimes referred to as a *rotrouenge* , a musical form based on a structure of 4 or 5 mono-rhymed lines, usually decasyllables, followed by a refrain. As such the form is akin to the *chanson de toile* and even epic verse and may include, as here, examples of epic caesura. Richard's is not a true *rotrouenge* since the refrain is merely the repetition at the end of each stanza of the rhyme-word *pris* (with the exception of the final *tornada*).

Previous editions

Leroux de Lincy 1841, I 50-59; Tarbé 1862, 114-117; Brakelmann 1870-1891, 222-224; Paris-Langlois 1897, 283-286; Bartsch 1920, 161-162; Gennrich 1925, 20-22; Spanke 1925, 201-203; Pauphilet 1952, 841-842; Spaziani 1954, 36-38; Gennrich 1955-1956, I 12-15; Gennrich 1958, 6-7; Mary 1967, I 232-233; Goldin 1973, 376-379; Archibald 1974, 149-159; Bec 1977-1978, II 124-125; Rosenberg-Tischler 1981, 195-198; Alvar 1982, 238-241; Collins 1982, 73-74; Dufournet 1989, 96-99; Spetia 1990,

128-129; Lepage 1993, 907-910; Rosenberg-Tischler 1995, 380-385; Spetia 1996, 108-111 ('Occitan' text: Achard 1785-1787, 379; Raynouard 1816-1821, IV 183-184; Mahn 1846, I 129; Riquer 1975, II 725; Lepage 1993, 907-910).

Analysis of the manuscript tradition

The manuscript tradition is complicated by the fact that the text is transmitted in both French and Occitan *chansonniers* , leading scholars to argue as to whether Richard wrote one or two versions. It is now generally accepted that the poem was composed in French, and that the language has been occitanized in troubadour songbooks PSf and their models. Analysis of the language and rhymes, as well as comparison with the *sirventes* , *Daufin, je·us voill derainier* (BdT 420.1) addressed to Dalfi d'Alvernha and transmitted only in Occitan manuscripts, confirms this. The myth of an Occitan redaction would seem to go back to Jean de Nostredame, who only had access to f where the two final stanzas are missing. Riquer (1975) and Bec (1977-1978) argue that Richard had eliminated these stanzas from the 'Occitan' version because they were addressed specifically to his French vassals. Nevertheless, they are present in P and S, though in a fragmentary manner in the latter due to a mechanical lacuna. However, these stanzas are problematic in all the manuscripts, since their order changes and they are not always both present. Furthermore, as far as the Occitan songbooks are concerned, they pose a problem since the rhyme in *-ain* cannot be occitanized in all cases, which might explain why they were omitted from f, the most 'Occitan' of all the manuscripts. Richard's song, then, is in French, but copied in Occitan manuscripts which, as far as P and S are concerned, reveal traces of French influence (Avalle 1961, pp. 120-121; Borghi Cedrini 2004, p. 29; Noto 2003, pp. 35-36). Moreover, with the exception of KNOX, the other manuscripts all show some oscillation between the French and Occitan traditions: za is a rare case of a *trouvère* collection copied in the Veneto region, where so many Occitan songbooks were compiled, while C and U, though French songbooks, also contain some Occitan songs and correspond to Occitan *chansonniers* ζ and X. Analysis of the manuscript tradition confirms the fundamental groundwork by Spetia (1996), who identifies three manuscript families: CU, KNOXza, fPS, though postulating contamination between za and the sources of KNOX and PSf (1996, p. 112). Rather than contamination, however, divergent readings of za with respect to KNOX and agreement alternatively with C or fP(S) would rather seem to bolster her claim that za occupies a higher position in the stemma codicum with respect to the other manuscripts, and that it could be placed on a separate branch of Schwan's stemma (1993, pp. 257-272; 1996, p. 113). This edition is based on za.

Historical context and dating

The historical background to the song, sometimes called *la rotrouenge du prisonnier*, is of course Richard's capture and imprisonment in December 1192 on his journey homeward from the Third Crusade. As is well known, in October 1192 after taking Acre, Arsuf and occuping Jaffa, Richard suddenly decided to return home, his decision probably prompted by the trouble that had been brewing up in his kingdom. When he left for the Crusade in September 1189, Richard had only recently been crowned king of England. He had left the government of the kingdom to his brother John, offering him lands in England and the county of Mortain in Normandy to try and keep his ambitions in check, but John soon began plotting against his brother, especially once Philip Augustus, who had left the Crusade the year before, was back in France and took advantage of the situation. This was despite an agreement with Richard that neither would attack the other's interests while one or both were away serving God's cause.

Because he had been informed of the fact that Raymond VI of Toulouse and other southern French barons, through whose lands he would have passed, had risen against him, he chose not go via

Marseilles as he had on the way out to the Holy Land, but rather to sail up the Adriatic, hoping to return through Germany, where he would be under the protection of his brother-in-law, Henry the Lion. However, he was shipwrecked off the Istrian coast and thus proceeded overland, when, despite being disguised perhaps as a merchant, he was captured by the Duke of Austria, Leopold of Babenberg. Leopold apparently bore him a grudge, either because he believed Richard had slighted him at the siege of Acre, or because Richard, after conquering Cyprus, held captive prince Isaac Comnenus and his wife, who were related to Leopold, or again because he blamed Richard for the assassination of Conrad of Monferrat in April 1192. In February of the following year, Leopold, who was also aware of Richard's differences with the Emperor over the Sicilian succession, sold him on to Henry VI. Richard spent nearly a year and a half in captivity, moving from one prison to another, from Dürnstein on the Danube, via Speyer to Trifels in the Rhine valley, taking part in assemblies to discuss his case at Regensburg, Speyer, Worms and Mainz. Here he was finally released on February 4th, 1194, after payment of a ransom of 100,000 marks and the promise of a further 50,000. During the spring of 1193 Richard was at Trifels, where conditions seem to have been rather harsh, prompting him to write several letters of complaint. The poem, as Gillingham argues (1999, pp. 239-243) would fit into this context, thus the most likely date is the spring of 1193. *Ja nus homs pris*, therefore, is not technically a Crusade song, but rather a song from the aftermath of the Third Crusade, a request for payment of a ransom.