



## **Maugré tous sains et maugré Diu ausi**

**(RS 1030)**

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## Huon d'Oisy

I

Maugré tous sains et maugré Diu ausi  
revient Quenes, et mal soit il vegnans!  
Honis soit il et ses preechemans,  
4 et honis soit ki de lui ne dist: «fi»!  
Quant Diex verra que ses besoins ert grans,  
il li faura, quant il li a failli.

II

8 Ne chantés mais, Quenes, je vos em pri,  
car vos chançons ne sont mais avenans;  
or menrés vos honteuse vie ci:  
ne volsistes pour Dieu morir joians,  
or vos conte on avoec les recreans,  
12 si remanrés avoec vo roi failli;  
ja Damedius, ki sor tous est poissans,  
del roi avant et de vos n'ait merci!

III

16 Molt fu Quenes preus, quant il s'en ala,  
de sermoner et de gent preechier,  
et quant uns seus en remanoit decha,  
il li disoit et honte et reprovier;  
or est venus son liu recunchiier,  
20 et s'est plus ors que quant il s'en ala;  
bien poet sa crois garder et estoier,  
k'encor l'a il tele k'il l'emporta.

I

Despite all the saints and despite God Himself  
Conon is returning, and a curse on his return!  
Shame on him and his preaching, and shame on  
anyone who does not say to him 'fie upon you'!  
When God sees him in great need He will not help  
him, just as he has not helped Him.

II

Sing no more, Conon, I pray you, for your songs are  
no more pleasing. Now you will live a shameful life  
here; you did not choose to die joyfully for God, and  
now you are counted among the cowards, so you  
will stay here with your failed king. May Our Lord,  
who has power over all people, have no pity, first  
on the king and [then] on you!

III

When he set off, Conon was very brave in giving  
sermons and preaching to people, and if a single  
man stayed behind, he covered him in shame and  
reproach. Now he has returned to soil his home [his  
nest?], and he is filthier than when he left. For  
sure, he can keep his cross and stow it away, as it  
is in the same state as it was when he carried it  
away.

## Notes

Huon d'Oisy's text is neither a song of crusading exhortation nor a *chanson de départie*, but bears witness to the rapid reception and popularity of Conon de Béthune's crusade songs, representing as it does a sarcastic riposte made up almost entirely of more or less literal responses to RS 1125 and RS 1314. Essentially Huon throws back in Conon's face his failure to practise what he had preached, turning back on him all the rebukes he had made to those who chose not to take part in the crusade. Huon's text demonstrates that Conon's songs were heard and interpreted as propaganda, given the absence of any reference to separation from the beloved lady which constituted a distinctive element of that trouvère's songs. Huon's harsh sarcasm should not necessarily be interpreted literally, and it is not impossible that it simply forms a literary game. Apart from his sarcastic echoing of Conon's songs, Huon also copies their rhetorical structure, based on the semantic opposition *honte-honor* and on their antitheses; see for example *honis* (vv. 3 and 4), *honteuse vie* (v. 9), *recreans* (v. 11), *preus* (v. 15), *honte* (v. 18). The numerous echoes are indicated in detail in the notes.

- 1 The first line echoes RS 1314, 20-22: *Dieus! ke porront faire si anemi, / quant tot li saint trambleront de dotance / devant Celui ki onques ne menti?*
- 2 The meaning of the verb *revient* here has been the subject of much discussion; together with *ala* in vv. 15 and 20 it seems to indicate some departure and return on Conon's part. But to what exactly does this refer? To a real departure on crusade, to a short and swiftly aborted journey, or simply to a desire to leave? In view of the content of vv. 15-16, where the verb *aler* is linked to Conon's propaganda activity, it cannot be ruled out that *ala* does indeed refer to the decision to depart on crusade and *revient* to some event which prevented this from happening.
- 3-4 These lines echo RS 1125, 21: *Saichiés chil sont trop honi ki n'iront* and RS 1314, 39-40: *Po en i a n'ait son renne honi, / por tant qu'il ait sor ses homes possance.*
- 5-6 An ironic allusion to the Last Judgment, evoked by Conon in RS 1314, 20-24; but see also vv. 13-14. The wordplay with repetition of the verb *faillir* is found in RS 1125, 11-12: *ki li faura a cest besoig d'aïe, / saiciés ke il li faura a grignor*; Huon also echoes its syntactic ambiguity, with the personal pronouns *il* and *li* which refer in turn to God and Conon.
- 7-8 These lines may perhaps constitute a response to the beginning and end of RS 1314, where Conon questions the appropriateness of writing a song or not and acknowledges Huon d'Oisy as his master in the art of poetry; see RS 1314, 1-2: *Bien me deüsse targier / de chançon faire et de mos et de chans* and 51-52: *si s'an praignent a mon mastre d'Oissi, / qui m'at appris a chanter tres m'anfance.*
- 9-10 These lines echo RS 1125, 33-34: *Ki chi ne velt avoir vie anuieuse / si voist por Dieu morir liés et joieus*; for v. 9 see also RS 1125, 48: *a tos jors mais iert no vie honteuse.*
- 11-12 These lines echo RS 1125, 23-24: *et cil ki sain et jone et riche sont / ne poevent pas demorer sans hontaige*; for v. 12 see also RS 1314, 26: *ne remanrai chi avoc ces tirans.*

- 12 The expression *vo roi* should not be taken as an indication of a particular closeness between Conon de Béthune and Philip Augustus, since Conon, like Huon, was the direct vassal of Philip of Alsace and not the King and revealed his aversion towards the sovereign on various occasions (see Barbieri 2013, pp. 289-290). The verb *remanrés* seems to indicate that the King has not yet left on crusade. For the attack on the delaying tactics of Philip Augustus and other sovereigns and barons see for example the refrain and vv. 51-58 in Maistre Renaut's RS 886, which also echo the reference to the Last Judgment and the same play on words with the repetition of the verb *faillir* in v. 6; for Occitan lyric see Bertran de Born BdT 80.4, 15-21 and perhaps BdT 80.17, 20 and 29-35 (6 and 15-21 ed. Gouiran). The opening lines of the *Torneiement des dames* also suggest criticism of inaction on the barons' part, also found in Conon's songs (vv. 1-5: *En l'an que chevalier sont / Abaubi, / Ke d'armes noient ne font / Li hardi, / Lez damez tournoier vont*).
- 13-14 Another probable allusion to the Last Judgment, as the expression *ki sor tous est poissans* probably indicates the power of God's judgment. These lines echo RS 1314, 23-24: *Adont seront pecheor mal bailli, / se sa pitiés ne cuevre sa poissance*.
- 15-16 These lines echo RS 1125, 41-42: *Diex! tant avons esté prex par huiseuse, / or i parra ki a certes iert prex*.
- 19 The line echoes RS 1314, 37-38: *Dehait li bers qui est de tel sanblance / con li oixel qui conchiét son nit!* Huon's riposte to RS 1314, 38 would be more precise if the text read *nit* (*niu?*) instead of *liu*. Could this point to an archetype error? In either case the text works in the same way and it seems inappropriate to correct.
- 21-22 These lines seem to confirm that when the author was writing to him, Conon de Béthune had not reached the Holy Land, and that his intention to leave on crusade had not materialised.

## Text

Luca Barbieri, 2015.

## Mss.

(2) . M 50a ( *Me sire hues doysj* ), T 53r ( *Me sire hues doisy* ).

## Versification and music

10ababbaba (MW 902,1 = Frank 302); 3 *coblas doblas* (2+1); the first stanza has only 6 lines, with the rhyme-scheme 10abbaba: there may have been a gap in a previous exemplar or the stanza may form a sort of refrain; rhyme a: *-i* , *-a* ; rhyme b: *-ans* , *-ier* . Three of the four rhymes ( *-i* , *-ans* , *-ier* ) also appear in RS 1314 by Conon de Béthune. The versification is very common, but Huon d'Oisy is imitating Conon de Béthune's song RS 1125 in particular, though the latter has a feminine a-rhyme. Identical rhyme vv. 15 and 20 (the whole expression *quant il s'en ala* ), equivocal rhyme vv. 6 and 12 ( *failli* , first a verb and then an adjective), paronymous rhyme vv. 9 and 14 ( *ci-merci* , also for the ear in *ausi* v. 1), etymological figure vv. 3 and 16 ( *preechemans-preechier* ); lyric caesura vv. 2, 10 and 15 (but the latter is probably a case of a median caesura 5+5); feminine caesura with elision v. 11; melody in both mss., with melodic structure ABAB CDC'D' (T 601).

## Previous editions

de la Borde 1780, II, 211; Paris 1833, 103; Leroux de Lincy 1841-1842, I, 116; Dinaux 1837-1863, I, 140; Brakelmann 1870, 56; Meyer 1877, II, 367; Bédier 1906, 379; Bédier-Aubry 1909, 62; Gennrich




1951, 24; Wentzlaff-Eggebert 1960, 154; Cluzel 1969, 46; Schöber 1976, 162; Dufournet 1989, 100; Dijkstra 1995a, 192. de la Borde 1780, II, 211; Paris 1833, 103; Leroux de Lincy 1841-1842, I, 116; Dinaux 1837-1863, I, 140; Brakelmann 1870, 56; Meyer 1877, II, 367; Bédier 1906, 379; Bédier-Aubry 1909, 62; Gennrich 1951, 24; Wentzlaff-Eggebert 1960, 154; Cluzel 1969, 46; Schöber 1976, 162; Dufournet 1989, 100; Dijkstra 1995a, 192.

## Analysis of the manuscript tradition

The two manuscript versions are virtually identical, with minimal variants. In both there are two lines rhyming ab apparently missing in the first stanza. The various editors indicate the lacuna as corresponding to two initial lines or vv. 3-4. However there are no noticeable skips or breaks in the stanza's syntactic structure and the melody is marked out regularly in both cases; it may be a case of a type of refrain rather than a gap in the common source, and given this uncertainty it is better not to indicate missing lines in the printed text. T's graphy is essentially followed, its northern features being preserved. For the alternation of the forms *Diu/Dieu* in particular see Gossen 1976, § 9, pp. 55-58 (compare also *liu* for *lieu* in v. 19). M is used only for v. 3 where there is an error in T (*preemans* which generates a hypometric line).

## Historical context and dating

Huon III, lord of Oisy-le-Verger (Pas-de-Calais, arr. Arras), Montmirail and Crèvecœur, viscount of Meaux and castellan of Cambrai, is considered one of the earliest trouvères. A loyal vassal of the count of Flanders Philip of Alsace, whose sister Gertrude he took as his first wife, Huon supported him during the war of 1181-1185 against the king of France, Philip Augustus (Cartellieri 1899-1922, I, p. 107). Huon d'Oisy was distantly related to Conon de Béthune, and it is the same Conon who indicates him as his master in the art of poetry (RS 1314, vv. 51-52). They are also linked through their support of the count of Flanders against the political action of Philip Augustus (see Barbieri 2013, p. 289-290). The evident dependence of RS 1030 on Conon de Béthune's two crusade songs has generated various doubts as to the date and attribution of the latter, since it has long been accepted that Conon returned from the Third Crusade with Philip Augustus in 1191, while historical documents attest the death of Huon d'Oisy between 1189 and 1190. In fact the various indications from the sources seem to converge on a single hypothesis. Firstly, the attribution of the text to Huon is indirectly confirmed by the fact that in the mss. this is followed by his *Torneiement des Dames* (RS 1924a), whose attribution is proved by internal elements of the text. Secondly, there is no objective evidence that Conon took part in the Third Crusade, and his involvement in Philip Augustus's expedition seems unlikely, given that his work and biography testify to his hostility to the King. Conon's father made the journey to the Holy Land joining up with one of the Flemish contingents that left their native land from the autumn of 1188 onwards; Robert V of Béthune died during the siege of Acre on 18 January 1191. The content and heavily sarcastic tone of Huon's text would be hard to explain if it had been written after even a short stay in the Holy Land on Conon's part and after his father's death on crusade. Finally, there is no reason to question the date of Huon's death recorded in the documents. The annals of the abbey of Anchin register it in the year 1189, while the necrology of the abbey of Cantimpré, founded by the same Huon, provides us with the precise date: 20 August. Other documents confirm that Huon was still alive in 1189, and that he was dead by 1190 (Schöber 1976, pp. 154-156). The Cantimpré necrology also informs us of a journey to the Holy Land undertaken by Huon d'Oisy; this could be a pilgrimage preceding Saladin's capture of Jerusalem in 1187, and this seems confirmed by the fact that Huon was able to bring back certain relics from the Holy Land (Dijkstra 1995a, pp. 93-94). Such a pilgrimage would give greater authority to the song RS 1030's sarcastic remarks. It remains only to conclude that in all probability Conon de Béthune did not take part in the Third Crusade, and certainly did not do so before Huon d'Oisy's death. It may be supposed that if he did set out with his father in the early months



of 1189 (Bédier 1906, p. 59), whether with the intention of leaving with him or with that of accompanying him part of the way, for some reason unknown to us he rapidly returned. If this was the occasion of RS 1030's composition, it must have been written between January and August 1189. The fact that Conon de Béthune may have indeed set out on crusade after Huon's death, perhaps in the entourage of Philip of Alsace, has no influence on the date and circumstances of composition and in any case has no documentary confirmation.