**Anonimo**

***Ne chant pas, que que nuls die*** (RS 1133)

I Ne chant pas, que que nuls die,

de cuer lié ne de joious,

quant nos baron sont oisous

4 en la terre de Surie;

encor n’i ont envaïe

cité ne chastiaus ne bours;

par une fole envaïe

8 perdi li cuens de Bar vie.

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. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

II S’il euvrent par aatie

12 tout iert tourné a rebours:

trop y a des orgueillous

qui s’entreportent envie;

se Diex l’orgueil ne chastie,

16 perdu avront leur labors

et mal leur paine emploïe;

se ceste voie est perie,

vilains sera li retours

20 et sainte Eglyse abaissie.

III Encor n’ont chose esploitie

dont il soit preus ne hounours,

ne moustree leur valors

24 dont y ait nouvelle oye;

se Diex l’orgueil ne chastie,

tout sont cheü en decours;

si tres haute baronnie,

28 quant de France fu partie,

on disoit que c’ert la flours

du mont et la seignorie.

IV Aus bachelers ne tient mie

32 ne aus povres vavasours:

a ceus grieve li sejourz

qui ont leur terre engagie,

ne n’ont bonté ne aïe

36 ne confort des granz seignors,

quant leur monnoie est faillie;

il n’i ont mort desservie:

s’il s’en revienent le cours,

40 d’euls blasmer seroit folie.

V Li pueples de France prie,

seigneur prisonnier, pour vous;

trop estiez orgueillous

44 de moustrer chevalerie,

fole volenté hardie

vous eslonga de secours;

li turc vous ont en baillie:

48 or en penst li filz Marie,

car ce sera granz dolours

se Diex ne vous en deslie.

**Translation.**

I. Whatever people may say, I do not sing with a happy or joyful heart while our barons are idle in the land of Syria; they have not yet attacked any city or castles or towns; because of a foolish sortie the count of Bar has lost his life...

II. If the barons act out of rivalry everything will go downhill: there are too many arrogant men vying with each other. If God does not punish this pride, they will have wasted their labours and put their efforts to poor use; if this crusade is a failure the return will be dishonourable and Holy Church humiliated.

III. They have not yet carried out any exploit producing profit or honour, or demonstrated their valour of which news is heard; if God does not punish this pride, they are heading for total downfall. Such a high company of barons, when it left France, was said to be the finest flower of the world.

IV. It is not the fault of the young knights or poor vavassors: the idle wait weighs heavily on those who have mortgaged their land and have no compassion or aid or comfort from the great lords, when their money has run out. They do not deserve to die there: if they hurry back home, it would be folly to blame them.

V. The people of France pray, lord prisoners, for you; you were too proud in showing off your valour – a foolish reckless ardour carried you away from help. The Turks hold you in their power; now may the son of Mary give thought to this, for it will be most painful if God does not liberate you from them.

**Mss. (5).** Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, W.142 (B), 310d-311a; Paris, BnF, fr. 9083 (P1), 316cd; Paris, BnF, fr. 22495 (P2), 283v; Paris, BnF, fr. 24209 (P3), 320cd; Torino, Biblioteca nazionale universitaria, L.I.5 (T), 491cd.

**Previous editions.** *Histoire littéraire de la France*, XXIII, 675; *Continuation Rothelin*, 548; Bédier-Aubry 1909, 217; Dufournet 1989, 188; Guida 1992, 115; Dijkstra 1995a, 209.

**Versification and music.** 7a’bba’a’ba’a’ba’ (MW 1302,1 = Frank 472); 5 *coblas unissonans*; rhyme a = *-ie*; rhyme b = *-ou(r)s*. The same metrical shape appears in seven other texts, all in 7-syllable lines and with the same alternation of m. and f. rhymes; among these is RS 1141 (the Count of Brittany), with 5 *coblas unissonans* and identical rhymes, while the first 3 stanzas of RS 1135 (Moniot d’Arras) also has the same rhymes *-ie* / *-ous*. The same scheme but with different rhymes is used in the anonymous crusade song RS 1738a, datable to 1244-1245. Among troubadour texts the metrical shape is used by Raimon de Miraval in the *canso* BdT 406.7 (m. rhymes only) and the anonymous *sirventes* BdT 461.247 which has the same alternance of m. and f. rhymes (e rhyme *-ia* / *-os* in st. III and IV). Two lines are missing at the end of st. I, and the sentence may be incomplete, hence the indication of a lacuna.

**Analysis of the manuscript tradition.** See the corresponding paragraph in the introduction to RS 164.

**Historical context and dating.** See the corresponding paragraph in the introduction to RS 164. The references allow us to situate the present text, as RS 164, after the Gaza ambush and before the liberation of the Christian prisoners, so between 13 November 1239 and 23 April 1241, and it seems likely that in this case too the song was composed before the departure of Thibaut de Champagne and the greater part of the French contingent, around the middle of September 1240.

**Notes.** Unlike RS 164 this text does not criticise the crusade leaders’ caution after the Gaza episode, and does not appear to agree with the barons’ position. Instead it adopts the point of view of the lesser, poor knights (*bachelers* and *vavasours*, vv. 31-32), who denounce the barons’ rivalries and their imprudent personal initiatives which produced disastrous consequences (vv. 7, 11-14, 43-46), while at the same time complaining about the prolonged period of inactivity (vv. 5-6, 21-24, 31-40). Despite expressing disapproval over the Gaza sortie, the song ends with a prayer for the liberation of the prisoners. Particularly notable is the realism expressed in these lines which form a sort of caption to the events narrated in the chronicle in which they are set, giving us access to the state of mind and opinions of the participants in the later crusades. Idealistic motives do not seem as clear as they once were,and in any case they are not highlighted; instead, more worldly preoccupations predominate: ambition for personal glory on the part of individual barons, the problems of the high cost of the expeditions and the economic difficulties of the minor knights.

The anonymous author cannot have been an entirely uncultured man, given that his versification forms part of a network of literary references that cannot be put down to chance. He must have at least known the song RS 1135 of Moniot d’Arras, from which he takes the rhymes of the first three stanzas (and also the expression *que q’en die* of the incipit). Some influence of the Occitan *sirventes* BdT 461.247 is also possible, given the application of the metrical schema to a crusade song which expresses polemical positions. Still to be resolved is the identification of the count of Brittany, author of a few lyrics which are often sprinkled with formal irregularities. One of these songs imitates the metrical shape and rhymes of RS 1133. Some scholars suggest the count may be Pierre Mauclerc, who took part in the barons’ crusade, while Bédier prefers to identify him with Pierre’s son Jean (married to Bianca, daughter of Thibaut de Champagne), though his arguments do not appear definitive (Bédier 1928, pp. 477-482; note for example that the *Continuation Rothelin* continues to call Pierre Mauclerc count of Brittany, even though his son succeeded him in 1237). If the count of Brittany the lyric author were identifiable with the crusader Pierre Mauclerc, he might conceivably be the actual author of RS 164, in which we find similar metrical irregularities to those found in the small corpus attributed to the count of Brittany, and which in any case expresses positions that chime well with the character concerned, with the advantage that, unlike Philippe de Nanteuil, he was not taken prisoner at Gaza.

7-8. These lines appear to confirm the death of Count Henry II of Bar-le-Duc at Gaza, which the same chronicle has called into doubt on the preceding pages (*Cont. Roth.* p. 546), but which the other sources certify. See the note to v. 20 of RS 164.

13-15. The problem of the rivalries and internal divisions in the crusading army, which was already emerging clearly during the first crusade, seems to have diminished somewhat during the 12th-c. crusades or to have applied only at the level of the rulers; but it explodes again in the 13th c. and becomes particularly glaring during the barons’ crusade, as is shown by all the sources, especially the *Continuation Rothelin* (see the excellent syntheses of Balard 1989 and Lower 2005, pp. 167-175).

21-24. Rather than blaming the incompetence of the expedition’s leaders – a criticism from which many historians have not spared Thibaut de Champagne – the author seems to attribute the cause of inactivity mainly to the divisions and rivalries in the Christian army and to the barons’ personal initiatives.

28. This text, as RS164, shows the emergence of emphasis on French nationalism (see also v. 41) which charcterises the later crusades.

31-40. The ‘bachelors’ are young knights or those aspiring to be such, generally having no fief and destined to perform military service under a lord. The vavassors constitute one of the lowest grades in the feudal hierarchy holding a small fief over which they are unable to exercise direct rights, since some of the latter remain the apanage of higher-ranking lords, so they are obliged to lend military service to the real lord. The hereditary system of fiefs often brought about the impoverishment of these two classes, and the equation of vavassors and poverty is often present in courtly literature, which in some cases tends to exalt the dignity and nobility of soul of those belonging to these classes (Köhler 2000). See for example the romances of Chrétien de Troyes and Bertran de Born’s song BdT 80.37, 12-22. Furthermore those belonging to the lower nobility were often constrained to pawn and mortgage their lands to procure the funds necessary to finance the expedition (Cazel 1989), a phenomenon alluded to in vv. 33-34. This stanza seems to express its solidarity with the lower levels of feudal society, to which the author may well belong.

41-47. These lines synthesise well on the one hand the mood of disillusionment in the face of the ever more negative results produced by expeditions to the Holy Land, and on the other, the residual hope in divine intervention which alone can guarantee their success.