Did Raimbaut de Vaqueiras really know five languages? Notes on the descort, *Eras quan vey verdeyar* (BdT 392, 4)

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Raimbaut de Vaqueiras' *descort*, *Eras quan vey verdeyar* (*BdT* 392, 4) frequently figures as a prime example of Medieval multilingualism (Varvaro 2004; Brugnolo 2015: 15), written as it is in five Romance varieties: Occitan, Italian, French, Gascon and Galician-Portuguese, including a ten-line *tornada*, or five two-lined *tornadas*, repeating the same languages. As is well-known, the *descort* is a genre, or sub-genre, of the *canso*, which seeks to illustrate the poet's confused state of mind after being refused by his lady, by using a different metrical structure for each stanza. This would evidently have corresponded to a different musical structure. Thus, for Asperti (1995: 78-86) it was also viewed as a genre that stood out on musical grounds and, as such, was included in sections of some *chansonniers* (M or N, for example) that singled out melody. Raimbaut's *descort* is frequently copied with his *Kalenda maia*. Nevertheless, it is the only *descort* to have recourse to different languages to express the poet's confusion; the only other two lyrics in the Occitan tradition to mix different languages, excluding some bilingual *tensos*, are Bonifaci Calvo's *sirventes* in three languages, *Un nou sirventes ses tardar* (*BdT* 101, 17) and a *cobla* in six (or perhaps four) languages by Cerveri de Girona, *Nunca querria eu achar* (*BdT* 434a, 40) (Tavani 2002: 44-55). Raimbaut's poem is also the only one of the three to devote each stanza to a different language while developing a coherent discourse on his sentiments across the five stanzas as well as the *tornada*. This exceptional poem, which has received much critical attention, especially from the philological and linguistic points of view, leads to a series of questions concerning Medieval multilingualism and multilingual poetry; Raimbaut's particular choice of languages; why he chose these and for which audience in what circumstances; who would have understood the text and how far did he master these languages himself. In what follows I hope to be able to answer just a few of these.

In recent years interest in multilingualism in the Middle Ages has increased as scholars realise that society as a whole tends towards multilingualism. This is certainly true today with the movement of vast numbers of people from the so-called third world to more developed countries, but it is also true of the past, of emigration to the New World in the nineteenth century, colonialism and post-colonialism and their effect on new geographical entities created

with little regard for different languages and cultures. Indeed, as a whole over time it would appear that monolingualism is the exception which has been espoused by nationalist movements from the nineteenth century onwards, whose devastating effects led to two World Wars and many other conflicts, and whose antihistorical influence is still felt today in such areas as the Brexit referendum in Britain, or far right movements in Europe such as the *Front national* in France and the *Lega* (League) in Italy which, when still called the Northern League, had suggested abandoning Italian and using the local dialect, duly putting up bilingual sign posts for northern towns and cities: *Bèrghem* for *Bergamo*, *Püntida* for *Pontida*. However folkloristic this may seem, it is not too far removed from Mussolini's efforts during the twenty years of Fascist domination in Italy to 'italianise' the language, imposing Italian versions of foreign terms and Italian place-names, especially in the German-speaking South Tyrol. Language as a sign of national identity, then, but at the same time such attempts also serve to remind us that, in Italy at least, multilingualism is still very much the norm with several areas of the country where minority languages are spoken as well as local Italo-Romance dialects to varying degrees from north to south.

If we may pinpoint a time in history when the idea that one nation was associated with one language, I would say that, rather than in the nineteenth century, this occurred in the late eighteenth century during the French Revolution, when the view was held that it was counter-revolutionary to not speak French. The best-known episode in the development of this idea is no doubt the survey carried out from 1790-1794 by Abbé Grégoire, the first example of research into the use of dialects, whose aim was, as the title goes: *Sur la nécessité et les moyens d'anéantir les patois et d'universaliser l'usage de la langue française*. Published in 1794, this survey illustrated Grégoire's belief that "l'unité de l'idiome est une partie intégrante de la Revolution" (Lodge 1993: 198); its immediate effect was to send teachers out to the areas where French was spoken the least: Brittany, Flanders, Alsace, the Midi, also with a view to setting up compulsory schooling. The Revolution was over before Grégoire could see his plan completed and, indeed, compulsory schooling did not come into being before 1880, but the seeds were sown for the highly centralised language policies that still characterise the French government (Lee 1987: 68-75) and evidently served as a model for many other nation states.

Nevertheless, attempts to spread the use of a more uniform type of language go back at least two centuries when many European nations were beginning to form and began to feel the need to elaborate a set of norms available to all, or at least to the literate classes of the population. Important at this stage was also the invention of the printing press since printers, who were often Dutch or German, had to know what forms to use to be understood by their readers, but also so as not to commit errors in languages that were not necessarily theirs. This, which marked the beginning of the process of standardisation, led to the publication of many

treatises, grammars, rhetorical works and arts of poetry throughout the sixteenth century, whose aim was also to illustrate the quality of the language and its ability to rival with Latin, which had represented the language of culture and administration so far. One of the first works to have been written in this light was Nebrija's *Gramática de la Lengua Castellana* (1492), a pioneering work that celebrated to some extent the end of the *Reconquista* and the establishment of Castilian as the national language in Spain. Nebrija had studied and acquired grammatical competence in Italy at the University of Bologna.

Italian models also inspired another work that set out to show how vernacular languages could rival Latin: in this case French. This is Joachim du Bellay's *Deffense et illustration de la langue françoise* (1549). Du Bellay had also travelled to Italy in 1553-1557, but his principle source of inspiration was Sperone Speroni's *Dialogo delle lingue* (1542, but written some 10 years earlier). As a poet and member of the Pléiade, du Bellay wished to 'illustrate' the language as suitable for poetry, but the treatise follows a series of royal *ordonnances* under Francis I establishing French as the language of administration, of which the best known is probably that of Villers-Cotterêts (1539), which is credited as marking the end of the use of Occitan as a language of administration. Thus much of this discussion took place first in Italy from the humanists onwards, though Italy is the one Romance-speaking country which would not become a nation state until 1861 but sought nevertheless to elaborate a written norm principally (but not exclusively) for cultural purposes. This discussion, known as the *questione della lingua*, eventually led to the development of a norm based on fourteenth-century Florentine, the language of the so-called *Three Crowns*: Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. It's main promoter was Pietro Bembo, who set out his views in his *Prose della volgar lingua*, published in 1525, where it is clear that he followed the model of Latin and Greek which, as dead languages, would no longer change and would resist the test of time; thus Italian, too, should be based on a 'classical' model which would remain unchanged. The case of Italian is fairly extreme but shows how the creation of a standard language is not necessarily a natural process, but rather something that owes its existence to human intervention, essentially an artificial language, which, as theories on standardisation point out, has to be accepted by a speech community (Haughen 1966).

On the whole, and unlike the Italian example, the standard language tends to coincide with an important political and economic centre, which may subsequently develop into an important cultural centre, whose language may then be selected by the community since it was convenient to do so, before any legislation actually intervenes to fix the norms. A good example of this would be French which, despite early rivalry from varieties such as Norman and later Picard, began to emerge as the variety spoken in Paris, or the Île-de-France before the end of the Middle Ages, which in turn led to some early reflection about the use of correct language long before the discussions that took place during the Renaissance. One of

the better known instances of this is expressed around 1180 by the poet Conon de Béthune, a native of Picardy, in his poem, *Mout me semont Amors que je m'envoise* (ll. 8-14):

> La Roine n'a pas fait ke cortoise
> Ki me reprist, ele et ses fieus li Rois;
> Encoir ne soit ma parole franchoise,
> Si la puet on bien conprendre en franchois;
> Ne chil ne sont bien apris ne cortois
> S'il m'ont repris se j'ai dit mos d'Artois,
> Car je ne fui norris a Pontoise.
>
> [The Queen, along with her son the King, acted discourteously when she criticised me: although my speech is not that of Ile-de-France, one can still understand me in French. And those who criticised me for using words from Artois are not courteous or polite, for I was not born in Pontoise][1].

Conon, who was later to go on to be one of the leading figures of the Fourth Crusade, is echoed by other contemporary or near contemporary writers who stress the correctness and politeness of the Parisian norm. As Lodge (1993: 100-104) argues, on the basis of the different statements made by writers at the time, that during the thirteenth century the former dichotomy between Latin as a high variety and the vernacular is gradually replaced by one that views Parisian French as a high variety compared to other dialects or vernacular languages, as French became a language of choice for the aristocracy of northern Europe and the Mediterranean, as a result, in the latter instance, of the Crusades and the foundation of Crusader states from Greece to the Middle East. In these areas French would go on to develop local traits rather than adhere to a strictly Parisian norm, that reflect its status as a colonial variety (Minervini 2010).

The point is that medieval societies were often fundamentally multilingual and national boundaries did not follow linguistic boundaries, as may still be seen today to some extent, in the Iberian peninsula, for example; less so in France, though areas where different varieties are spoken still exist and continue to reflect the medieval linguistic division. Medieval kings ruled over subjects who might speak several different languages. The kings of Spain had subjects who spoke Castilian, Leonese, Basque, Galician, but also Hebrew and Arabic; still today the national frontier between Portugal and Spain cuts across what is essentially a single linguistic variety. The extensive Crown of Aragon included speakers of Aragonese, Catalan, Sardinian, Sicilian and other southern Italian varieties after the conquest of Naples, as well as Occitan in its southern French counties, and Arabic and Greek in the Mediterranean. The King of England, too, ruled over subjects who not only spoke English, but also French, Occitan,

1 Text and translation from Lodge (1993: 99).

Gascon and Celtic varieties, such as Welsh and Irish Gaelic. Linguistic diversity never became an ideological problem and, on the whole, does not even seem to deserve much comment (Varvaro 2004). One would be hard put, for example, to find any mention of the language spoken by the Norman conquerers of Sicily and southern Italy during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They must have used French, as they did in England, but traces of the language are almost entirely lacking, with the exclusion perhaps of a comment by the so-called Hugo Falcandus in the *Liber de Regno Siciliae*: "Quibus Francorum se linguam ignorare, que maxime necessaria esset in curia, nec eius esse, respondebat, industrie ut oneri tanto sufficeret" [He replied that he was ignorant of the French language (which was an important requirement at court) and did not have the energy to be able to uphold such a burden][2]. Falcandus, whoever he may have been, writes mainly about the reign of William I (1154–1166) and the regency of William II (1166–1189), ending with the exile of Stephen of Perche, who had governed Sicily in the king's name from 1166–1168 and was a cousin of the queen mother, Margaret of Navarre. These words are said to have been pronounced by her half-brother Rodrigo, who meantime had become Henry, count of Montescaglioso, and presumably did not speak such good French as his sister, or Stephen of Perche and his followers. At the time in Sicily Italo-Romance, Greek, Arabic and Hebrew would also have been used.

Despite the existence of these many multilingual societies, most of the recent studies on medieval multilingualism I alluded to above, have tended to concentrate on the use of French, which gradually replaced Latin as a language of culture, but also administration and trade, thus becoming the real *lingua franca* employed at the time rather than hypothetical varieties for which there is little documentation (Minervini 1996; Varvaro 2004). Research into the subject is now viewed from the perspective of colonial, post-colonial, or even 'global' studies (Kinoshita 2010; Gaunt 2016), and has led to specific publications as well as a number of websites and projects devoted to the subject. These include the Fordham University websites *The French of Italy*, *The French of England,* and *The French of Outremer*; the project *Medieval French Literary Culture Outside France*, coordinated by the Universities of London and Cambridge, which was followed by the ERC project *The Values of French,* that moves mainly from the Neapolitan manuscript of the second redaction of the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, British Library, MS Royal 20 D I. A further important initiative is the RIALFrI (Repertorio informatizzato dell'antica letteratura franco-italiana) website, set up at the University of Padua, with the aim of offering a complete picture of Franco-Italian, not limited to the Lombardy-Veneto area, including manuscripts, critical editions of texts and a dictionary, along with the journal *Francigena*, devoted to related topics. All these projects have helped to bring to the attention of scholars in the field of French medieval language and literature the very wide

2 English translation by Loud/Wiedermann (1998:179), original text consulted at *The Latin Library*: www.thelatinlibrary.com/falcandus.html.

circulation and different varieties of the language from northern Europe to the Middle East, often as the language of choice, as was the case of French in Lombardy and the Veneto region, which had not been colonised by French speakers like the Crusader States or the Kingdom of Naples, but had practised the language in their many commercial exchanges. An emblematic case here would be Marco Polo whose *Devisement dou monde* was originally composed in Franco-Italian with the help of Rustichello da Pisa, himself an Italian who wrote romances in French. Moreover, a recent study by Andreose (2018) argues, on the basis of the form of the Greek expressions in the *Devisement*, that Marco may have used French for his notes, since this was the language of merchants all around the Mediterranean and further afield.

In this context it should be clear that if there is one language that Raimbaut understood and used, apart from his native Occitan, this would be French. Proof of this would be his *tenso* with Conon de Béthune, composed during the Fourth Crusade (Harvey/Paterson 2010: III, 1087-1094), while his participation in campaigns in the Mediterranean along with his patron Boniface of Montferrat would have brought him into contact with the language as a *lingua franca*, even if he had never seen a literary text in French, which was not the case since, as we know, he often looked to the French tradition to innovate Occitan poetry (Brugnolo 1983; Lee 2006b).

In his study of the *descort* as a genre, Canettieri (1995: 71-72) sets up a list of 30 texts, 16 of which are defined as a *descort* within the text while 12 offer the same characteristics and, therefore, may be considered as belonging to the corpus. Of the remaining two, one, Garin d'Apchier, *Quan foill'e flors reverdis* (*BdT*, 162, 6), is listed as a *descort* in the *vida*, while the other, the anonymous *Bella domna cara* (*BdT* 461, 37), is classed as an *acort*, a "negative" *descort*. As said before, Raimbaut's *descort* stands as unique within the genre, a genre which more usually played on metrical and musical features rather than linguistic; unfortunately the music has not survived, despite his claim to "dezacordar los motz e·ls sos e·ls lenguatges". His other *descort*, *Engles, un novel descort* (*BdT* 392, 16), is a more traditional example of the genre; it survives in 4 manuscripts: C, Da, R, a^1(1), three of which coincide with those containing *BdT* 392, 4. The only other example of its kind would appear to be a *discordo* attributed to Dante, *Aï faus ris, pour quoi traï avés,* in French, Latin and Italian. If the text really is by Dante it would be surprising to see him follow Raimbaut's example, a poet who would normally be outside of his canon of vernacular *auctores*. Raimbaut does not figure among those quoted in *De vulgari eloquentia* and, as we shall see below, the *descort* does not form part of the Italian tradition of troubadour songbooks that may have been familiar to Dante. On the other hand, Dante had a keen sense of language and multilingualism as is revealed by the masterpiece that is *De vulgari eloquentia*, that stands as one of the most innovative reflections on language and dialects from the medieval period, and which did not fail to influence the sixteenth-century debate on standardisation in Italy after the treatise was rediscovered and published in Italian in

1529 by Gian Giorgio Trissino. However, if Dante was unaware of Raimbaut's *descort*, he would probably have had some knowledge of the learned, Latin tradition of bilingual and multilingual poetry throughout the Middle Ages, which characterised Romance poetry from the outset.

Some of our earliest examples of poetry in the Romance languages actually appear as refrains or quotations within Latin poems starting with the "L'alba par umet mar atra sol / Poypas abigil miraclar tenebras" of the bilingual *alba* from Fleury, a text probably dating to the tenth century (Lazzerini 2010: 129-141, 241-284). Zumthor (1973: 79-134), who studied the phenomenon of bilingual poetry during what he sees as the Romanesque period in Medieval literature, believes that it derives from a mistaken understanding of Quintilian on the part of twelfth-thirteenth-century rhetorical treatises in their definition of the figure of *barbarolexis*, or *barbarolensis*. It satisfied the medieval taste for interruptions in rhythm and the alternation of the solemn and the burlesque. Zumthor goes on to say that the use of different languages is always for stylistic purposes; its function is to produce surprise, to frustrate the audience's expectations. In this case the alternation of languages between Latin and the vernacular also causes a contrast between the high variety, Latin, and lower varieties, the vernaculars which, in the earliest examples of the technique, would not yet have gained literary status, thus causing surprise, and perhaps comic effect. Nevertheless, the phenomenon is not limited to the Latin tradition, but is also present in Al-Andalus with the genre of the *muwaššahat* and *kharağiat* in Classical Arabic or Hebrew and a popular vernacular that includes, as is well known, Mozarabic. The earliest examples of this also date back to around the year 1000 (Solá-Solé 1990: 35-37). I would doubt that the effect in these texts would be comic, but they create a contrast in tone, content and voice: female rather than male in this case.

Zumthor (1973: 122) goes on to say that from around 1200 this type of bilingualism is replaced or flanked by an alternation of different vernaculars, thus inaugurating what he terms "horizontal bilingualism" rather than "vertical bilingualism" between a high and low variety. These terms echo Folena's (1994) comments on translation in the Middle Ages in which he distinguishes between *volgarizzare* and *tradurre*, with the former referring to a vertical translation from Latin, and the latter to translations from one Romance language to another, which often take on the form of *commutazione*, to use Varvaro's term (2004: 242), a form of code-switching in effect from one language to another. Although Zumthor himself is unsure as to whether the two forms of bilingualism derive one from the other and feels that two vernaculars create a lesser stylistic effect than a passage from a high to a low variety, it cannot be denied that it still creates a contrast and often a change of tone used for comic and parodic effect; here one need only think of the *fabliaux* that play with English pronunciations of French. This is also the kind of contrast at the basis of another of Raimbaut's exceptional poems, the *contrasto* with the Genoese lady, *Domna tant vos ai preiada* (*BdT* 392, 7), in which

the lover's discourse in classic troubadour style is answered by the lady, who will have none of it, in Genoese dialect in far more concrete terms. The contrast in language and tone, which also creates a comic effect, sets up a contrast at different levels reflecting political tensions, according to Caïti-Russo (2005: 26-27), between Genoa and Lunigiana, where Raimbaut was active, the rulers of Genoa and the Malaspina and lords of Montferrat, their allies against Genoa, between urban economy and feudalism.

This very well-known poem, dated around 1185, is generally credited with being the first lyric poem in Italian, but it would also seem to hark back to the Italian genre of the *contrasto*, which one might presume circulated but was yet to be written down at the time. Unlike the *pastourelle*, from which it is perhaps derived, the Italian *contrasto* often expresses the difference in social class between the protagonists by playing with different speech levels and dialects (Caïti-Russo 2009). Probably the best known *contrasto* in the Italian tradition is that by Cielo d'Alcamo, *Rosa fresca aulentissima*, associated to the Sicilian School of poetry and quoted by Dante in *De vulgari eloquentia* (I, 12, 6) as an illustration of Sicilian dialect and negative example of poetic language that does not conform to the "volgare illustre" for which he was searching and which was practiced by the poets of the Sicilian School active at the court of Frederick II and his son Manfred. In point of fact, the passages cited by Dante in Book I as instances of different Italian dialects are likely to be quotations from this kind of poem, as illustrated too by the *contrasto*, *Una fermana iscopai da Cascioli* by Castra Fiorentino (Fenzi 2012: 427-429). The genre is further illustrated by a text such as the *Contrasto con la Zerbitana*, in which the lady courted is from Djerba, now in Tunisia, and is credited with speaking the Mediterranean *lingua franca*, one of the few apparent examples of this perhaps imaginary language (Minervini 1996), but it may well be a parody of the language of Campanian sailors composed at the end of the thirteenth century in Angevin Naples (Strinna 2006). I would therefore argue that it is against this background of multilingual poetry that Raimbaut's *descort* should also be considered.

However, before going on to discuss the language and circumstances in which the poem was composed, it would be better to look again at the text, which I give on the basis of Linskill's edition (1964: 191-199).

Manuscripts

C, fols. 125^{r-v}; E, fol. 187^{r}b; M, fols.108^{r-v} and M^{1}, fol. 251 (second copy of most of first stanza)[3]; R, fol. 62^{v} a-b; Sg, fols. 30^{r-v}; a^{1}, pp. 334-335; f, fol. 69^{v}; λ = *Leys d'Amors* (Gatien-Arnoult 1843-1845: I, 334)[4].

I Eras quan vey verdeyar
pratz e vergiers e boscatges,
vuelh un descort comensar
d'amor, per qu'ieu vauc aratges;
q'una dona·m sol amar,
mas camjatz l'es sos coratges,
per qu'ieu fauc dezacordar
los motz e·ls sos e·ls lenguatges.

II Io son quel que ben non aio
ni jamai non l'averò,
ni per april ni per maio,
si per ma donna non l'ò;
certo que en so lengaio
sa gran beutà dir non sò,
çhu fresca qe flor de glaio,
per qe no m'en partirò.

3 The second copy at M 251r-v is in the section devoted to *descorts*; it is essentially identical to the first and almost gives all the first stanza, when the scribe must have realised he had already copied it. It reads as follows:

Ara qan vei verdeiar
pratz e vergiers e boscages
vueilh un descort comensar
d'amor, per q'ieu vauc arages
qar ma donna·m sol amar
mas camiatz lles sos corages
per q'ieu vueilh desacordar
lo motz

4 The *tornada* in the *Leys d'amors* in Gatien-Arnoult's edition gives a fairly corrupt text:

De cobla partida es can conte dos o motz diverses lengatges segon quom pot vezer en esta cobla que fe en Riambaut

Bels cavayers, tant es grans.
Le vostre grans senhoratge.
Qum jorno men es mocho.
Oy me lasso que faro.
Si cela que lay pos chiera.
Me tua no say por que.
Ma dauna he que deyt abos
Ni pen cap sauta quitera.
Le corasso mavestz touto.
E mout dossamen furtado.

III Belle douce dame chiere,
a vos mi doin e m'otroi;
je n'avrai mes joi'entiere
si je n'ai vos e vos moi.
Mot estes male guerriere
si je muer per bone foi;
mas ja per nulle maniere
no·m partrai de vostre loi.

IV Dauna, io mi rent a bos,
coar sotz la mes bon'e bera
q'anc fos, e gaillard'e pros,
ab que no·m hossetz tan hera.
Mout abetz beras haisos
e color hresc'e noera.
Boste son, e si·bs agos
no·m destrengora hiera.

V Mas tan temo vostro preito,
todo·n son escarmentado.
Por vos ei pen'e maltreito
e meo corpo lazerado:
la noit, can jatz en meu leito,
so mochas vetz resperado;
e car nonca m'aprofeito
falid'ei en mon cuidado.

VI Belhs Cavaliers, tant es car
lo vostr'onratz senhoratges
que cada jorno m'esglaio.
Oi me lasso! que farò
si sele que j'ai plus chiere
me tue, ne sai por quoi?
Ma dauna, he que dey bos
ni per cap Santa Quitera,
mon corasso m'avetz treito
e mot gen favlan furtado.

[I. Now when I see the meadows and orchards and woods turn green, I would begin a "discord" on love, on whose account I am distraught. For a certain lady was wont to love me, but her heart has changed, and so I produce discordance in the rhymes, melodies and languages.

II. I am one who has no happiness, nor shall I ever have it, either in April or in May, if I do not have it from my lady. Certain it is that in her own language I cannot describe her great beauty, which is fresher than the gladiolus flower, and that is why I shall not part from her.

III. Fair, sweet, dear lady, I give and commit myself to you. Never shall I know perfect bliss if I have not you and you me. You are a most treacherous enemy if I die through my good faith; yet I shall in no wise depart from my obedience to you.

IV. Lady, I surrender to you, for you are the kindest and fairest that ever was, and joyous and worthy, if only you were not so cruel to me. Your features are most fair and your complexion fresh and youthful. I am yours, and if I possessed you, nothing would be lacking to me.

V. But I so fear your anger that I am in complete despair. For your sake I endure pain and torture and my body is racked. At night, as I lie in my bed, I wake again and again, and since I gain no advantage for myself thereby, I have failed in my intent.

VI. Fair Knight, so precious to me is your noble sovereignty that each day I am dismayed. Ah me! what shall I do if she whom I cherish most slays me, I know not why? My lady, by the faith that I owe you and by the head of Saint Quiteria, you have wrested my heart from me and stolen it with your most sweet discourse.]

I have preferred Linskill's edition because it offers a slightly more neutral text from the linguistic viewpoint compared to the more recent edition by Tavani (1986: 140-143; 2001: 58-59). The principal differences with this latter edition are as follows (leaving aside differences in graphy and decisions on language). I have also excluded the Italian stanza for which see below. The Occitan stanza is basically the same, the French stanza has at l. 23 *mas ja* / *e ja*:

Gascon stanza:

l. 26 coar sotz la mes / *c*oar ets 'ra mes;
l. 27 q'anc fos / co anc hos;
l. 29 mout / moch;
l. 30 e color hresc'e noera / ab color hresqu'e nouera;
l. 31 Boste son / boste soy;
l. 32 hiera / hiuera.

Galician-Portuguese stanza:

l. 35 por / per;
l. 38 so mochas vetz resperado / so<n> mochas vezes penado;
l. 39 m'aprofeito / m'ei profeito;
l. 40 mon / meu.

tornada:

l. 41 car / cars;
l. 42 lo vostr'onratz / vostre honratz;

l. 43 cada / c<i>ascun;
l. 48 per / peu;
l. 49 corasso / corasso<n>;
l. 50 favlan / faulan.

Tavani's edition is also useful since it provides a complete parallel transcription of all seven manuscripts (1986: 143-147; 2001: 61-66). Here Tavani has followed modern usage in word-division, but also frequently fails to give the precise graphy of words without actually admitting to it; thus we often find *j* instead of *i* (*joy* for *ioy*, *ja* for *ia*, etc., *qu* for *q* (*qu'ieu* for *q'ieu*). At l. 31 in C I read *agues* and not *agos* (required by the rhyme and a Gascon form), which brings C into line with R.

Both these editions provide a composite text, as admitted by their editors though based on slightly different premises. Linskill (1964: 191-192) considers three groups of manuscripts: CEf, MR, Sga[1] and prefers those readings from either of the first two, where they coincide with Sga[1] and especially Sg. Tavani (1986: 118-119) rather sees two groupings of the manuscripts: CEf, MRSga[1], which enables him to have more frequent recourse to *usus scribendi* and *iudicium*, the philologist's ideal in making decisions, according to Bédier! However, it is clear from both editions that in the case of this text the manuscript tradition diverges from what is the norm in troubadour manuscripts, where CR usually form part of the same grouping (Tavani 1986: 117-118) and are defined by Avalle (1961: 95) as "quasi gemelli". Moreover, despite the interest of modern scholars for this particular song, it does not seem to have held the same interest for the compilers of the great Italian songbooks; in Saviotti's words (2017: 90): "La fortuna del trovatore che fa parlare di sé per la propria audace e arguta originalità è, infatti, del tutto legata alla linea 'occidentale' della tradizione manoscritta trobadorica". The most original poems by this innovative troubadour seem to have found favour in Languedoc, in general in the south of France and in Catalonia, where he is also viewed by the compiler of Sg, a "Cerveri Sammlung", as a precursor of Cerveri de Girona (Saviotti 2017: 84-101). *Eras quan vey verdeyar*, in fact, is transmitted exclusively by southern French manuscripts, or manuscripts linked to this area. A case being M, compiled in Naples under Robert the Wise from materials coming mainly from Provence, of which the Angevin kings of Naples were counts (Asperti 1995: 43-88). The inclusion of the *tornada* as an example of a *cobla partida* in the *Leys d'amors*, put together in Toulouse, is further evidence of Raimbaut's popularity in this area.

In approaching this text, it has become a commonplace for scholars of the *descort*, as well as others in languages other than Occitan, to blame imperfections on the scribes who would not have been used to copying different languages and therefore tend to occitanise the text. This is true to a certain extent and may be illustrated by poems using languages other than

Occitan; one example is Raimbaut's above-mentioned *partimen* with Conon de Béthune, *Seigner Coines, jois e pretz et amors* (*BdT* 392, 29), in which Raimbaut addresses Conon in Occitan and Conon answers in French. The following is the second stanza by Conon (Harvey/Paterson 2010: III, 1089-1091), along with the translation by Harvey and Paterson:

> Certes, Raimbaut, lo taiser es folors:
> si ge ne qer merce, per qe l'avrai?
> Pos qe ma dame avra totas valors,
> ja de merci no mes desperarai.
> Qerre merci non es ges poing d'oltrage,
> que Judas fo perduz per son folage
> qui de proier no s'ausa enardir:
> mainz pechadors fai desespers morir.
>
> [For sure, Raimbaut, it is folly to keep silent. If I do not ask for favour, how shall I ever have it? Granted that my lady possesses every virtue, I shall not ever despair of her favour. To ask for favour is not to be guilty of insolence, for Judas was damned for his foolishness in not daring to be so bold as to pray: many a sinner is brought to death by despair].

This may be compared to the same stanza in Saviotti (2017: 143-144):

> Certes, Rambautz, lo taisers es folors:
> si je ne quier merce, per que l'aurai?
> Pois que ma dame aura totas valors,
> ja de merci no mes desperarai.
> † Querer merci non es ges point d'oltrage, †
> qe Judas fo perdutz per son folatge,
> qui de proier no s'ausa enardir.
> Mainz pecadors fai desespers morir.

The text is transmitted by eight manuscripts: C, Da, E, G, I, K, Q and T with the Veneto group Da, I, K preserving the better readings while the others introduce more erroneous forms, with C, according to Saviotti (2017: 145), occitanising the most, but it is clear from both editions that the numerous Occitan forms must go back to a "defective archetype" (Harvey/Paterson 2010: III, 1086), and have led Bec (2003) to doubt Conon's authorship and attribute the entire poem to Raimbaut, on the basis, too, of rhymes and lexicon. Saviotti (2017: 152-155) has recourse to the same arguments to attribute the French stanzas to Conon and argues (2017: 159) that some of the mixed forms present in DaIK could be associated with performance, while in the "western tradition", expressed by the other manuscripts, the problem lies more with the scribes.

A similar gradual move towards Occitan is also illustrated by the manuscript tradition of the well-known song, sometimes called a *rotrouenge*, by Richard the Lionheart, *Ja nus homs pris ne dira sa raison* (RS 1891 = *BdT* 420, 2), composed while he was a prisoner in Germany following the Third Crusade. Here the tradition is complicated by the fact that the text is transmitted in both French and Occitan songbooks, the latter becoming gradually more occitanised, and this has led to some scholars believing that Richard wrote two versions, addressed one to his French and the other to his Occitan vassals. It is now generally accepted that the poem was composed in French; analysis of the language and rhymes confirms this. In fact the problematic rhymes in *-ain* in the two final stanzas, which cannot be occitanised in all cases, has led to the omission of these stanzas in f, the most 'Occitan' of all the manuscripts, thus creating the myth of a second redaction (Spetia 1996; Lee 1998)[5].

Nevertheless, scribes cannot always take the blame for these alterations and it should be recalled that they may also be professionals who were used to copying texts in different languages. An example of this would be the Italian scribe, Iohannes Iacobi, perhaps from Bologna, who copied the version of the Occitan romance *Jaufre* in BnF, MS f. fr. 12571. He is also responsible for a the copy of the French romance, *Florimont* in BnF, MS f. fr. 24376 and the *chanson de geste*, *Aspremont* in Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 470, as well as a collection of religious texts in French and Italian now in Lyons, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 739. On the whole, judging from the text of *Jaufre*, apart from a few traits more typical of Franco-Italian and very few Italian and French forms, no attempt is made to rewrite the text in a different linguistic form (Lee 2006a: 52-54). I would argue that the same may be said for the *descort* whose text emerges fairly clearly from the manuscript tradition and we would not be tempted to consider the presence of different redactions for the different stanzas, nor a complete lack of comprehension on behalf of the scribes. This evidently leads to the conclusion, proposed by Tavani (2001: 92), that while correct forms in the different languages present in the text must be considered as *lectiones difficiliores* belonging to the archetype, Occitan forms that cannot be corrected in any way are to be attributed to Raimbaut, since

> pur riconoscendo a Raimbaut de Vaqueiras una notevole competenza nell'uso delle forme espressive 'straniere' del discordo a del contrasto -, non si può escludere che, a volte, egli stesso abbia impiegato una forma provenzale invece della forma non provenzale corrispondente, a lui probabilmente sconosciuta" (Tavani 2001: 93).

Scribes may have made mistakes, but Raimbaut did not have complete mastery of the different languages. Yet modern philologists have not been able to resist the temptation to improve on Raimbaut's command of languages, including Tavani himself.

5 French songbooks: C, fols. 103^{v}–104^{r}; K, p. 398; N, fols. 180^{r}–180^{v}; O, fols. 62^{v}–63^{r}; U, fols. 104^{v}–105^{r}; X, fols. 252^{r}–252^{v}; za, fol. 137^{r}. Occitan songbooks: f, fol. 43^{v}; P, fol. 22^{r}; S, fol. 1 (fragment).

The least problematic of the different stanzas, naturally, is that in Occitan, followed by that in French where the different scribes have introduced an Occitan final *-a* for French *-e*, for example, or an *x* to represent palatal *ch* /ʃ/ in Sg following Catalan usage. Raimbaut would have been familiar with French, as I have argued above, but he would also have frequented many different speakers of the language during the Fourth Crusade and the years leading up to this. However, the language of stanza III is also correct because, as has been demonstrated convincingly by Brugnolo (1983), it pays homage to Conon de Béthune and his song *Belle doce dame chiere* (Wallensköld 1968: 12), the opening line of which forms the first line of the stanza. Moreover, all the rhymes in *-iere* in stanza III are taken from the first stanza of this poem, though not in the same order, with l. 23 again almost identical to l. 10 in Conon's song: "Car ainc ens nule maniere". The remaining rhyme-words in *-oi*: *otroi*, *moi* ("si je n'ai vos e vos moi"), *bone foi*, *vostre loi* are not present in Conon's production and rather characterise *trouvère* poetry in general, since the underlying discourse of remaining faithful to the same lady, however badly one is treated, a concept carried over into the French lines of the *tornada* where it is suggested that the lady may even kill the lover, is not at all typical of Conon, who rather demands satisfaction, but it is found frequently in other *trouvères*. Raimbaut, therefore, not only knew French, but also French poetry, with which he is able to play with great ability in the *descort*. Considering this, then, one wonders why Tavani, in his 1986 edition, felt the need to begin stanza III as "Bell'e douce dame chiere" rather than with the direct quote from Conon, as in the later edition (2001: 58).

If we now consider the Italian stanza, adjustments to the language are also present, and not always justified. Here the text is identical in both editions by Tavani (1986, pp. 140-142; 2001: 58):

Io son quel que ben non aggio,
ni encora non l'av(e)rò
ni per aprilo ne per maggio,
si per madonna non l'ho;
certo qu'en nisun lenguaggio
sa gran beltà dir non so:
chu fresqu'es que flor de glaggio,
e ja no me'n partirò.

que c<i>ascun jorno m'esglaggio.
Oi me lasso! que farò.

A first problem with this stanza is the term "Italian". As should be clear from the above discussion of standardisation, at the end of the twelfth century when Raimbaut presumably composed this poem, there was no such thing as Italian, just a series of regional varieties

whose features would not necessarily correspond to those of modern standard Italian, nor to medieval Tuscan which was to become the basis of the standard. Raimbaut lived many years in Italy, between Liguria and Piedmont (Montferrat), thus he would have known north-western varieties of Italo-Romance, as he indeed showed some years earlier in composing the *contrasto* with the Genoese lady. This aspect of the text should not be forgotten when approaching the second stanza of the *descort*. A first criticism here would be the decision to change the graphy of l. 14 *beuta*(*t*) in all manuscripts (except Sg: *boutat*) into *beltà* and of the rhyme-words into a form that explicitly recalls the Italian affricate /ʤ/ when all the manuscripts offer *i* or *y*, while using *tg* or *g* for the Occitan affricate: *boscatges*, etc. These forms would normally correspond to /z/ (Rohlfs 1966: I, § 220, § 274, §§ 276-278) and *aia* < HABEO would coincide with results in Liguria and Piedmont. Tavani (2001: 53), on the other hand, justifies his approach with the fact that these intervocalic groups with yod > /j/ in southern Italian dialects, but this overlooks the difficulty of representing these sounds in Occitan, where *i*, *y*, *j* may all be /j/ or /ʤ/; thus it would be wiser to follow the manuscripts here. The decision to write *madonna* and not *ma dona* obviously adds to the impression of correct Italian, as does the choice of l. 9 *io*, found only in f, over the variants *ieu*, *eu*, while *c<i>ascun* in the *tornada* is not present in any manuscript, though *cascun* is in Sg: *c* may indicate the palatal affricate /ts/ or the velar plosive /k/. In l. 15 the form *chu* < PLUS, in M alone, has been preferred to *plus*, *pus* since it is a Ligurian and south Piedmontese form (Rohlfs 1966: I, § 186) and is also present in the *contrasto*. Nevertheless, M, as said before, was compiled and copied in Naples, where PLUS > *chiu*, which could be represented as *chu*. I'm not suggesting not putting *chu* in the text, but one may query as to whether the form is Ligurian or Neapolitan. To some extent the same may be suggested for l.13 *nisun* where Tavani has opted for the interpretation (bolstered by *negun* in a[1] in this case, "It is certain that in no language can I describe her great beauty", rather that Linskill "Certain it is that in her own language I cannot describe her great beauty" offered by the other manuscripts. NE IPSE UNUM > *nisciuno*, *nissuno* (the latter in medieval texts) is a Neapolitan form (Ledgeway 2009: 690), as well as southern Italian. On the whole, the most typically Italian aspect of the stanza are the verb forms at the rhyme ending in *-o*, or simply (*h*)*o*, a feature already exploited in the first Genoese stanza of the *contrasto*.

Much the same may be said of the two remaining stanzas, in Gascon and Galician, where modern editions have tended to increase typical features of the language compared to what must have been Raimbaut's original text. Among the salient features of Gascon are *b* for *v*: *bera*, *boste*, *si·bs* and initial *f* > *h*, both traits shared to a certain extent with Castilian. Also -ll- > -*r*- *bera*, *novera*, conservation of labio-velars, as in *coar* (/kw/) and *gualharda* (/gw/). Following Tavani's reconstruction of the Gascon stanza in 1986, Bec published an article containing a new edition, in which he mostly followed Tavani, but also made other choices, some of which Tavani accepted in his 2001 edition, although he remains convinced of the

emendation at l. 26 which introduces the Gascon article *ra*, not present in the manuscripts and which Bec (1987: 284) considers of limited usage.

Gascon stanza in Bec (1987: 287):

Dauna, io mi rent a bos,
coar eras m'etz bon' e bera,
ancse etz gualhard' e pros,
(/coar etz la mes bon' e bera
q'anc hos, e gualhard' e pros/),
ab que no·m hossetz tan hera.
Mout auetz beras haissos
ab color hresqu' e nauera.
Bos m'auetz e si·bs agos,
no·m destrengora hiuera.

Edition proposed by Tavani (2001: 58) after Bec's revision:

Dauna, io mi rent a bos,
coar ets 'ra mes bon' e bera
co anc hos, e gualhard' e pros,
ab que no·m hossetz tan hera:
mout auetz beras haissos
ab color hresqu' e nauera,
boste soy, e si·bs agos
no·m destrengora hiuera.

These forms are present in the manuscript tradition and most are justified in the text. However, all the editions listed have included forms where *f-* > *h-*, most of which are only present in Sg, with the exception of l. 29 *haisos* also in R; l. 32 *hiera* in f (compared to *fiera* CEMR, *çihera* Sg, where the *-h-* is still present). However, a question could be when exactly Gascon, which did not have a long tradition of written texts at the time, began to use the initial *h-* in writing, and whether it is justifiable to use it in the text on the basis of Sg, a fourteenth-century manuscript from an area fairly close to Gascony. In Castilian, the change /f- > h- > ɵ/ is not complete before the sixteenth century and *h-* not used in writing until the late sixteenth century, though the change is recorded by Nebrija (Penny 1991: 79-82; 90-91). In point of fact, a Gascon document written down around 1200, round about the time when Raimbaut composed the *descort*, regularly uses *f-* and never *h-*: *forsa*, *fazia*, *fos*, etc. (Di Girolamo/Lee 1996: 141). Bec (1987: 280), who also points out that, like in Castilian, this phenomenon was not recorded in medieval Gascon texts, still adopts the forms with *h-* in his text.

Finally, probably the stanza that seems to have caused most difficulties for the scribes was stanza V in Galician-Portuguese, where all manuscripts offer some quite erroneous

readings, and more especially M. The stanza has been closely examined again by Tavani, both in his 2001 study, which anticipates that of 2002, where he goes over the editions of the stanza proposed by Jean-Marie d'Heur and Mercedes Brea in order to criticise the excessive zeal of the former in his attempt to "correct" the text compared to Brea, whose text is close to Tavani's own.

Stanza V in d'Heur (Tavani 2001: 94; 2002: 40):

Ca tan tem'o vosso preito,
tod' eu son escarmentado:
por vos ei pen', e maltreito
é meu corpo lazerado.
De noit' eu jaç 'en meu leito,
son muitas vezes penado,
e ca nunca mi-a proveito
falid' é en meu cuidado.

meu corasso<n> m' avetz treyto
e mot gen faulan furtado.

Stanza V in Brea (Tavani 2001: 94; 2002: 40):

Mas tan temo vostro preito,
todo·n son escarmentado;
por vos ei pen'e maltreito
é meu corpo lazerado;
la noit, can jaç' en meu leito,
son moitas vez espertado,
e, ca nonca m 'a proveito,
falid' ei en meu cuidado.

meu coraçon m' avetz treito
e mou gen favlan furtado.

Tavani repeats here the concept that it is justifiable to consider as genuine all the Galician forms found in the manuscripts, even if only in one, and to consider them *lectiones difficiliores*, which the scribes would not have been able to correct by themselves, if only because they would not have sufficient knowledge of the language (2002: 39-40), while the many Occitanisms must again be attributed to Raimbaut. Thus, for Tavani (2002: 41-42), Brea is sometimes too timid in her reconstruction of the original text, as when she prefers *vez* in l. 38 in her edition to *vezes* in his and d'Heur's; the form is present in M and a[1]. d'Heur, on the other hand, "ha 'tradotto' l'intero testo in galego, anche quei segmenti testuali che certamente galeghi non sono" (Tavani 2002: 40). Moreover, he has had recourse to the more

typically Portuguese forms found in the so-called "dionisian" graphy (*grafia dionisina*), used from the time of Don Dinis (1279-1325), rather than the "alphonsine" graphy (Larson 2018: 26), prevalent in the earlier stages of Galician poetry at the time Raimbaut was active and which more closely resembles Castilian forms, one reason why some scholars have doubted that the text was in Galician-Portuguese. d'Heur, therefore, opts for forms such as *vosso* for *vostro*, *muitas* for *mochas* or *moitas*, *nunca* for *nonca*, while the more Galician forms are suggested by the variant readings of the manuscripts and d'Heur's solutions find no justification in these (Tavani 2002: 41).

I would agree with Tavani here and the general agreement between the text he proposes with Brea's and even Linskill's seem to confirm a careful approach, which does not always characterise the approach to the other languages, such as Gascon *f-*/*h-* and Italian *-ggio*. His comments concerning d'Heur's edition, indeed, do correspond to the tendency of previous editors to adjust the text to each language: *h-* for *f-* in the Gascon stanza is preferred by Linskill and, long before him, by Crescini (1892: 71-72), based on what I believe is the erroneous view that Raimbaut knew these languages well. Tavani is probably right in stating that the language he seems to know least is Galician and he is quite correct in thinking that when Raimbaut's knowledge of one of the languages is shaky, he has recourse to Occitan (2002: 40), thus, it would be wrong to try and eliminate all the Occitan forms when many are obviously to be credited to the author.

As a matter of fact, taking into consideration that the most stable part of a lyric poem in the manuscripts are the rhymes, it would appear that Raimbaut's technique in composing in the different languages was also to concentrate on the rhymes, which is where his linguistic know-how appears to be most competent. While the French stanza pays homage to *trouvère* poetry and to Conon de Béthune in particular, thus employing rhymes that are typical of Conon and other poets, the Italian stanza has recourse, as also said before, to verb forms with final tonic *-o*, that characterise the language. The Gascon stanza stresses the passage -ll- > *-r-*: *bera*, *novera*, the imperfect subjunctive *agos*, at the rhyme, as well as more generally the passage v- > *b-*: *boste*; *bos*, etc. The Galician stanza has rhymes using one of the more salient features of the language, the falling diphthongs, in this case *-ei*: *preito*, *maltreito*, *leito*. In effect, Raimbaut has scattered correct expressions here and there in the different stanzas when he knew them, otherwise he used Occitan. This might be compared to a phenomenon characterising Occitan epic poetry which has often been considered as tributary to French epic, even as a translation of French poems, due to the frequent presence of *laisses* with rhymes in *-er*/*-ier*, where Occitan would require *-ar*. Nevertheless, and I am specifically thinking of the poem *Daurel e Beton* here, some of these forms would not actually be French, in that they do not reflect sound changes in French. Infinitives in -are > *-ier* only when preceded by a palatal sound, as in caricare > *chargier*, manducare > *mangier*, where /k + a/ palatalise; thus

forms such as *alier* < *allare (< ambulare?), *amier* < amare, *parlier* < parabolare present in the poem, are not justified phonetically (Lee 1991: 34). This feature, which Avalle (1961: 78-80) has defined as Franco-Occitan, served to recall to some extent the French tradition and thus to seem French; I would argue that Raimbaut's intention was to "seem" Italian, Gascon or Galician, by producing a mixed language that underscored the salient features of each language. This would probably not have troubled an audience that did not necessarily know these languages and, moreover, was listening to them in a performance accompanied by music.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Raimbaut had what we would now call a flair for languages and an interest in other traditions. However, we are talking about an author writing at the turn of the thirteenth century, a time when many Romance languages were just beginning to come into their own as far as literature was concerned. Indeed, Tavani (2001: 66-68), for instance, sees in the *descort* a play on languages that had developed a literary tradition at this stage and those that had not, with an alternation between three that had done so: Occitan, French, Galician, and two that had not: Italian and Gascon. While there is no question as far as the first two languages are concerned, and Gascon had not developed a poetic tradition at this stage, though, as we have seen, it did have a *scripta* employed in documents, the question as to the status of Italian and Galician is less obvious and impacts on Tavani's analysis of the poem's structure. Considering the case of Italian, or varieties of Italo-Romance, it used to be a commonplace to point to Raimbaut's *contrasto* as the first use of a form of Italian in lyric poetry deriving from the troubadour tradition, but recent research, along with fortunate finds in libraries and archives, has shown that such a tradition probably goes back a few years, providing a background not only for Raimbaut's use of Italian but also the development of the Sicilian School of poetry some thirty years later. Important discoveries for this early Italian tradition are the lyrics transcribed in the *Carta ravennate*, an act concerning the sale of a property in 1127 found in the Archivio Storico Arcivescovile in Ravenna, dated 1180-1210 by Stussi (1999), who first described the poems: *Quando eu stavo in le tu' cathene* and *Fra tuti qui ke fece lu Creature*. This was followed at the end of the 1990s by the discovery of the so-called *Frammento piacentino* in the Archivio Capitolare of the Basilica of Saint Antonino in Piacenza, *O bella, bella, bella madona per r[…]*. Vela (2005), who was the first to attempt a reconstruction of the text, believes that it is a *contrasto*; though this has been contested by Brugnolo (2007: 171-205), it would seem to be an example of a more popular register, harking back to the French tradition (Di Girolamo 2008: XXIII-XXIX). A further more recent find is that by Bertoletti (2014) of the Italian translation of the *alba* by Giraut de Borneil, *Reis glorios*, dated around 1240 (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS E 15 sup. 84v), later than the other texts but nevertheless proof that from the end of the twelfth to the beginning of the thirteenth century a courtly poetic tradition of some kind was forming in Italy. Moreover, it is significant that this translation, copied by a Ligurian scribe, hails from

Piedmont, precisely the area frequented by Raimbaut and confirmation of the importance of the "north-west passage" for troubadour lyric into Italy and its subsequent development there (Bertolucci 2003).

These new findings also reveal that poetic traditions, such as that of the Sicilian School, do not just appear from nowhere. This must be true for troubadour lyric in general, but also of Galician-Portuguese poetry, since the question has often been asked as to whether Raimbaut could have known this poetic tradition. The answer is that theoretically he might have been aware of it since the earliest poem to have come down to us is generally thought to be the political *sirventes*, *Ora faz ost' o senhor de Navarra*, by Johan Soarez de Pávia, dated around 1200. Interestingly, the metrical form of this poem is the same as Conon de Béthune's crusade song, *Ahi! Amors com dure departie*, which leads us to ask whether there existed a group of poets linked by their admiration for Conon. This is difficult to say, but we may presume that poetry in Galician-Portuguese probably began to circulate around this time, when Raimbaut composed his *descort*; Johan Soarez himself is said to have composed at least six *cantigas d'amor* that are now lost. Johan Soarez was from Portugal, but as well as his lands in the north of Portugal, he held fiefs in the Crown of Aragon near Monzón, Tudela and Pamplona, close to the border with Navarre. These lands were invaded by Sancho VII of Navarre, hence his attack on the king in the poem and the appeal to the King of Aragon, who is not mentioned by name, but was most probably Peter II (1196-1213). The fact that he frequented the Aragonese court and that his missing songs are courtly love-songs also suggests a familiarity with the Occitan tradition (Lanciani/Tavani 1993: 361-362).

This links up with the question as to how Raimbaut came into contact with these languages and poetic traditions. As far as French and Italian are concerned, it should be obvious from the above that Raimbaut had had contacts with the language as well as the literature, while he could have had some contact with Gascon either in his native Provence or at Boniface's court. It should be recalled that Gascon was considered a separate variety from Occitan, still in the fourteenth century at the time the *Leys d'Amors* were composed, and Gascony gravitated towards a different political entity, being part of the lands of the Dukes of Aquitaine until the death of Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1204 when it passed to the kings of England. The question of Galician is more complicated and most probably is to be seen in the light of the above comments concerning a poet such as Johan Soarez de Pávia and his connection to the Aragonese kings, who were also counts of Provence. Raimbaut, of course, was from Provence and, despite the long periods he spent in Italy and, at the end of his life, in Greece, he also travelled in Provence, moving from one protector to the other. His main point of reference in the area was Guilhem III des Baux, count of Orange, towards whom Raimbaut probably also had juridical obligations since Vaqueiras was in his lands. Guilhem was related to Hugh III des Baux, who was to take on the title of viscount of Marseilles, and at whose court

Raimbaut also spent time (Guida/Larghi 2013: 445-449). Marseilles was within the lands of the Aragonese counts of Provence. I would argue that it is in this Provençal context that Raimbaut might have come into contact with Galician poetry.

Raimbaut, as is generally claimed, and quite rightly, is one of the more original and innovative troubadours, not only because of his experimentation with new genres and with material deriving from the French tradition in particular, but also because a consistent part of his production is autobiographical, a novelty in the medieval tradition. In this sense, his most important poem, is the epic letter, a *salut* addressed to Boniface requesting material support, written in epic meter, which goes over events they had faced together over the years, from their youth in Liguria and Piedmont, to the Sicilian campaign in support of Henry VI, to the Fourth Crusade. As Saviotti has shown (2017: 41-62; 71-73), Raimbaut describes his travels in great detail, both here and in other poems, such as the *partimen* with Albert of Malaspina (BdT 392, 1), alluding to some quite obscure place-names. Mention is never made to visits to Spain, nor would he have felt the need to go there either in his own wanderings, or with Boniface who travelled around France (Phillips 2004: 86-88) after being elected head of the Crusade in 1201, but never to Spain.

It has also been claimed, by Tavani for example (2001: 80, 82), that Raimbaut would have composed his *descort* at Boniface's "international" court during preparations for the Crusade, addressing it presumably to a multilingual audience. Again, however, this court could well have included French, even Gascon, Italian and Occitan lords, but probably not from the Iberian peninsula. Indeed, apart from the involvement of Boniface, probably as the brother of lords who were engaged in the crusading movement in Greece and at Jerusalem (Tavani 2001: 72) and of Venice, who funded the campaign, the Fourth crusade was essentially a French affair with the Iberian kingdoms specifically excluded by the pope, on the basis of their being taken up by the *Reconquista* at the time (Phillips 2004: 7). Nevertheless, Raimbaut, who also frequently has recourse to names of nations and peoples, writes in his epic letter:

> E vos pensetz de far defensio
> e·l coms de Flandres; e frances e breto
> et alaman, lombart e berguonho
> et espanhol, proensal e guasco,
> tug fom renguat, cavalier e pezo.
> (II, 45-50)
>
> [And you looked to the defence, and the Count of Flanders also; and Frenchmen and Bretons, and Germans, Lombards and Burgundians, and Spaniards, Provençals and Gascons, we all stood arrayed, horsemen and footmen][6].

6 Text and translation Linskill (1964).

Saviotti (2017: 71) points out how this list almost corresponds to the letter to the Romance languages of the *descort*, along with languages that Raimbaut ignored (German and Breton). Who might the *espanhol* be? Historians do not record this. Moreover, Saviotti (2017: 72) also comments, rightly in my view, that the term *espanhol* was not employed in the modern sense of 'Spain' and more probably refers to the Iberian peninsula as a whole, which was made up of different kingdoms, including Aragon and the County of Barcelona. Raimbaut might have some idea of the use of Galician for poetry in the Iberian peninsula, but probably not of the political makeup of the area. One need only think too of Dante who, a century later in *De vulgari eloquentia* (I, 8, 5), still affirmed that the *lingua d'oc* was spoken by the *Yspani*, presumably referring to Catalonia and the Crown of Aragon, which at the time would probably have been the most familiar part of the Iberian peninsula for an Italian. Raimbaut would no doubt have been aware of the fact that the Catalans and Aragonese composed their lyric poetry in Occitan, while the rest of the *espanhols* used another variety, that is Galician-Portuguese. Thus, he has employed this language to characterise the Iberian peninsula.

All this also impacts on the circumstances, and to a certain extent the date, of composition of the *descort*. Clearly the poem belongs to the texts dedicated to *Belh cavalier*, a *senhal* for Boniface's daughter Beatrice, and perhaps, as Saviotti (2017: 31-40) has convincingly argued, to Raimbaut himself. Whatever the case, these poems are associated with his presence at the court of Montferrat, where the *descort* must have been composed, as most scholars who have discussed this poem would agree. Scholars also tend to agree on the possible date of the poem as being around 1199-1201, but no later than 1201 when Boniface was elected leader of the crusade and Raimbaut was not apparently at his side, and would not be until 1203, when he seems to have finally decided to take up the cross and follow his lord (Guida/Larghi 2013: 447). Tavani (2001: 66-83), who underscores the international component at Boniface's court, believes that the *descort* and the languages employed serve political ends and stand as a homage to some of the main contenders of the Fourth Crusade. The choice of Italian and Gascon, that, it will be remembered, he considered non-literary languages, would point to two ladies of the high nobility, Constance of Hauteville and Blanche of Navarre. Constance, Queen of Sicily, who had died in 1198, was the widow of the emperor Henry VI, whose brother and successor, Philip of Swabia, was both lord, but also a friend of Boniface's. Blanche of Navarre, who would have inspired the use of Gascon, was the wife of Thibaut, count of Champagne, who had been elected leader of the crusade in 1199, when he held the famous tourney at Écry-sur-Aisne, where Fouques de Neuilly preached the crusade. By 1201, Thibaut had died and Boniface was named as leader. Indeed, on this basis, Tavani dates the *descort* to November 1199 when the tourney was held at Écry (2001: 82).

This reconstruction of events is plausible and 1199 a possible date. Besides Raimbaut seems to have been in Provence until 1198 and, as said above, after 1201 he does not seem to

have immediately followed Boniface on the Crusade. Nevertheless, I am not convinced that the motivation for composing the *descort* was political, but rather that it was a text conceived more for entertainment, whose aim was also to show off Raimbaut's ability as a poet. This last period that he spent at the court at Montferrat, and more particularly from 1200-1201, was fairly productive and he is believed to have composed six love-songs as well as some of his more original poems, from the modern point of view, *Engles un novel descort* (*BdT* 392, 16), *Kalenda maia* (*BdT* 392, 9), *Truan mala guerra* (*Lo Carros*: *BdT* 392, 32), as well as the multilingual *descort*, all of which are linked by the *senhal*, *Bel cavalier* (Guida/Larghi 2013: 447). That these latter poems were in some ways not considered quite at the same level as the love songs seems to be borne out by the manuscript tradition, as said above. Saviotti (2017: 86-92) comments on the fact that the more traditional *cansos* are to be found in the Veneto songbooks, that evidently preferred this genre and that they seem to go back to a collection of Raimbaut's songs that had begun to be put together at the court of Montferrat. The remaining poems from this period, on the other hand, have been copied in manuscripts of the more western tradition, with the exception of *BdT* 392, 16, also in Da, but not A, I, K, a tradition that has been considered here for *Eras quan vey verdeyar*. Thus, from the outset Raimbaut's production seems to have been divided into more classic songs, typical of the mainstream of troubadour poetry, and more eccentric compositions that were perhaps considered less important.

I would suggest that this is because the audience, and perhaps Raimbaut himself, viewed them as amusement for the court. From the battle between ladies of the *Carros*, to the musical style of the *estampida* and the different versification or languages of the two *descorts*, their main function was entertainment, while at the same time enabling Raimbaut to show off his skills. After all, in concluding the epic letter, he defines himself as "cavalier e jocglar", two roles of which he seems to be proud, as already emerges in the *partimen* with Albert of Malaspina, who pokes fun at him for these two roles:

> Per Dieu, Rambaut, segon la mia esmansa
> fesetz que fols qan laissetz lo messier
> don aviatz honor e benananssa;
> e cel qe·us fetz de joglar cavallier
> vos det trebaill, enoi e malananssa
> e pensamen, ira et encombrier
> e tolc vos joi e pretz et alegranssa:
> que puois montetz de ronssin en destrier
> non feset[z] colp de spaza ni de lanssa.
> [*BdT* 392, 1, ll. 37-45] (Harvey/Paterson 2010: I, 70)

> [As God is my witness, Raimbaut, in my opinion you acted like a fool when you abandoned the occupation which brought you honour and comfort, and the man who promoted you from minstrel to knight, brought you torment, trouble, discomfort, anxiety, grief and sorrow, and robbed you of joy, reputation and happiness: for since you changed your mount from a nag to a charger, you have never struck a blow with sword or lance.]

We often forget that the court was a place of social gatherings, not only for political intrigue, thus Raimbaut, as a *jongleur*, as Boniface's *jocglar*, would have been called upon to entertain those present. Much later a personality, such as Leonardo da Vinci, was employed by Ludovico il Moro in Milan as an organiser of events at court, not only as an artist and inventor; indeed his inventions served to move the machines that were used to create the scenery at these events and surprise the audience. In the same way, we may imagine that Raimbaut surprised the court with his more original poems. Again the conclusion of *Kalenda maia* seems to answer to a precise challenge to produce something different, to compose a song to the melody of the *estampida*, or *estampie*, perhaps really brought to the court by the "dos joglars de Franza" mentioned by the *razo*:

> Bastida,
> finida,
> N'Engles,
> ai l'estampida
> (*BdT* 392, 9, ll. 71-72)

> [Lord *Engles*, the "estampida" I have composed is ended][7].

Surprise here would be created by the rhythm, while in the *descort*, obviously, it would be achieved by the different languages. I would argue that it did not really matter who understood these languages, bearing in mind that anyway the Romance languages were (and still are to some extent) mutually comprehensible. Saviotti (2017: 164) talks of *commutazione*, using the same term employed by Varvaro for translations from one Romance language to another where little attention is paid to the accuracy of the language. In the same way, it would not have been too important to know the languages perfectly, one could always supply a term from a familiar language to fill the gap, to have recourse to code-switching in effect, as Raimbaut himself did, every time he used Occitan for those words he needed but did not know. The main point was to seem to use the languages correctly, to create something new and unexpected, following what had always characterised multilingual poetry at the time, which played on the juxtaposition and contrast between the different languages. In this way, Raimbaut

7 Text and translation, Linskill (1964).

> ha teso e talvolta spezzato il chiuso cerchio della poesia provenzale classica [...] (e) si perviene alla creazione di nuovi moduli letterari, i quali possono accogliere una *res* che la tradizione non autorizzava ad assumere (Bertolucci 1963: 67).

Manuscripts

Occitan songbooks

A = Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS lat. 5232.
C = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (=BnF), MS fonds fr. 856.
Da = Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS α.R.4.4.
E = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 1749.
G = Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS R.71 sup.
I = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 854.
K = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 12473.
M = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 12474.
N = New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 819.
P = Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Pl. XLI.42.
Q = Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 2909.
R = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 22543.
S = Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 269.
Sg = Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 146.
T = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 15211.
a^1 = Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS Campori ɣ.N.8.4, 11, 12, 13.
f = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 12472.

French songbooks

C = Bern, Bürgerbibliothek, MS 389.
K = Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 5198.
N = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 845.
O = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 846.
U = Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 20050.
X = Paris, BnF, MS nouvelles acquisitions françaises 1050.
za = Zagreb, Bibliothèque métropolitaine, MS MR 92.

Other Manuscripts

Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 470.
London, British Library, MS Royal 20 D I.
Lyons, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 739.

Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS E 15 sup.
Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 12571.
Paris, BnF, MS fonds fr. 24376.
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Ravenna, Archivio Storico Arcivescovile (*Carta ravennate*).

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