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as lords of their lands the princes had the duty to protect and defend their people. In a charter of Geoffrey Martel to Saint-Serge at Angers of 1046–9 certain customs are granted 'excepto . . . proelio generali pro defensione regni aut principis', excepting service for the defence of the principality or prince.[54] The princes were to uphold the ideals of peace and freedom, many directing the peace and truce of God movements in their own lands.[55] They fought hostile castellans to uphold these ideals, and, perhaps more to the point, their own powers—and they developed their own administrations. In this they had the backing of the church, over which again they exercised regalian rights in various degrees. Thus Fulbert of Chartres wrote of 'episcopis eius'[56] of Duke William of Aquitaine. In Normandy, ducal domination over the church was very strong, and papal legates were not given precedence over the local bishops, a contrast with the Île de France. The counts of Blois-Champagne controlled only a few bishoprics, but these they hung on to with some determination.[57] It is true that the French kings controlled more bishops than any single prince—a legacy of inheritance and of a special alliance with the church. But this did not enable them to intervene in the ecclesiastical affairs of the stronger principalities without the prince's consent. The king was in effect merely a territorial prince in his own lands; the territorial princes were kings in theirs. Indeed the only real difference between them was the royal title, conferred by the ceremony of crowning and special unction, and this the princes did not have—apart from the dukes of Normandy as kings of England.[58] But with the lack of emphasis on the king's sacral powers, a far cry from the days of Saint Louis, this distinction appears to have been unimportant in real terms. In the eleventh century the princes were the king's equals to all intents and purposes—and they were to remain so well into the twelfth. It is easy to exaggerate the growth of royal power under Louis VI and Louis VII. Not until the reign of Philip Augustus did the king become the dominant power in France.

But why did the royal power survive? One answer seems to be that it posed little real threat to the princes in the heyday of their authority. The king's title was never denied, the attributes which he held and for the most part shared with the princes were never forgotten. But the fact that his power was weak and that he behaved like a territorial prince—if one with a slight difference—made the princes treat him as such. Odo II of Blois, the bane of the lives of Robert the Pious and Henry I, and described by Herman Contract as 'princeps gallicae Campaniae',[59] is reputed by another contemporary chronicler, Wipo, frequently to have declared 'quod numquam rex fieri, sed semper magister esse regis vellet',[60] This attitude—'I don't want to be king, just his master'—explains and also epitomizes much in the relationship between the king and the princes in eleventh-century France. The princes were generally indifferent to the royal office itself, but were far more interested in practical power. Hence the history of France in the eleventh century is very far from being the history of its kings.

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[54] Werner, 'Kingdom and principality', pp. 254–5; Guillot, ii. 93 (no. 118).

[55] Werner, 'Kingdom and principality', pp. 255–6; e.g. M. de Boüard, 'Sur les origines de la trêve de Dieu en Normandie', *Annales de Normandie*, viii (1958), 423–40.

[56] *Letters of Fulbert*, pp. 164–5 (no. 92).

[57] Werner, 'Kingdom and principality', pp. 253–4; Bur, pp. 151–92.

[58] M. Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J. E. Anderson (1973), pp. 108–30. The princes, like the Capetians, also associated their heirs with them as rulers (A. W. Lewis, 'Anticipatory association of the heir in early Capetian France', *American Hist. Rev.*, lxxxiii (1978), 906–27).

[59] *Recueil des Historiens*, xi. 18.

[60] *Ibid.*, xi. 4.

# Richard I and Berengaria of Navarre

FROM THE mid twelfth century to the end of the thirteenth century the five reigning queens of England were Eleanor of Aquitaine, Berengaria of Navarre, Isabella of Angoulême, Eleanor of Provence and Eleanor of Castile. Simply to list these names is to suggest that their husbands had important political and diplomatic interests in south-western Europe. On the other hand to read what historians have written about the kings of England in this period is to gain the impression that this was not the case. Historians have tended to concentrate almost exclusively on the lands on either side of the English Channel, on the area of the old Anglo-Norman realm. It is easy enough to understand why they have chosen to confine their history within these narrow geographical limits. The northern Plantagenet lands and, above all, England are relatively rich in the kind of documentation to which historians of politics have grown accustomed: narrative sources and the records of central government. By contrast, there is relatively little of this type of evidence to be found in the lands which comprised the southern part of the Plantagenet empire. Although this difference may, in practice, cause historians to neglect the south,[1] we should not assume that the Plantagenets themselves shared this attitude. The paucity of familiar kinds of evidence may imply that politically and culturally, the south was a very different sort of society from the north; but it does not mean that the Plantagenets were northerners who believed that the south did not matter.

In this article, by focusing attention on just one of these royal marriages, I hope to suggest that if we are to understand the Plantagenets we must be prepared to travel south—as they did when they chose their queens. At the same time an investigation of the circumstances of Richard I's marriage should help to dispel two myths: the old, but still vigorous myth that he was a negligent king who was 'a total loss in the counsel-chamber',[2] as well as the flourishing modern myth about his activities in the bed-chamber.

The well-known facts about the marriage are few and can be quickly summarized. Berengaria of Navarre was brought to Richard's court, then at Messina in Sicily, in March 1191. She accompanied the crusader-king on his journey east and they were married in Cyprus, at Limassol, on 12 May 1191. After the crusade they saw little of each other and there were no children. These facts can be fitted quite easily into the conventional portrait of Richard as an irresponsible crusader, indifferent to serious matters of politics like the succession to the throne, sacrificing his kingdom's future for the sake of present pleasures. As a result no historian has bothered to give them much thought.

[1] The most notable exception to this was Sir Maurice Powicke, the only English historian of this period to give due weight to the affairs of the south-west, see F. M. Powicke, *The 13th Century* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 95–119, 234–318—though these are probably the least read pages in a book which is difficult to read. Powicke's references to Richard's marriage in *The Loss of Normandy, 1189–1204* (2nd edn., Manchester, 1961), pp. 85–6, 98, make it plain that he saw its diplomatic significance. However it is only through an investigation of the extraordinary circumstances of the wedding that we can see just how important it in fact was. Moreover—though Powicke himself would certainly not have liked this—his *Loss of Normandy*, precisely because it concentrates on Normandy, tends to reinforce the impression that the south did not matter much. In this article, as in much else, I am grateful to Mr. John Prestwich and Professor Christopher Brooke for their help and advice.

[2] J. Brundage, *Richard Lionheart* (New York, 1974), p. 260.

If they are mentioned anywhere they are simply stated as though they were 'ordinary facts' telling us nothing that we would not expect. In fact they are extra-ordinary and remarkable. Plantagenet kings did not ordinarily get married in Cyprus. It is true, of course, that Richard was going on crusade, but if he was anxious to get married, why had he not married in the twelve months which elapsed between the death of his father in July 1189 and the start of the crusade in July 1190? On the other hand, if he was reluctant to get married, why not use the crusade as an excuse to postpone a wedding?[5] The hypothesis which will be advanced here is that marrying Berengaria of Navarre while on his way to Jerusalem was an ingenious diplomatic device deliberately adopted by Richard in order to cut his way through a thicket of political problems, and that this in itself gives some indication of the importance which he attached to the alliance with Navarre.

Berengaria left the court of her father, King Sancho VI, at some date towards the end of 1190.[4] Her husband-to-be was the most powerful ruler in western Europe: king of England, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, count of Anjou. For the last fifteen or sixteen years he had been actively involved in the political and military life of the Angevin empire, but like most sensible princes he had delayed marriage until he had entered upon his inheritance—until he was in a position to assess accurately his political and diplomatic needs. He was now thirty-three years old, a famous soldier looking forward with confidence to the great task ahead of him: the recapture of Jerusalem. He was the most eligible bachelor in Europe and as Berengaria, the daughter of a minor Spanish king, travelled to meet him, she may well have felt that she had cause to congratulate herself on her good fortune—except for one thing: Richard was betrothed to someone else.

More than twenty years earlier, at the treaty of Montmirail in January 1169, Henry II and Louis VII had agreed that Richard should marry Alice, Louis's second daughter by his second wife, Constance of Castile.[5] Alice was handed over to Angevin custody, and although the marriage ceremony had never been performed, the betrothal had been formally confirmed on several occasions, most recently in July 1189, in an agreement between Philip Augustus and Richard which was made immediately after the Old King's death.[6] It is clear that it would not be easy for Richard to withdraw from this long-standing engagement. To do so would seriously jeopardize the alliance with Philip which

[3] This would have been a perfectly reasonable excuse and had, in fact, already been used. By the terms of the July 1189 agreement between Henry II and Philip Augustus, Richard's marriage to Alice was postponed until after his return from crusade (Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., Rolls Ser., 1867), ii. 70).

[4] This is based upon the evidence that her party, conducted by Eleanor of Aquitaine, had reached Lodi (near Milan) by 20 Jan. 1191 (J. F. Böhmer, *Regesta Imperii*, IV. iii: *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Heinrich VI*, ed. G. Baaken (Cologne, 1972), no. 116, p. 51).

[5] Constance of Castile died on 4 Oct. 1160 in giving birth to her, so by the time of the treaty of Montmirail Alice was about 8 years and 3 months old. Her betrothal to Richard had been a subject of discussion at least since the spring of 1168 (letter of John of Salisbury to Baldwin, archdeacon of Tornes, *Letters of John of Salisbury*, ii, ed. W. J. Miller and C. N. L. Brooke (Oxford, 1979), pp. 564–6). See also Ralph de Diceto, *Opera Historica*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., Rolls Ser., 1876), i. 331 and *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., Rolls Ser., 1879–80), i. 208.

[6] It had first been confirmed at Nonancourt in Sept. 1177 (Howden, *Gesta*, i. 191). Then, after an interlude during which Henry toyed with the idea of marrying Alice to his youngest son, John, and Richard to a daughter of Frederick Barbarossa, it was confirmed again in March 1186 (*ibid.*, i. 306, 319, 344). On this ephemeral diplomatic episode see F. Trauz, *Die Könige von England und das Reich, 1272–1377 Mit einem Rückblick auf ihr Verhältnis zu den Staufern* (Heidelberg, 1961), p. 76. Finally the betrothal was confirmed twice in July 1189, once before Henry II's death and once after it (Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 70, 74).



had been the pivot of Richard's policy since November 1188. It was this alliance which had enabled Richard to fight for his inheritance and which was now an essential part of the preparations for the Third Crusade. With the lessons of the years since 1177 before his eyes, no serious crusader could be ignorant of the damaging effects of the long drawn-out hostility between Capetian and Angevin. Moreover since December 1183 the question of Alice's marriage had been linked with the sensitive problem of the Norman Vexin[7]—an area of vital strategic importance which Richard could ill afford to put at risk.

All these were facts which must have been well known to King Sancho when he allowed Berengaria to leave Navarre in search of a husband. How was it that he had been persuaded to send his daughter on what, on the face of it, might well have turned out to be a humiliating wild goose chase? Few historians have given any thought to the preliminaries to Richard's marriage, but those who have are unanimous in stating that Sancho was persuaded by Eleanor of Aquitaine. She, it was said, 'went in person to Spain to conduct the negotiations and to escort Berengaria to Sicily'.[8] For Edmond-René Labande it was Eleanor who saw that Richard's marriage was a political necessity and took action in order to bring it about.[9] Elizabeth Brown, the most recent and by far the most level-headed historian of Eleanor, takes the same view. She writes that

> in an even grander display of her power in matters domestic and political, she [Eleanor] then arranged, and perhaps personally negotiated, the marriage of Richard and Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre. Thus she set aside his long-standing engagement to Alice ... If Henry II had, as the gossips said, actually dallied with Alice, Eleanor may have been motivated by disgust and spite.[10]

In attributing all the initiative to Eleanor, historians are lending support to the traditional picture of Richard as an enthusiastic crusader who took no thought for the future. He went off 'without designating an heir',[11] apparently indifferent to the succession problem. Eventually his mother 'bullied him into taking Berengar of Navarre, whom she had brought from Spain for the purpose'.[12]

But there is, in fact, not a shred of evidence to show that it was Eleanor who had conducted the negotiations. Historians have taken it for granted that she did, partly because she escorted Berengaria to Sicily and partly because of their belief that Richard was uninterested in such matters. They have assumed—without evidence—that the negotiations filled a gap in Eleanor's itinerary, between 6 April 1190 when she was with Richard at Argentan in Normandy and 20 January 1191 when she and Berengaria arrived at Lodi. The effect of this

[7] Howden, *Gesta*, i. 343–4, ii. 74. In 1158 Louis VII had designated the Norman Vexin as the *maritagium* of his daughter Margaret (Alice's elder sister) on the occasion of her betrothal to Henry II's eldest son Henry. After the Young King's death in June 1183, Henry II was determined to retain the Norman Vexin and the possibility that it might be regarded as Alice's *maritagium* was raised. For further discussions see below pp. 165–6. There is a valuable appendix on the Vexin in L. Landon, *The Itinerary of King Richard I* (Pipe Roll Soc., new ser., xiii, 1935), pp. 219–34.

[8] Landon, p. 227 n. 6.

[9] E.-R. Labande, 'Pour une image véridique d'Aliénor d'Aquitaine', *Bull. Soc. des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 4th ser., ii (1952), 218–19.

[10] E. A. R. Brown, 'Eleanor of Aquitaine: parent, queen and duchess' in W. W. Kibler, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: Patron and Politician* (Austin, 1976), pp. 20–1, 32. Among other historians who attribute the diplomatic initiative to Eleanor are A. Richard, *Histoire des comtes de Poitou, 778–1204* (2 vols., Paris, 1903), ii. 272; H. G. Richardson, 'The letters and charters of Eleanor of Aquitaine', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lxxiv (1959), 201; P. Rassow, *Der Prinzgemahl. Ein pactum matrimoniale aus dem Jahre 1188* (Weimar, 1950), p. 79.

[11] Brundage, pp. 71–2. See also F. Barlow, *The Feudal Kingdom of England, 1042–1216* (1955), p. 355.

[12] W. L. Warren, *King John* (Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 58.

assumption was to make it seem likely that the major part of the negotiations had taken place during the second half of the year 1190, i.e. after Richard had already set off on the first stage of his journey to Outremer.[13] But this interpretation makes Sancho as rash as it makes Richard negligent, and it is fundamentally implausible. Before allowing his daughter to leave home in such ambiguous and difficult circumstances, Sancho must have demanded far-reaching assurances and, with the best will in the world, the negotiations which preceded Berengaria's departure from Navarre must have been complex and prolonged. It is, of course, precisely the absence of any documentation bearing directly on the question of the marriage negotiations, which has permitted historians to give Eleanor the credit for taking the initiative. There are, however, a few scraps of evidence which can be pieced together to suggest the outlines of a very different story—even though not one of these scraps taken in isolation seems to have anything at all to do with the marriage.

A starting-point is the following passage in Roger of Howden's *Gesta Regis Ricardi*:

> Eodem anno, post Purificationem beatæ Dei genitricis Mariæ, Alienor regina mater regis Ricardi, et Alays soror Philippi regis Franciæ, et Baldewinus Cantuariensis archiepiscopus, et Johannes Norwicensis episcopus; Hugo Dunelmensis episcopus; Godefridus Wintoniensis episcopus; Reinaldus Batoniensis episcopus; Willelmus Eliensis episcopus; Hubertus Salesberiensis episcopus; Hugo Cestrensis episcopus; Gaufridus Eboracensis electus et frater regis Ricardi; et Johannes comes Meretonii frater regis, transfretaverunt de Anglia in Normanniam per mandatum regis. Et habito cum illis consilio, dominus rex statuit Willelmum Elyensem episcopum cancellarium suum, summum justitiarium Angliæ. Et concessit Hugoni Dunelmensi episcopo justitiariam a flumine Humbri usque ad terram regis Scotiæ. Et [fecit] Gaufridum Eboracensem electum et Johannem comitem Moretanii fratres suos jurare quod Angliam non intrarent ab illa hora ante annos tres præteritos, nisi per licentiam illius.[14]

This council was held in mid March at Nonancourt, close to the French border.[15] Since it was decided to banish John and Geoffrey from England for three years it is clear that family matters and the awkward problem of the succession were raised at this meeting. The presence of Alice of France might also be taken to imply that her future was on the agenda—though Howden does not mention it. His silence could mean either that no formal decision was reached—the matter still being at the stage of private discussion—or simply that there were some things about which he was in the dark. This raises the question of the source of Howden's information. In all probability the source was Hugh du Puiset, the bishop of Durham. Roger was in residence at Howden—a minster which belonged to the church of Durham—and must have met Bishop Hugh in 1190.[16] Did Hugh simply tell Roger what had happened? Or did he also pass on to the chronicler a copy of the writ summoning him to the conference? Two phrases used by Howden suggest the latter. The first is the phrase 'per mandatum regis'. The second is the phrase used to date their Channel crossing: 'post Purificationem beatae Dei genitricis Mariae'—after Candlemas (2 February). Since they clearly did not cross early in February in order to attend a meeting in mid March, Howden has adopted a rather curious form of dating—unless he had before him a copy of a writ issued at Candlemas, in which case it would be a natural enough choice of words.[17]

If then we ask where Richard was on 2 February, the answer is that he was in Gascony, at la Réole on the River Garonne. No chronicler tells us what he was doing there and we can only speculate. We are not, however, entirely without evidence. Three extant charters in favour of the abbey of la Sauve were issued there on 2, 3 and 4 February. The witness lists show that on those days Richard held court attended by many of the greatest lords of Gascony, both ecclesiastical and secular. Among churchmen there were the bishops of Agen, Périgueux and Bazas as well as the archbishop of Auch, the metropolitan of Gascony, and the abbots of Clairac, Chaise-Dieu, Moissac, Brantôme and Cadouin. Among laymen there was the seneschal of Gascony, Elie de la Celle, Bernard count of Armagnac, Bernard count of Vésone, Gaston viscount of Béarn, Peter viscount of Castillon, and a host of other lords.[18] It may be that many had gathered simply to welcome their lord for the first time since his enthronement as king of England and duke of Normandy, but it was also the obvious occasion to deal with business which concerned Gascony. If Richard was already considering a marriage alliance with Navarre this would naturally be one such item. Considerations of political geography alone would suggest this, but there is a further point to be borne in mind: Berengaria's dowry. Richard and Berengaria were eventually married in Cyprus on 12 May 1191. On that day Richard settled on her all his Gascon possessions beyond the Garonne as her dower.[19] Clearly this was a profoundly important question which cannot have been decided on the spur of the moment either in Cyprus or in Sicily. It involved not only Richard, Berengaria and the Gascons. It was also bound up with diplomatic relations between Gascony, Navarre and Castile. At the Castilian court it was claimed that, in 1170, when Henry II's and Eleanor's daughter, Eleanor, married Alfonso VIII of Castile she had been granted Gascony as her *maritagium*, though the grant was to take effect only after her mother's death.[20] To settle Gascony upon Berengaria was to create complications and conjure up the danger of conflicting claims. Thus, in Berengaria's dower settlement, it was stipulated that she should enjoy her Gascon revenues only during the lifetime of Eleanor of Aquitaine. After Eleanor's death Berengaria was to have those estates in England, Normandy and Poitou which Henry II had assigned to his queen and

[13] Landon, pp. 30, 37, 227 n. 6. He and Philip left Vézelay on 4 July 1190.

[14] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 105–6.

[15] Landon, p. 26. It is worth noting the witness lists to charters nos. 229 and 233.

[16] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 109. I am grateful to Mr. David Corner for help on this point, as on much else concerning Roger of Howden.

[17] If there was no appropriate saint's day or festival, Howden dated events either by using the Roman calendar (e.g. 'mense Martio, XVII° Kalendas Aprilis', *ibid.*, ii. 107) or in the form 'XI° die Decembris' (*ibid.*, ii. 101). Even if he did not know the precise dates of their Channel crossing there was certainly no need for him to choose a form as vague as 'after 2 February'.

[18] Landon, p. 25. Two of the charters were published by Cirot de la Ville, *Histoire de l'abbaye et congrégation de Notre-Dame de la Grande-Sauve* (2 vols., Paris, 1844–5), ii. 119–21 (including the names of 2 witnesses omitted by Landon) and the third by E. Martène and U. Durand, *Thesaurus novus Anecdotorum* (5 vols., Paris, 1717), i, cols. 636–7.

[19] E. Martène and U. Durand, *Veterum Scriptorum et Monumentorum Amplissima Collectio* (9 vols., Paris, 1924–33), i, cols. 995–7.

[20] In 1204 after Eleanor's death Alfonso VIII invaded Gascony in support of his claim: 'rex castelle cum quibusdam de vassallis suis intravit vasconiam et fere totam occupuit preter baionam et burdegalim, habuit et blayam et borc que sunt ultra garonam et terram que est inter duo maria' (G. Cirot, 'Une chronique latine inédite des rois de Castille', *Bull. Hispanique*, xiv (1912), 266–8). See the discussion of this episode, which has been almost totally ignored by English historians, in Y. Renouard, *Bordeaux sous les Rois d'Angleterre* (Bordeaux, 1965), pp. 21–6 and J. Gonzalez, *El Reino de Castilla en la época de Alfonso VIII* (3 vols., Madrid, 1960), i. 865–75. Eventually, in 1254, Alfonso X renounced all Castile's claims to Gascony, and his sister, Eleanor, married Henry III's eldest son, Edward (Powicke, *The 13th Century*, pp. 116–18).

which had been confirmed by Richard.[21] An assembly attended by the magnates of Gascony would be the proper occasion for some formal announcement, if not discussion, of a matter of this kind. Twenty years earlier a very similar court had assembled at Bordeaux to witness the formal marriage settlement between Eleanor and Alfonso VIII of Castile in the summer of 1170.[22] And that questions of foreign policy were indeed being discussed at la Réole in February 1190 is suggested by the presence of one man who, in the witness lists, stands out in striking contrast to all those Gascons: Henry son of the duke of Saxony, i.e. Henry of Brunswick, son of Henry the Lion.[23] I suggest, therefore, that the question of Richard's marriage was among the important public and dynastic business discussed at la Réole and that it was to take this further that, on 2 February 1191, Richard sent writs summoning a council to meet in Normandy.[24] The facts that the council was to meet on the eve of a conference with Philip of France and that Alice was summoned to attend point in this direction.

From Nonancourt Richard rode the eight miles to Dreux to meet Philip on 16 March. We do not know what the two kings said to each other, only that the crusade, which had been due to start at Easter, was postponed until 24 June. They needed more time to complete their preparations.[25] Were these preparations simply the massive material organization of the crusade—or did they include diplomatic preparations? In wishing to discard Alice and marry Berengaria Richard was caught in a very awkward diplomatic situation. It is clear that Philip would be disgraced if his sister were dropped in this fashion and he did nothing to avenge her honour.[26] Could Richard afford to state his intentions publicly? If he did, would that destroy the fragile peace between the kingdoms and cause further interminable delays to the crusade on which his heart was set? Perhaps only when he and Philip were already on crusade could he marry someone else without inviting an immediate attack upon his lands. But it could not have been easy to persuade Sancho of Navarre to send his daughter to be

[21] 'Post decessum vero iam dictae matris nostrae si eadem uxor nostra superstes fuerit, praedicta omnia ultra Guaronam sibi assignata in pace dimittet, et assignavimus ei in Anglia tunc habendum dotalitium reginarum ... in Normannia etc.' (Marrène and Durand, *Amplissima Collectio*, i, col. 995). But after Richard's death, John did not feel bound to observe the promises made to Berengaria, see below, n. 95.

[22] Gonzalez, i. 190–3.

[23] Landon, p. 25 n. 217. For some wide-ranging speculations on the possible implications of Henry of Brunswick's presence at la Réole see Rassow, pp. 85–7.

[24] There was plenty of time for writs sent from la Réole on 2 Feb. to be received in England and acted upon. Bishop Hugh of Durham was apparently engaged in governmental duties at Westminster throughout Jan. and Feb. See G. V. Scammell, *Hugh du Puset, Bishop of Durham* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 294–5.

[25] Diceto, *Opera*, i. 77. Complete certainty here is impossible since Howden says that 24 June was fixed as the departure date at a meeting in Jan. (*Gesta*, ii. 105), while the author of the *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* says that it was fixed for 1 July at a meeting in mid March (*Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I*, ed. W. Stubbs (2 vols., Rolls Ser., 1864–5), i. 146).

[26] The clearest piece of evidence for this obvious point is Bertrand de Born's *sirventes* 'S'ieu fos aissi senher'. Whatever the date of this poem (see below n. 27), its fourth stanza illustrates the kind of pressure Philip was under to appear to be doing something to save his sister's, and his own, reputation.

> E pois non es per sa terra iros,
> Membrelh sa sor el maritz orgolhos
> Que la laissa e no la vol tener;
> Aquest forfaitz mi sembla desplazer.

(*Poésies complètes de Bertran de Born*, ed. A. Thomas (Toulouse, 1888), no. 18).



married somewhere abroad in these ambiguous and hazardous circumstances.[27] In February 1190 Richard may well have found that he needed more time to complete such intricate negotiations.

In April Richard travelled south again, through Anjou and Poitou. By 8 May he was at Cognac on the river Charente. We next find him at Bayonne close to the border with Navarre on 6 June.[28] According to Roger of Howden it was on this trip to Gascony that he hanged the lord of the castle of Chis for the crime of highway robbery.[29] Though many of this lord's victims had been pilgrims on the way to Compostella, it is hard to believe that it was devotion to the cult of St. James—however much the Moor-slayer may have appealed to Richard—which alone had brought him into the Pyrenees. It may well have been on this occasion that Richard found the opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with Sancho to bring the negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion. Now at last Richard was ready to go. But far from him going on crusade without a thought for the problem of the succession, it rather looks as though the opposite was the case: that he had postponed his departure until most of the problems surrounding his marriage had been resolved. Richard was by no means just a fanatical crusader who neglected everything else.

Even so, when Richard and Philip left Vézelay in July 1190 there was one vital task still to be tackled. Somehow Philip had to be persuaded to drop his insistence on a marriage between Richard and Alice. It was obviously not going to be easy. Philip reached Messina on 16 September 1190.[30] A week later Richard arrived. The two kings conferred and Philip announced his intention of leaving for the Holy Land that same day. But no sooner had his fleet left the harbour than the wind shifted and, much to his dismay, Philip was forced to return to

[27] All the more so if, as has been suggested, Richard had once before offered marriage to Berengaria and then withdrawn. The case for an earlier betrothal is based upon the lines which follow immediately upon those quoted in n. 26.

> E tot adès que s'en vai perjuran,
> Quel reis Navars l'a sai dat per espos
> A sa filha, per que l'anta es plus gran.

Dating a poem, even a *sirventes* packed with political allusions, is, of course, a hazardous business, but most students of Bertrand de Born have been inclined to favour composition *c.* 1188. The best discussion of the dating problems is by C. Appel, *Bertran von Born* (Halle, 1931), p. 60. See also A. Cartellieri, *Philip II August, König von Frankreich* (4 vols., Leipzig, 1899–1922), ii. 157 n. 4. If the poem can be dated to 1188 this would suggest that the marriage negotiations of 1190 were in fact re-negotiations and that Berengaria's betrothal had at least been discussed in the 12 months between Nov. 1187, when Richard took the cross, and Nov. 1188, when he came to terms with the king of France. Richard and Philip were at war on and off throughout this period and there are signs that Philip was nervous about his sister's future (Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 29, 35–6, 39–40, 45–6, 49). The advantages which a Navarre alliance offered to a crusader duke of Aquitaine (see below pp. 166–7) applied to 1188 just as much as to 1190.

[28] Landon, pp. 32–3.

[29] *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Hovedene*, ed. W. Stubbs (4 vols., Rolls Ser., 1868–71), iii. 35. Howden's source for this information, which is not in his earlier work, the *Gesta*, is by no means easy to determine. Landon, p. 32 identifies the 'castellum Willelmi de Chisi' as Chis in the county of Bigorre, Hautes Pyrénées, but this is doubtful. A more likely alternative is the col de Cize just north of Roncesvalles, a famous landmark and the site of Charles's Cross which traditionally marked the southern border of Aquitaine: see the Vézelay Chronicle in R. B. C. Huygens, *Monumenta Vizeliacensia* (Corpus Christianorum, Continuacio mediaevalis, xlii, Turnholt, 1976), p. 588 and Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 119. For the importance of the col de Cize in pilgrim lore see J. Vielliard, *Le Guide du Pèlerin de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle* (2nd edn., Mâcon, 1950), pp. 2, 4, 6, 12, 20–2, 24. For Richard's activity in this region in 1177 on behalf of pilgrims to Compostella see Howden, *Gesta*, i. 131–2, clearly based upon a report which Richard had sent to his father in England. There are some useful maps in L. Vázquez de Parga, J. M. Lacarra and J. Uria Riu, *Las Peregrinaciones a Santiago de Compostela* (3 vols., Madrid, 1948–9).

[30] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 124.

Messina and to further meetings with the king of England.[31] Other business detained the crusaders until the end of the first week in October.[32] By this time it was late in the year for a safe passage to the Holy Land and so they decided to winter in Sicily.[33] Not until February 1191 did the question of Richard's marriage come to the surface once more. The news reached Messina that Eleanor and Berengaria, accompanied by Count Philip of Flanders, had arrived at Naples. Richard sent some galleys to meet them there and convey them to Messina. But although Count Philip was allowed to embark, Eleanor and Berengaria were not: Tancred's officials apparently claimed that their escort was too large.[34] There was obviously more to it than this transparent excuse and so Richard went to Tancred to demand an explanation. The two kings met at Catania on 3 March and spent five days together. According to Roger of Howden, Tancred eventually confessed to Richard that he had been listening to Philip's insinuations. The French king apparently had warned Tancred that Richard's word was not to be relied upon: that he had no intention of keeping the treaty they had made last October, and instead was planning to deprive Tancred of his kingdom.[35] This is a curious story and however well informed Roger of Howden was, he is unlikely to have overheard the private conversation of two kings. Nonetheless the fact that Eleanor and Berengaria were kept away from Messina suggests that Howden is doing more than simply repeating anti-French gossip. Tancred was understandably nervous about the crusaders but clearly he had nothing to fear from Philip's small force. His problem was Richard and the Angevin army. Although they were allies, Richard's assault on Messina and the circumstances in which the alliance had been forged, were hardly such as to dispel all Tancred's doubts. Yet it was vital that he read Richard's intentions correctly. The king of Sicily's insecurity was fertile ground for Philip's diplomatic skill—these were just the kind of fears he had played upon when separating Henry II from his sons. What Philip wanted is clear enough: he wanted to save his sister's honour. As the news came that Eleanor and Berengaria had crossed the Alps and were travelling southwards through Italy, so Philip's concern grew. But at the same time their journey may have raised his hopes of drawing Tancred over to his side. For Tancred too had news which gave him cause for grave concern. Henry VI had left Germany and was heading in the direction of Sicily. It is not hard to imagine Tancred's feelings when he learned that Eleanor and Henry VI had met at Lodi on 20 January 1191.[36] Just what lay behind this meeting? Were Richard and his old mother planning to throw in their lot with Henry? These were the fears which Richard had to dispel when he met Tancred at Catania and, eventually, he succeeded. The two kings exchanged gifts as a token of their renewal of

[31] Just for a moment it seemed possible to speculate that Richard and Philip might come to an amicable settlement involving Philip's marriage to Richard's widowed sister Joan (Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 125–6 and *idem*, *Chronica*, iii. 56). Howden was presumably an eye-witness of some of these meetings since he had joined Richard at Marseilles (*ibid.*, p. 38).

[32] This other business included the quarrel with King Tancred of Sicily over Joan's dower and the capture of Messina. On the Sicilian politics of this period see D. Clementi, 'The circumstances of Count Tancred's accession to the kingdom of Sicily, duchy of Apulia and the principality of Capua', *Mélanges Antonio Marongiu* (Brussels, 1968), pp. 57–80.

[33] On Mediterranean weather and sea conditions see F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. S. Reynolds (2 vols., 1972–3), i. 246–65.

[34] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 157 and, with some additional details, *idem*, *Chronica*, iii. 95. There would have been time for the two ladies to reach Lodi by 20 Jan. 1191 (see above n. 4) if Richard, as soon as he had decided to winter in Sicily, say mid Oct. 1190, had sent instructions to his mother to bring Berengaria to him.

[35] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 158–60; *idem*, *Chronica*, iii. 97–9.

[36] See above n. 4 and Rassow, p. 79.



friendship. Richard gave Tancred the sword Excalibur which had once belonged to King Arthur. Tancred's gift was more prosaic, but possibly more useful: four large transport ships and fifteen galleys.[37]

The French king had been playing a dangerous game. Once Tancred was convinced that he had nothing to fear from Richard, then Philip became the victim of his own intrigue. He protested his innocence, claiming that the whole thing was a put-up job, a scheme devised by Richard to give him an excuse for breaking his promise to marry Alice. For two reasons, however, Philip's defence does not ring quite true. Firstly, because Tancred's agents had prevented Berengaria from leaving Naples—an unnecessary complication if it was all just a charade. And secondly, because the count of Flanders, on his arrival in Sicily, took Richard's side against King Philip—which might suggest that he did not believe the French king's story.[38] At all events it is clear that Philip was now isolated and in a weak bargaining position. Richard drove home his advantage. He had no wish, he said, to discard Alice but he could never marry her since she had been his father's mistress and had borne him a son. This was a grim accusation to make since Alice had been entrusted to the Old King's custody, but Richard claimed that he could summon many witnesses able to testify to its truth. In the face of this terrible threat to his sister's honour Philip gave up his struggle to save her marriage.[39] In return for 10,000 marks he released Richard from his promise. Other clauses in the treaty between the two kings drawn up at Messina in March 1191 regulated most of their outstanding differences, above all the question of Gisors and the Norman Vexin.[40] There can be no doubt that Philip regarded this treaty as a humiliation. In a gesture which perfectly expressed his feelings he chose to set sail from Messina on 30 March, just a few hours before Berengaria arrived.[41] In the opinion of Rigord, the chronicler of Saint-Denis, the quarrel between the two kings began at the moment when Richard rejected Alice.[42]

What this curious episode in Sicily makes abundantly clear is that great obstacles had stood in the way of Richard's marriage to Berengaria and that he had fought hard to overcome them. He was no reluctant husband, pushed into marriage by a bullying mother. But some questions still remain. Why was he so keen to discard Alice? And why was he so keen to marry Berengaria?

The fate of Alice, twenty-five years in the Old King's custody, puzzled contemporaries just as much as it has puzzled historians: 'One of the minor mysteries of Henry II's reign' is how Professor W. L. Warren described it.[43] Gossip said that Henry seduced her and that Richard would not marry his father's mistress. Warren has denied this, arguing that the rumour comes from prejudiced sources—Gerald of Wales and William the Breton.[44] On the other

[37] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 159.

[38] *Ibid.*, ii. 160; *idem*, *Chronica*, iii. 95.

[39] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 160–1; *idem*, *Chronica*, iii. 99.

[40] For the text of the treaty of Messina see *Diplomatic Documents preserved in the Public Record Office*, i: *1101–1272*, ed. P. Chaplais (1964), pp. 14–16; Landon, pp. 229–31.

[41] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 161.

[42] Rigord, *Gesta Philippi Augusti* in *Œuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton, historiens de Philippe Auguste*, ed. H. F. Delaborde (2 vols., Paris, 1882–5), i. 107–8. By marrying Berengaria in Cyprus Richard avoided some awkward problems. If the wedding had taken place in the Holy Land, would Philip have been among the guests?

[43] Warren believes that 'Richard simply had no desire to marry her and maintained his reluctance with his customary obstinacy' (W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (1973), p. 611).

[44] Giraldus Cambrensis, *Opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer and others (8 vols., Rolls Ser., 1861–91), viii. 232; William the Breton, *Philippidos*, in *Œuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton*, ii. 89; *The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, ed. J. T. Appleby (1963), p. 26.

hand Howden's evidence cannot be altogether ignored. The problem of seduction apart, however, there were good political reasons why Richard should not marry Alice. After the death of the Young King in 1183 Philip demanded the restoration of the Norman Vexin, on the grounds that it had been his sister's *maritagium*. Henry II, in reply, argued that the Norman Vexin belonged of right to the duchy of Normandy and that Philip's father, Louis VII, had acknowledged this in 1160 on the occasion of Margaret's marriage to the Young King. Eventually, in December 1183, Philip announced that he was willing to let Henry keep the Norman Vexin on condition that he paid Margaret an annual pension of 2,700 *livres* and on the understanding that the Vexin was to be held by Alice's husband.[45] But what this agreement failed to make clear was what would happen to the Vexin if Alice remained unmarried. If either Richard or John married her it would lend plausibility to Philip's claim that this vital territory was his sister's marriage portion and, as such, might one day be returned to France. If Henry II and Richard wanted to maintain that it belonged of old to Normandy then it was safer not to confuse the issue. Alice was better left unmarried, a political pawn in their hands.

Why was Richard so anxious to marry Berengaria? A romantic attachment is not impossible,[46] but it would inevitably have been secondary to the requirements of diplomacy. Historians write of Richard's preparations for the governance of his dominions during his absence on crusade as though they involve England only. In fact of course it was—as always—the continental lands and frontiers which demanded most attention. Here in France alone the Angevin empire was faced by four other 'feudal empires'—to adopt Professor Le Patourel's terminology.[47] These were the empire of the counts of Flanders, the Capetian empire, the empire of Blois-Champagne and the empire of Saint-Gilles-Toulouse. In the crisis of 1173–4 three of these 'empires' had joined in the attack on Henry II.[48] In the crisis of Richard's rule as duke of Aquitaine in 1183, the fourth—Toulouse—had supported the Young King in his war against Richard.[49] In 1190 the position was that the princes who ruled three of these neighbouring empires had taken the cross: Count Philip of Flanders, King Philip, Count Theobald of Blois and Count Henry of Champagne. Only Count Raymond V of Toulouse intended to stay at home. Richard can have been in no doubt what this meant. For the last six years he and Raymond had been in an almost continuous state of war.[50] At that dramatic conference at Bonsmoulins in November 1188 when Henry II drove his son to rebellion by publicly refusing to acknowledge him as his heir, Richard turned to Philip and knelt and did homage to him. He did homage not only for all the lands which his father had held of the

[45] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 304–6. This agreement was confirmed in March 1186 (*ibid.*, ii. 343–4; cf. Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 40). For the text of the 1186 covenant between Margaret and Henry II see Landon, pp. 225–6. By its terms Henry was also permitted to retain Margaret's 'donatio propter nuptias'.

[46] On the evidence of Ambroise, this, at least, is what was believed by the soldiers in Richard's crusading army (Ambroise, *L'Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, ed. G. Paris (Paris, 1897), ll. 1150–2. 'E li reis l'aveit mult amee: Des que il esteit coens de Peitiers').

[47] J. Le Patourel, 'The Plantagenet dominions', *History*, l (1965), 289–308.

[48] Warren, *Henry II*, pp. 121–2.

[49] The seriousness of this threat to Richard's position in Aquitaine has been under-estimated by Warren (*ibid.*, pp. 592–3). See J. Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart* (1978), pp. 86–98. The best source on events in the Limousin in 1183 is the chronicle of Geoffrey de Vigeois in M. Bouquet, *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*, ed. L. Delisle (24 vols., Paris, 1869–1904), xviii. 212–20.

[50] On the war with Toulouse see *ibid.*, xviii. 228; Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 43–4, 55; Howden, *Gesta*, i. 345, ii. 34–6; Giraldus Cambrensis, viii. 245–6; the discussion in Warren, *Henry II*, pp. 82–7, 613–21. See J. H. Mundy, *Liberty and Political Power in Toulouse, 1050–1230* (New York, 1954), pp. 60–6 for the effect of the war on Count Raymond's position.



king of France, but also for the conquests which he, Richard, had made at the expense of Toulouse.[51] The most important of these conquests was the Quercy, a traditional bone of contention between Aquitaine and Toulouse.[52] That Richard still held this region fifteen months later is suggested by the presence of the abbot of Moissac at the court at la Réole in February 1190.[53] It was inevitable that Raymond would grasp at the opportunity presented by Richard's crusade. All the length of the Angevin frontiers there was no threat so serious as that posed by the count of Toulouse. It is in this context that we must see the marriage to Berengaria of Navarre. When in the first six months of 1190 Richard twice travelled south it was to arrange a crucial alliance which would help safeguard his dominions at their most vulnerable point.[54]

In diplomatic terms Richard's marriage proved its worth. In 1192 while he was still in Outremer a revolt broke out in Aquitaine. The leading rebels were the count of Périgord and Bernard, viscount of Brosse, but in all probability they were encouraged by Philip—who had returned in time to celebrate the Christmas of 1191 at Fontainebleau[55]—and by Raymond of Toulouse. Berengaria's brother, Sancho, brought a large force of knights to help the seneschal of Gascony and together they took the war into Raymond's lands, advancing right up to the walls of Toulouse.[56] Nowhere else in the Angevin empire had Richard's absence caused any serious unrest.[57] If he had returned home by January or February 1193, as seemed likely when he left Acre in October 1192, it would have been clear to historians that the arrangements he had made for the government of his dominions during his crusade had worked extremely well. As it turned out, however, the unforeseeable eventuality of his capture and imprisonment called everything into question.

Even in this crisis the Navarre alliance functioned well. A son of King Sancho was among those who went to Germany in the spring of 1194 to serve as hostages for the payment of the remainder of the ransom.[58] At the same time Berengaria's brother Sancho once again led an army to the assistance of the Angevin officials, hard-pressed as they were by a combination of King Philip's attacks and John's

[51] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 50; Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 58; *Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, i. 435–6.

[52] After their occupation by Henry II in the campaign of 1159, Cahors and the Quercy seem to have remained in Angevin hands until Raymond V and his son took advantage of Richard's difficulties in 1183 to recapture them. Richard's re-conquest took place either in 1186 (perhaps temporarily) or in 1188. According to Diceto, Richard estimated the revenues of Quercy at 1,000 marks or more (Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 58).

[53] Landon, p. 25; Cirot de la Ville, ii. 119.

[54] Richard's most obvious ally in this part of the world was undoubtedly Raymond of Toulouse's old rival, Alfonso II of Aragon (C. Higounet, 'La rivalité des maisons de Toulouse et de Barcelone pour la prépondérance méridionale', *Mélanges d'Histoire du Moyen-Âge dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen* (Paris, 1951), pp. 313–21). Alfonso was a more powerful ruler than Sancho of Navarre and he had come to Richard's aid in 1183 (*Recueil des Historiens*, xviii. 218). But at this date Aragon and Navarre were drawing closer together—chiefly in order to resist the expansionist policies of Castile (Gonzalez, i. 709–12, 827–33), and if Richard was now looking for a marriage alliance, it may be that Alfonso II had no daughters of a suitable age. The dynastic policies of the Spanish kingdoms is an extremely obscure subject, but as D. W. Lomax has pointed out, what passes elsewhere for 'old-fashioned "Kings and Battles" history' in Spain still remains to be written (D. W. Lomax, *Another Sword for St. James* (Birmingham, 1974), p. 17). I have been unable to obtain J. M. Lacarra, *Historia política del reino de Navarra desde sus orígenes hasta su incorporación a Castilla* (2 vols., Pamplona, 1973).

[55] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 235.

[56] Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 194; *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, p. 59.

[57] The quarrels in England between John and Longchamp were just a storm in a teacup which never seriously threatened the fabric of government; notice the lack of haste in Walter of Coutances's return to England in the summer of 1190.

[58] Ansbert, *Historia de expeditione Friderici Imperatoris*, in *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I*, ed. A. Chroust (Berlin, 1928), p. 107.

treachery. In January 1194 John had made a treaty with Philip, conceding the whole of Normandy east of the Seine, the key fortresses of Touraine, including Loches, and the homage of the most powerful noble in Aquitaine, Count Ademar of Angoulême.[59] Then in March 1194 Philip received the homage of two more of Richard's restless vassals: Geoffrey de Rancon and Bernard, viscount of Brosse.[60] In this same month Richard returned to England, and while he dealt with affairs there and in Normandy, Sancho of Navarre undertook an active role in the suppression of revolt in Aquitaine. After ravaging the estates of Ademar of Angoulême and Geoffrey de Rancon, Sancho's troops moved north to lay siege to Loches, where it was arranged that Richard would join them. On 13 June, the day after the king's arrival, the castle was taken by storm.[61] On 4 July Richard put Philip to flight at Fréteval. Two and a half weeks later, on 22 July, he wrote in triumph to Hubert Walter, announcing the capture of all the castles of the count of Angoulême and of Geoffrey de Rancon. The city of Angoulême itself had fallen in a single day.[62]

The shattering speed with which Richard had overwhelmed the old and formidable alliance of Angoulême-Rancon suggests that the groundwork had been most effectively laid by Sancho of Navarre. Some indication of the value of the Navarre alliance in 1192 and 1194 can be obtained from Diceto's summing up of Richard's position in the summer of 1194: from the castle of Verneuil to the Cross of Charles (in the Pyrenees) there was no one to stand against him.[63]

About Berengaria herself we know almost nothing. She moves silently in the background of events. Contemporary writers found little in her either to praise or to blame. They dismiss her in a phrase: one calls her a lady of beauty and good sense; another describes her as sensible rather than attractive.[64] After they were married Berengaria and Richard did not spend much time together. There were times when force of circumstances gave them no choice in the matter, but there were times also when Richard preferred to do without her. The clearest evidence of this comes from the pen of Roger of Howden. He reported an incident, apparently in 1195, when a hermit came to the king and rebuked him for his sins, telling him to remember the destruction of Sodom and abstain from illicit acts, for if he did not God would punish him in a fitting manner. At first Richard ignored the warning but when, some time later, he was struck by an illness, he recalled the hermit's words. He did penance and, says Roger of Howden, tried to lead a better life. This meant regular attendance at morning church—and not leaving until the service was over; it meant distributing alms to the poor. It also meant avoiding illicit intercourse; instead he was to sleep with

[59] T. Rymer, *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et Acta Publica*, ed. A. Clarke, F. Holbrooke and J. Caley (4 vols. in 7, 1816–69), I. i. 57. Loches had been temporarily ceded to Philip in July 1193 as security for the implementation of the treaty of Mantes (Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 217–20), but John was now prepared to countenance its permanent loss. Ademar of Angoulême had rebelled in 1193 and had been captured (*Addenda Chronico Andegavensi S. Albini* in *Recueil des Historiens*, xviii. 324), but his release was one of the terms of the treaty of Mantes.

[60] *Layettes du Trésor des Chartes*, ed. J. B. A. Teulet and others (5 vols., Paris, 1863–1909), i. 176.

[61] *Recueil des Historiens*, xviii. 325; Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 252; Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 117.

[62] Howden, *Gesta*, iii. 255–7.

[63] Diceto, *Opera*, ii. 119. The effectiveness of the Navarrese troops in 1192 and 1194 was such as to suggest the possibility that their fighting qualities were among the attractions of the marriage of Berengaria.

[64] 'famosae pulchritudinis et prudentiae virginem' (William of Newburgh, *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett (4 vols., Rolls Ser., 1884–9), i. 346); 'puella prudentiore quam pulchra' (*Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, p. 25).



his wife, a marital duty which he had presumably been neglecting.[65] Their marriage, however, remained childless.

Richard's inability to produce an heir and the hermit's warning are the two main planks on which the case for Richard's supposed homosexuality are based.[66] In the last thirty years it has apparently become impossible to read the word 'Sodom' without assuming that it refers to homosexuality. This tells us a good deal about the culture of our own generation: its unfamiliarity with the Old Testament and its wider interest in sex. In fact, however, the maledictions of the Old Testament prophets are rarely complete without a reference to the destruction of Sodom and, more often than not, this phrase carries no homosexual implications. It refers not so much to the nature of the offences as to the terrible and awe-inspiring nature of the punishment. The picture which chiefly interested the prophets and the preachers who followed in their footsteps was the apocalyptic image of whole cities being overwhelmed by fire and brimstone.[67] In the days when people read their Bible all the way through and when they appreciated the value of a good sermon no one understood the hermit's words to mean that Richard was a homosexual.[68]

There are two other pieces of evidence which are supposed to show that Richard was homosexual. The first is Howden's description of the friendship between Richard and Philip Augustus in the summer of 1187. According to him, Philip honoured Richard so highly that every day they ate at the same table and

[65] Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 288–90. The whole passage is saturated with Biblical imagery, Balaam's ass, lepers announcing salvation to Samaria and the like, but only one image has caught the eye of 20th-century historians: 'et ... dixit: Esto memor subversionis Sodomae, et ab illicitis te abstine: sin autem, veniet super te ultio digna Dei'.

[66] Among modern historians who either state or imply that Richard was homosexual are the following: Warren, *King John*, p. 20; S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1951–4), iii. 41, 59; J. J. Norwich, *The Kingdom in the Sun, 1130–94* (1970), pp. 364–5; G. Mathew, *The Court of Richard II* (1968), pp. 138 ff. By far the most detailed discussion of the subject is that given in Brundage, pp. 38, 88–9, 202, 212–13, 257–8 where it is linked with his 'emotional immaturity'. If the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is anything to go by, then this view of Richard has achieved the status of orthodoxy. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (15th edn., Chicago, 1974), xv. 827 (signed G.W.S. B[arrow]). It is hardly surprising to find that he now figures in histories of homosexuality, e.g. N. I. Garde (i.e., in drag?) *Jonathan to Gide: the Homosexual in History* (New York, 1969), pp. 191–5; A. L. Rowse, *Homosexuals in History* (1977); and that it is in this guise that he appears in films and popular historical novels.

[67] Thus Moses threatened those who forsook the covenant and worshipped other gods with the destruction of their land, 'in exemplum subversionis Sodomae', Deut. 29:25, but sodomy was not among the sins which Moses apparently had in mind, although they included a wide range of sexual offences, Deut. 27: 15–26. For some similar references to the overthrow of Sodom see Isa. 13:19, Jer. 49:18, 50:40, Amos 4:11. A verse which makes particularly clear the link between Sodom and sin in general is Jer. 23:14, while on the other hand, the prohibitions of male homosexuality in Lev. 18:22 and 20:13 contain no reference to Sodom. Among much later evidence a passage from a letter written by Boniface to King Aethelbald of Mercia makes it clear that it was possible to regard adultery as the grievous sin of Sodom: 'si enim gens Anglorum ... spretis legalibus conubiis adulterando et luxoriando ad instar sodomitane gentis foedam vitam vixerit, de tali commixtione meretricum aestimandum est degeneres populos et ignobiles, et furentes libidine fore procreandos...' (*Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl (Berlin, 1916), no. 73, p. 151).

[68] Stubbs, for example, in his introduction to the *Itinerarium Regis Ricardi* looked at Richard's vices and considered them to be less heinous than Henry II's and John's (*Memorials of Richard I*, i. pp. xx–xxi). Cartellieri clearly believed that Richard's sins were heterosexual ones: 'gab er sich in Messina, dessen Frauen den nordischen Kriegern recht begehrenswert erschienen, ganz seinen Lüsten hin' (A. Cartellieri, 'Richard Lowenherz', *Probleme der Englischen Sprache und Kultur. Festschrift Johannes Hoops zum 60 Geburtstag überreicht*, ed. W. Keller (Heidelberg, 1925), p. 136). A similar view was taken by the author of the standard French work on the dukes of Aquitaine (A. Richard, *Histoire des Comtes de Poitou* (2 vols., Paris, 1903), ii. 330). For an early 20th-century novelist's interpretation see M. Hewlett, *The Life and Death of Richard Yea-and-Nay* (1900).

shared the same dishes; at night the bed did not separate them. The king of France loved him as his own soul, and their mutual love was so great that the lord king of England was stupefied by its vehemence.[69] To a modern reader the meaning of these words may seem blindingly obvious. But it is, in fact, an obvious mistake to assume that ritual gestures such as kisses or sleeping in the same bed, retain a uniform meaning in all ages.[70] It would be easy and wearisome to compile a long list of instances of men sharing a bed where it is clear that the significance of their action is not sexual but political. One example will suffice: *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* tells us of an occasion when William shared a bed with Henry II.[71] The jongleur who composed the poem knew perfectly well what his audience would understand by this, and the meaning of Howden's passage is made plain by his comment that King Henry was stupefied. What Richard and Philip were doing was not making love but making a political gesture, a demonstration of an alliance directed against the Old King.

The second alleged piece of evidence is Richard's coronation banquet. It was, in Brundage's words, 'a bachelor party'. Women were excluded and this, argues Brundage, illustrates Richard's detestation of women.[72] As it happens, Richard's coronation is the first one for which a detailed description—again by Howden—survives.[73] It is nonetheless clear from references to the coronations of Edgar and Edwy in the tenth-century lives of Oswald and Dunstan that the ladies dined separately.[74] Moreover, in the mid twelfth century Geoffrey of Monmouth, describing King Arthur's crown-wearing at Caerleon, writes that the king went off with the men to feast in his own palace and the queen retired with the married women to feast in hers; for the Britons still observed the ancient custom of Troy, the men celebrating festive occasions with their fellow-men and the women eating separately with the other women.[75] On the basis of the coronation banquet we could reasonably argue that all early medieval English kings were homosexual, but not that Richard was in any way unusual.

So far as I have been able to discover the earliest reference to Richard's homosexuality dates from 1948.[76] Thirteenth-century opinion was in no doubt that his interests were heterosexual. According to Walter of Guisborough, Richard's need for women was such that even on his death-bed he had them brought to him in defiance of his doctor's advice.[77] Although Walter of Guisborough was writing a hundred years later his view of Richard's character was grounded in his reading of the contemporary chronicle of William of Newburgh.[78] There is the legend of Margery, the king of Almain's daughter, who

[69] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 7.

[70] The point has been well expressed by C. Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050–1200* (1972), pp. 96–7.

[71] *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, ed. P. Meyer (3 vols., Paris, 1891–1901), i. 324, ll. 8981–4.

[72] Brundage, p. 257.

[73] Howden, *Gesta*, ii. 78–9.

[74] *The Historians of the Church of York*, ed. J. Raine (3 vols., Rolls Ser., 1879–94), i. 436–8; *Memorials of St. Dunstan*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Ser., 1874), p. 100. See also *ibid.*, pp. 190–1, 283–4 for early 12th-century elaborations of this incident.

[75] *The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth*, ed. A. Griscom (1929), pp. 456–7.

[76] J. H. Harvey, *The Plantagenets, 1154–1485* (1948), pp. 33–4. Harvey's claim that he was 'breaking the conspiracy of silence surrounding the popular hero Richard' suggests that this may indeed mark the beginning of the legend. If so, it has obtained wide currency with remarkable rapidity.

[77] *The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough*, ed. H. G. Rothwell (Camden 3rd ser., lxxxix, 1957), p. 142.

[78] *Chronicles of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, i, ii. William of Newburgh wrote of Richard's marriage in terms which show that he expected the king to find pleasure in it (*ibid.*, i. 346–7).



helped Richard to pass the time of his captivity in a pleasant manner.[79] There is also the story of the nun of Fontevrault. As told by Stephen of Bourbon, a Dominican friar and a popular preacher, Richard wanted one of the nuns so badly that he threatened to burn down the abbey unless she was delivered to him. When the nun asked what it was that attracted him so much and was told that it was her eyes, she sent for a knife and cut them out, saying, 'Send the king what he so much desires'.[80] The same story had been told by a contemporary of Richard, Peter the Chanter, a famous master in the schools of Paris, but in his writings he refers only to a king of the English, giving no name.[81] Possibly he was just being cautious: we do know that Stephen of Bourbon claimed to have listened to Peter's sermons.[82] But whomever Peter the Chanter may have had in mind it is clear that the thirteenth century did not suffer from the illusion that Richard preferred monks. Nor did the late twelfth-century barons of Aquitaine, to judge at least from their complaints as recorded by Roger of Howden.[83]

In one respect the marriage clearly failed. There were no children, no heirs. The terms of the treaty of Messina in March 1191 make it clear that heirs were very much in Richard's mind, as one would expect, as he awaited Berengaria's arrival in Sicily.[84] After all, he already had one son, Philip, to whom he had granted the lordship of Cognac.[85] But no legitimate children came. The consequences of this were certainly disastrous—Richard's death was followed by a disputed succession and the accession of John, the most overrated king in English history. Historians sometimes write as though Richard was responsible for this—but suppose Berengaria were barren or that, for some other reason, like Henry I and Adela of Louvain, Richard and Berengaria could not have children. What then could Richard have done? He might, presumably, have had the marriage annulled—but while the Navarre alliance remained important this would have been politically foolish.

There are, however, two pieces of evidence, neither of which has so far been discussed by historians, which make it possible to guess that by the late eleven-nineties the Navarre alliance had outlived its usefulness. The first is a document from the Navarrese chambre des comptes which shows that in March 1196 King Sancho VII accepted the homage of Arnold-Raymond, viscount of Tartas. The viscount proclaimed his readiness to make war or peace whenever Sancho required it and stated that this would apply to the king of England even if his own difficulties with Richard were to be settled.[86] The implication here seems

[79] *Der mittelenglische Versroman über Richard Löwenherz*, ed. K. Brunner (Vienna, 1913). This 14th-century Middle English version is based on a 13th-century Anglo-Norman romance: see, for example, G. Paris, 'Le roman de Richard Cœur de Lion', *Romania*, xxvi (1897), 361.

[80] *Anecdotes historiques ... d'Étienne de Bourbon*, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche (Paris, 1877), pp. 211, 431.

[81] See J. W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: the Social Views of Peter the Chanter and his Circle* (2 vols., Princeton, 1970), i. 256, ii. 183–4.

[82] *Anecdotes historiques*, p. 19.

[83] Howden, *Gesta*, i. 292: 'Mulieres namque et filias et cognatas liberorum hominum suorum vi rapiebat et concubinas illas faciebat; et postquam in eis libidinis suae ardorem extinxerat, tradebat eas militibus suis ad meretricandum'.

[84] 'Et si rex Angl' haberet duos heredes masculos aut plures' (Landon, p. 230; *Diplomatic Documents*, i. 14).

[85] *Archives historiques de Poitou*, iv. 21–2; *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the third year of the reign of King John*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Pipe Roll Soc., new ser., xiv, 1936), p. 283; Howden, *Chronica*, iv. 97. Howden's statement should, however, be treated with caution (J. Gillingham, 'The unromantic death of Richard I', *Speculum*, liv (1979), 18–41).

[86] 'Notum sit ... quod Arnaldus Raymundi, vicecomes de Tartais, recipit Sancium, regem Navarre, in dominum super omnes homines et sit vasallus ipsius, et facit eidem regi hominium quod semper ad voluntatem et mandatum ipsius faciat guerram vel faciat pacem cum omnibus hominibus quandocumque ipse mandaverit. De rege autem Anglie istud nominatim convenit Sancio, regi Navarre, Arnaldus Raymundi, vicecomes de Tartais, quod si forte rex Anglie vellet ei emendare

to be that Sancho looked upon Richard as a potential enemy. Possibly Sancho was, by now, affronted by Richard's treatment of Berengaria. What it does seem permissible to say is that 1196 was a year of general diplomatic realignment in the south-west—a realignment probably linked with the death, in April 1196, of one of the most dominant figures on the political stage, Alfonso II of Aragon.[87] Navarre and Aragon had been allies, chiefly against Castile, but also perhaps against Toulouse. After Alfonso's death Aragon and Castile came to terms,[88] and by 1197 Sancho of Navarre was isolated and in great difficulties—which he attempted to solve by seeking aid from the infidel. This is reflected in one of Roger of Howden's romantic stories about the daughter of the emperor of Africa who fell in love with King Sancho.[89] Richard's share in the general realignment of 1196 was his peace treaty with Toulouse, a treaty marking the end of what William of Newburgh called the Forty Years War.[90] In October 1196 Raymond VI of Toulouse married Richard's sister Joan, and by the terms of the marriage settlement recovered the Quercy.[91] Once a firm peace was made with Toulouse the Navarre alliance lost its *raison d'être*—all the more so when Sancho became more in need of help than able to provide it. It is in this new context that we should interpret the second piece of evidence, a letter written by Innocent III on 29 May 1198. In this Innocent informs Richard that he has written to the king of Navarre, asking him to hand over to Richard the money and the castles—'Rocca Bruna' (? Rocafort) and Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port—which Berengaria's father had bestowed upon her as her dowry. Innocent also made clear that he was acting in response to requests made by Richard's envoys and that he had earlier written to the archbishop of Narbonne on the same subject.[92] From Innocent's letter it seems that by 1197 the marriage had become a source of dispute rather than the basis of a mutually profitable alliance. By this time Richard had presumably given up all hope of a son: in 1197 he was prepared to recognize John as his heir.[93] Whether or not he ever thought of marrying again we do not know—Innocent's letter suggests that he was thinking along the lines

injurias quas rex Anglie intulit illi, et componeret cum eodem rege Anglie propter emendationes illarum injuriarum vel propter alia, semper tamen pro velle ac mandato Sancii, regis Navarre, faciat guerram contra regem Anglie, quandocumque idem rex Navarre mandaverit, vel faciat pacem cum rege Anglie' (*Documents des archives de la Chambre des Comptes de Navarre, 1196–1384*, ed. J.-A. Brutails (Paris, 1890), pp. 1–3).

[87] There is a convenient summary of Alfonso II's reign by J.-F. Cabestany, 'Alfons el Cast' in P. E. Schramm and others, *Els Primers Comtes-reis* (Barcelona, 1960), pp. 55–99.

[88] Cirot, 'Chronique latine', p. 262.

[89] Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 90–2. For a hostile view of the episode on which this romanticization was based see *Roderici archiepiscopi Toletani Historia de rebus Hispaniae*, bk. 7, ch. xxxii.

[90] 'Bellum quoque Tolosanum, quod illustri Anglorum regi Henrico et filio ejus Ricardo res summi negotii fuerat, et per annos quadraginta vires multorum attriverat populorum, eodem tempore, Deo propitio, exspiravit' (William of Newburgh, *Historia*, ii. 491). Although the chroniclers say nothing of the war with Toulouse after Richard's return from captivity, it is clear that it had continued unabated (see the terms of the treaty of Louviers (Jan. 1196) in Landon, pp. 107–8). Presumably King Philip's grant of rights over the abbey of Figeac (1195) had been intended to keep the count of Toulouse in his camp (*Recueil des actes de Philippe Auguste*, ii, ed. H. F. Delaborde, C. Petit-Dutaillis and J. Monicat (Paris, 1943), no. 485).

[91] Howden, *Chronica*, iv. 124–5; *Diplomatic Documents*, i. 204, 209; C. de Vic and J. Vaissete, *Histoire générale de Languedoc*, ed. E. Dulaurier and others (16 vols., Toulouse, 1872–1905), vi. 173–5.

[92] '... ut pecuniam et castella sancti Iohannis de Pedeport et Rocca bruna, que pater suus tibi cum filia sua concessit in dotem, sine aliqua difficultate restituat' (*Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England, 1198–1216*, ed. C. R. Cheney and W. H. Semple (1953), p. 5).

[93] This, as Landon points out, is the tacit implication of the covenants which John made, at his brother's wish, with Count Baldwin VI of Flanders and Count Philip of Namur on 8 Sept. 1197 (Landon, pp. 121–2).



of insisting that the terms of the marriage settlement be carried out rather than of breaking the settlement. Nonetheless by 1197–8 the marriage was clearly no longer working—either as a diplomatic instrument or as a means of producing an heir.

Innocent's letter contains the last reference to Berengaria in Richard's lifetime. We next hear of her when Hugh of Lincoln visited her in April 1199 to tell her of her husband's unexpected death at Chalus.[94] Berengaria did not re-marry and, for the rest of her life, she remained a shadowy figure in the background.[95] Never again did she stand as close to the centre of the stage as she did during the complex negotiations of 1190–1. But for the historian of the politics of western Europe this brief episode in her life is important for the light which it sheds on Richard I's style as a ruler. Although by 1197–8 Richard may have been disappointed by the results of his marriage, we are not entitled to believe that his attitude towards it was negative from the start. On the contrary, in the light of the remarkable circumstances in which he was married, it is clear that, as a politician, Richard was able to outmanoeuvre a tactician as astute as Philip Augustus. It is equally clear, moreover, that he was neither a reluctant husband nor an irresponsible ruler who went off on crusade while neglecting to provide for the security of his dominions, in the south as well as in the north.

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[94] Adam of Eynsham, *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. D. L. Douie and H. Farmer (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1961–2), ii. 136.

[95] '... in viduitate laudabili diu vixit, et in civitate Cenomannis ex donatione propter nuptias quam habebat frequentius morabatur, eleemosynis et orationibus et piis operibus intendendo, castitatis et religionis exemplo provocans studia feminarum, et in eadem civitate vitae cursum felici exitu consummavit' (*Roderici archiepiscopi Toletani Historia de Rebus Hispaniae*, bk. 5, ch. xxiii). For her problems with John, see C. R. Cheney, *Innocent III and England* (Stuttgart, 1976), pp. 22, 101.