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A SINGER AT THE FOUNTAIN: HOMAGE AND IRONY IN CICONIA'S 'SUS UNE FONTAYNE'

BY ANNE STONE

SOME YEARS AGO Heinrich Besseler proposed that the period between the death of Machaut in 1377 and the beginning of Dufay's career around 1420 be named 'the era of Ciconia', in acknowledgement of the quality and prominence of that composer's works in a period considered to lack a single 'great' composer.[1] In the years since Besseler's publication, two complete-works editions, many articles and more than one book-length study treating questions of his biography and musical style, and at least three recordings devoted exclusively to Ciconia's compositions have only strengthened Besseler's case.[2]

Yet the suggestion has not really taken hold, perhaps because Ciconia's biographical and music-stylistic profile does not really seem to have been representative of his era. Born and presumably educated in the bishopric of Liège, he travelled to Italy at an early age to pursue his musical career, a path more often taken by composers of later generations than of his own. And while subsequent fifteenth-century *oltremontani* by and large imported northern styles and languages into Italy, Ciconia seems instead to have cultivated the genres of his adopted home. Nineteen Italian songs ascribed to him survive, but only three French-texted works: the canon 'Le ray au soleil' and two virelais, the unusual two-voice 'Aler m'en veus' and the three-voice 'Sus une fontayne'. This tally is all the more striking because surviving manuscripts suggest that French, not Italian, secular forms were often preferred among Italian composers in northern Italy; further, many of these Italians seemed to favour the extended and complex rhythmic notational vocabulary of the so-called *ars subtilior*.[3] If Ciconia's surviving pieces can be taken as representative of his compositional interests, then, his tastes were quite different from those of many of his north Italian colleagues.

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[1] Heinrich Besseler, 'Hat Matheus de Perusio Epoche gemacht?', *Die Musikforschung*, viii (1955), 19–23.

[2] The first scholar to devote a book to Ciconia and to edit his music was Suzanne Clercx: see *Johannes Ciconia, un musicien liégeois et son temps*, Brussels, 1960. A recent complete-works edition has been edited by Margaret Bent and Anne Hallmark as *The Works of Johannes Ciconia* ('Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century', xxiv), Monaco, 1984. The dissertation by Annette Kreutziger-Herr, *Johannes Ciconia [ca. 1370–1412]* ('Hamburger Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft', xxxix), Hamburg, 1991, treats Ciconia's career in the cultural context of early humanistic Padua, and Anne Hallmark's documentary study of Ciconia is forthcoming. An edition and translation of Ciconia's theoretical treatises *Nova Musica* and *De proportionibus* has been published by Oliver Ellsworth ('Greek and Latin Music Theory', ix), Lincoln, Nebraska, & London, 1993. The proceedings of the first international conference on Johannes Ciconia, held in 1998, *Johannes Ciconia: musicien de la transition*, ed. Philippe Vendrix, Paris, is forthcoming.

[3] The stylistic designation *ars subtilior* was proposed in Ursula Günther, 'Das Ende der Ars Nova', *Die Musikforschung*, xvi (1963), 105–20. For more on the *ars subtilior*, see also Anne Stone, 'Che cos'è di più sottile riguardo l'*ars subtilior*?', *Rivista italiana di musicologia*, xxxi (1996), 1–31.

Each of Ciconia's three French compositions, moreover, is at least slightly unusual in some way. Canon was not a common procedure in French songs, and the text of 'Le ray au soleyl' does not follow a *forme fixe* but consists, rather, of a four-line rhyming description of a heraldic emblem of Giangaleazzo Visconti of Milan.[4] 'Aler m'en veus' seems to be something of a formal hybrid, containing two voices of equal range (typical of Italian but not of French genres of the period), an irregular verse structure and imitation and voice-exchange reminiscent of the upper voices of Italian motets.[5]

The virelai 'Sus une fontayne' is the only surviving piece whose formal features reflect the French song tradition, yet it is this composition that has provoked the most commentary of all of Ciconia's works. To start with, 'Sus une fontayne' is the only work by Ciconia in which we find complex notational devices that exemplify *ars subtilior* practice. While this in itself is only mildly mysterious, the way the complex notation is used in the piece, together with various details of the work's structure and transmission, is considerably more enigmatic.

The enigma centres on 'Sus une fontayne' 's extensive quotation of the works of Ciconia's older Italian contemporary Filippotto da Caserta. Polyphonic quotations of the openings of three ballades by Filippotto are woven into the compositional fabric of 'Sus une fontayne', together with their texts, which are similarly incorporated into the text of Ciconia's virelai. While quotation of text and/or of music is a common feature of late fourteenth-century song it is taken to an extreme here; as Ursula Günther has pointed out, the quoted material accounts for fully 20 per cent of the composition.[6] To show an overview of the quoted material in the piece, I reproduce the text of 'Sus une fontayne' with the textual quotations italicized; they occur at the ends of lines 1, 4 and 5:

1	Sus une fontayne *en remirant*	By a fountain *while looking around*
2	Oy chanter si doucement	I hear such sweet singing
3	Que mon cuer, corps et pensement	That my heart, body and mind
4	Remanent pris *en attendant*	Remain captive *while waiting*
5	D'avoir merchi *de ma dolour*	To receive mercy *from my grief*,
6	Que me trepount au cuer forment	Which strongly strikes me in my heart,
7	Seul de vëoir ce noble flour	Only to this noble flower
8	Qui tant cantoit suavement.	That was singing so beautifully.
9	Que chois' null' say en recivant	For I have no choice but to suffer
10	Pavour, tremour et angosment	Fear, trembling and anguish,
11	Que fere duis certaynement,	That I must certainly bear,
12	Tant suy de ly vëoir desirant;	So desirous am I to see [the singer].

Ex. 1 is a transcription of the piece with boxes placed around the quoted material: 'En remirant' in bars 11–19, 'En attendant' in bars 51–4 and 'De ma dolour' in bars 70–76.[7]

'Sus une fontayne' 's second mystery is a consistent notational discrepancy between

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[4] For a discussion of the canon, see Ciconia, *The Works of Johannes Ciconia*, ed. Bent & Hallmark, p. 218, where it is listed as an *opus dubium*; and Virginia Newes, *Fuga and Related Contrapuntal Procedures in European Polyphony, 1340–1420* (unpublished dissertation), Brandeis University, 1987, pp. 197–204.

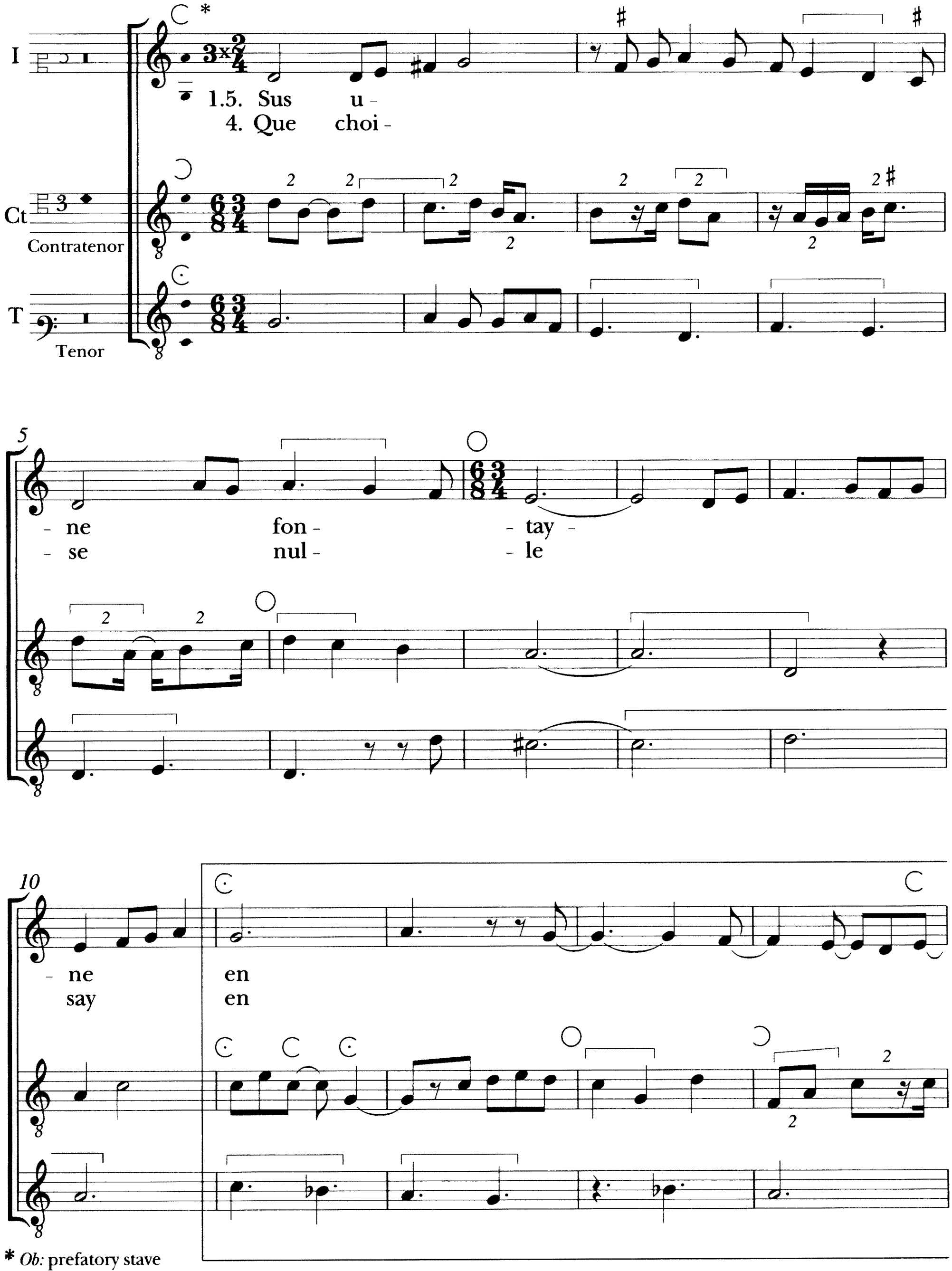
[5] See Anne Hallmark, 'Some Evidence for French Influence in Northern Italy, c. 1400', in *Studies in the Performance of Late Mediaeval Music*, ed. Stanley Boorman, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 193–225, at p. 209. On the formal and generic oddities of 'Aler m'en veus'/'O Beatum incendium', see Julie Cumming, *The Motet in the Age of Du Fay*, Cambridge, 1999, p. 143.

[6] Ursula Günther, 'Zitate in französischen Liedsätzen der Ars Nova und Ars Subtilior', *Musica disciplina*, xxvi (1972), 55–68, at p. 62.

[7] This transcription is taken from Ciconia, *The Works of Johannes Ciconia*, pp. 170–74, and is reproduced by permission of Editions Oiseau-Lyre.

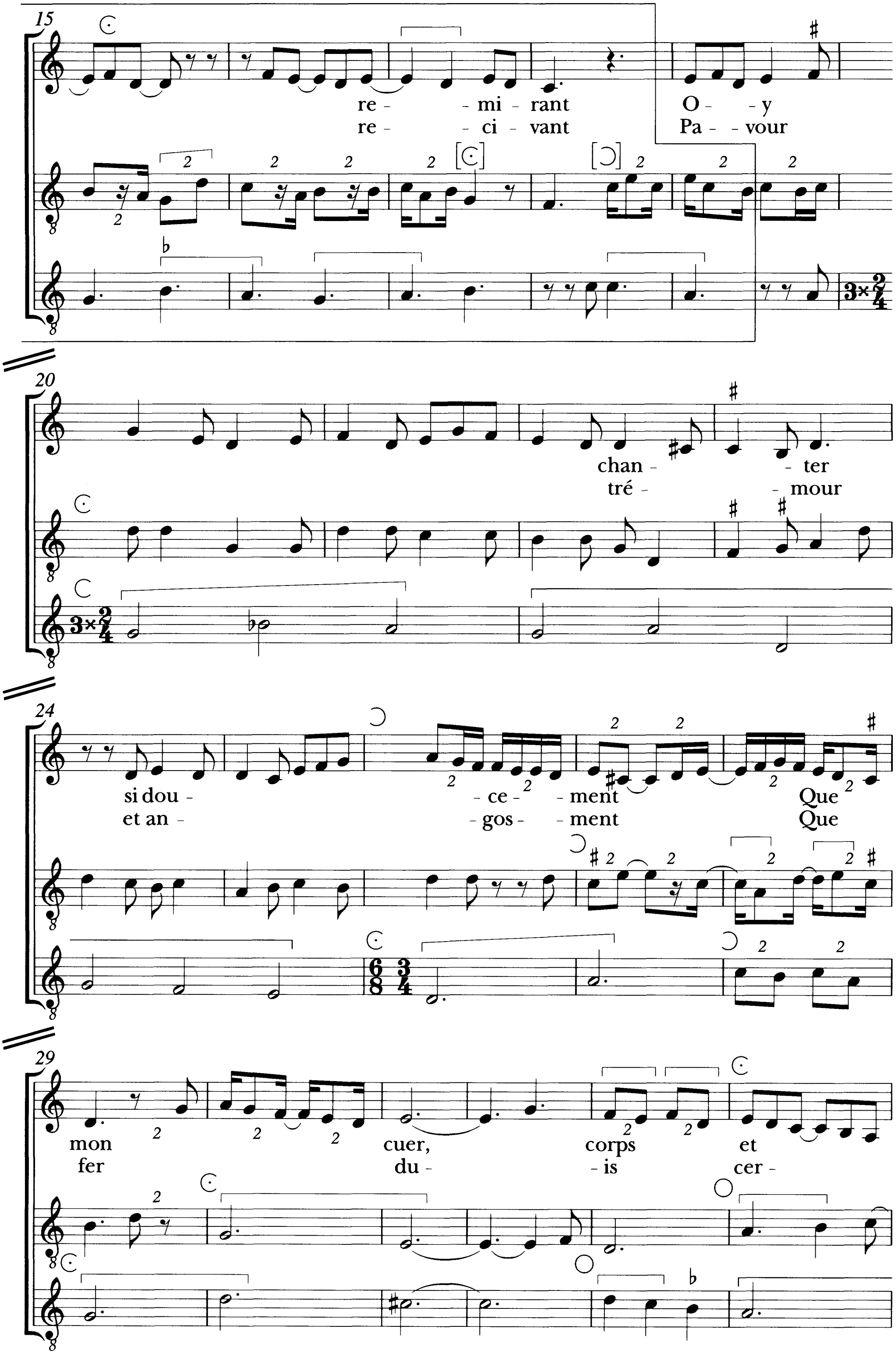
Ex. 1 'Sus une fontayne' (after *The Works of Johannes Ciconia*, ed. Bent & Hallmark, No. 45)

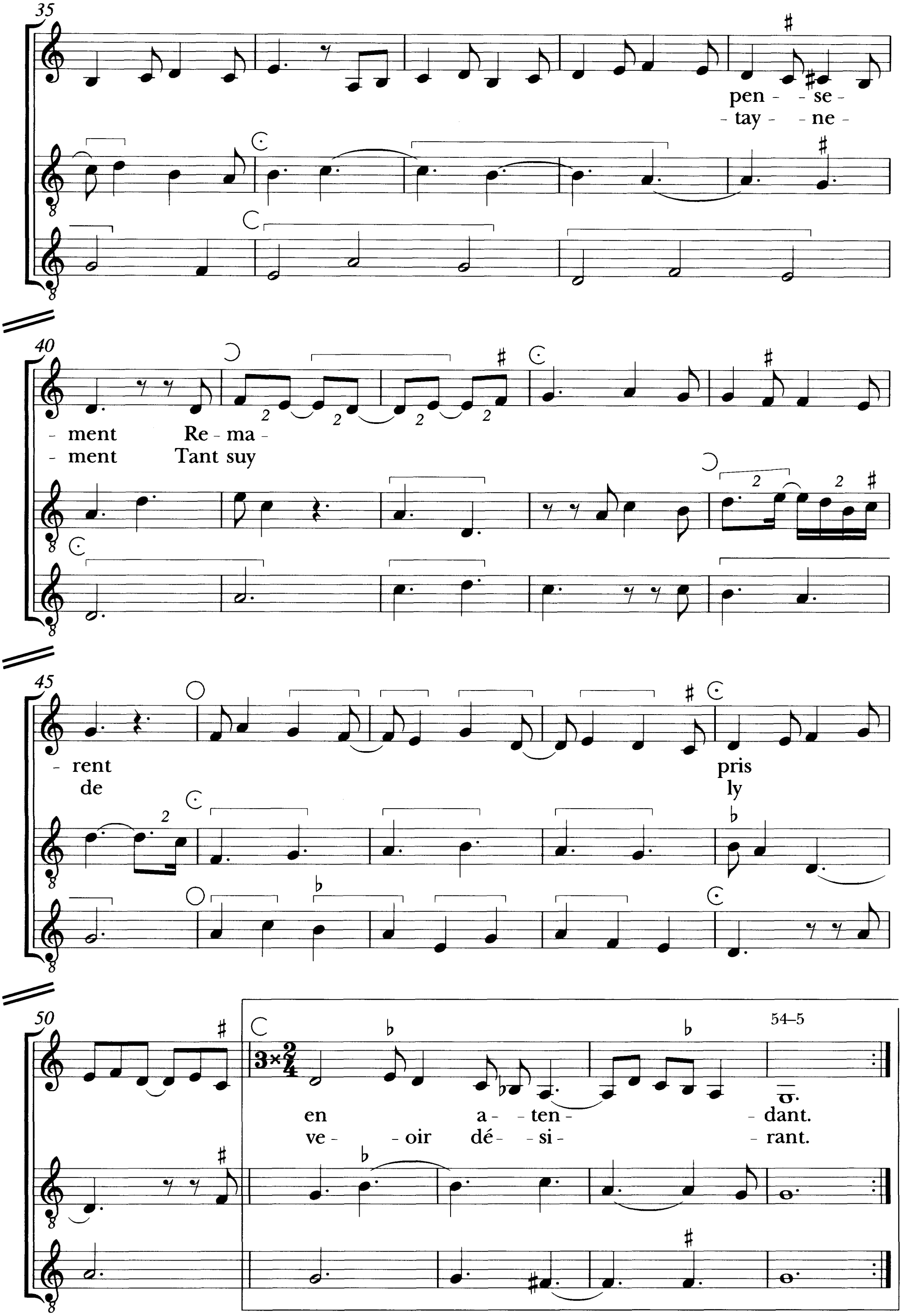
GB-Ob 229, I-MOe 5.24


I
1.5. Sus u - ne fon - tay - ne en
4. Que choi - se nul - le say en
Ct
Contratenor
T
Tenor
3x 2/4
6/8 3/4
2
5
10
*

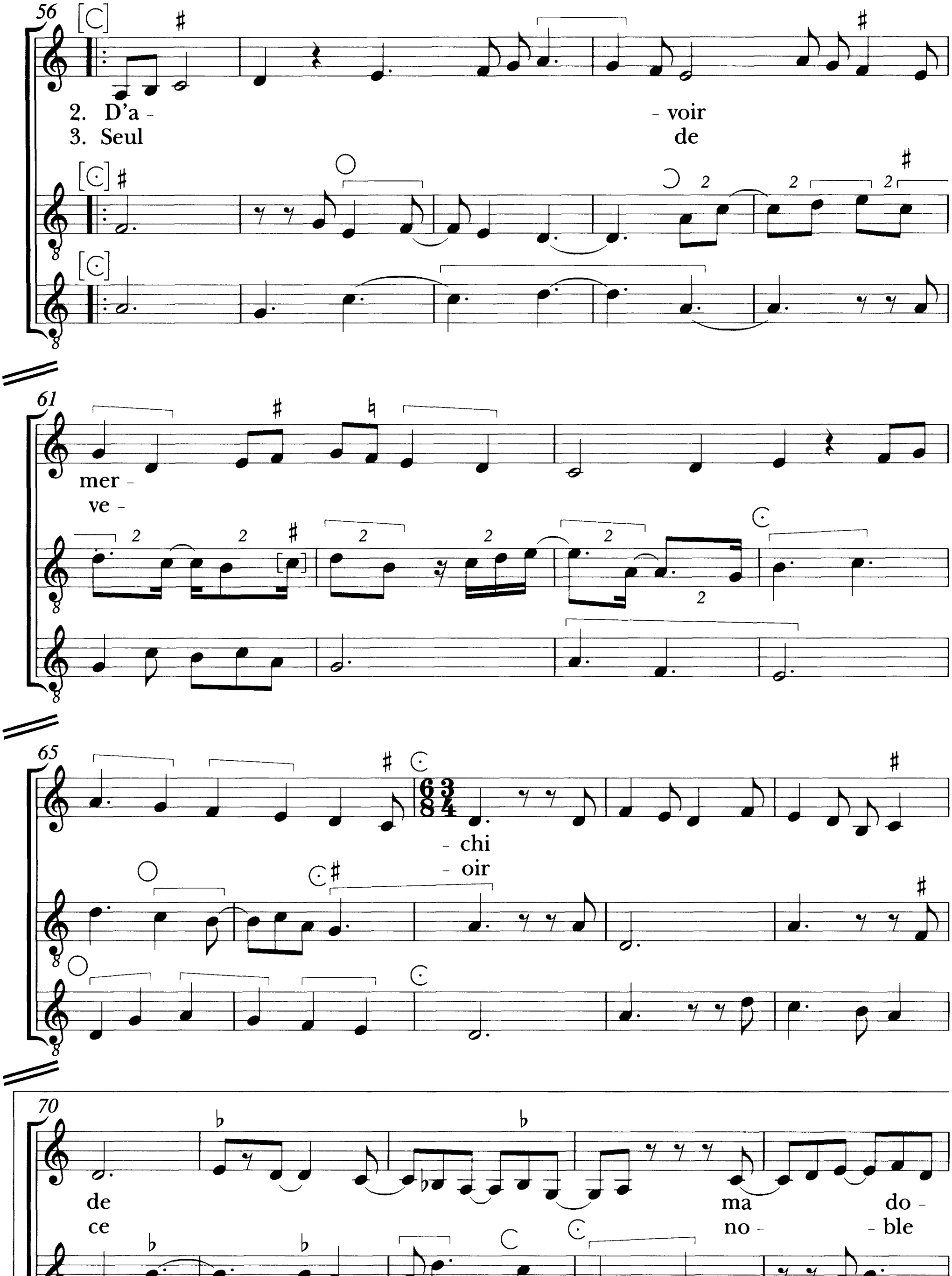
* *Ob:* prefatory stave
MOe: mensuration signs

'En remirant vo douce portraiture' (bb. 11–19)

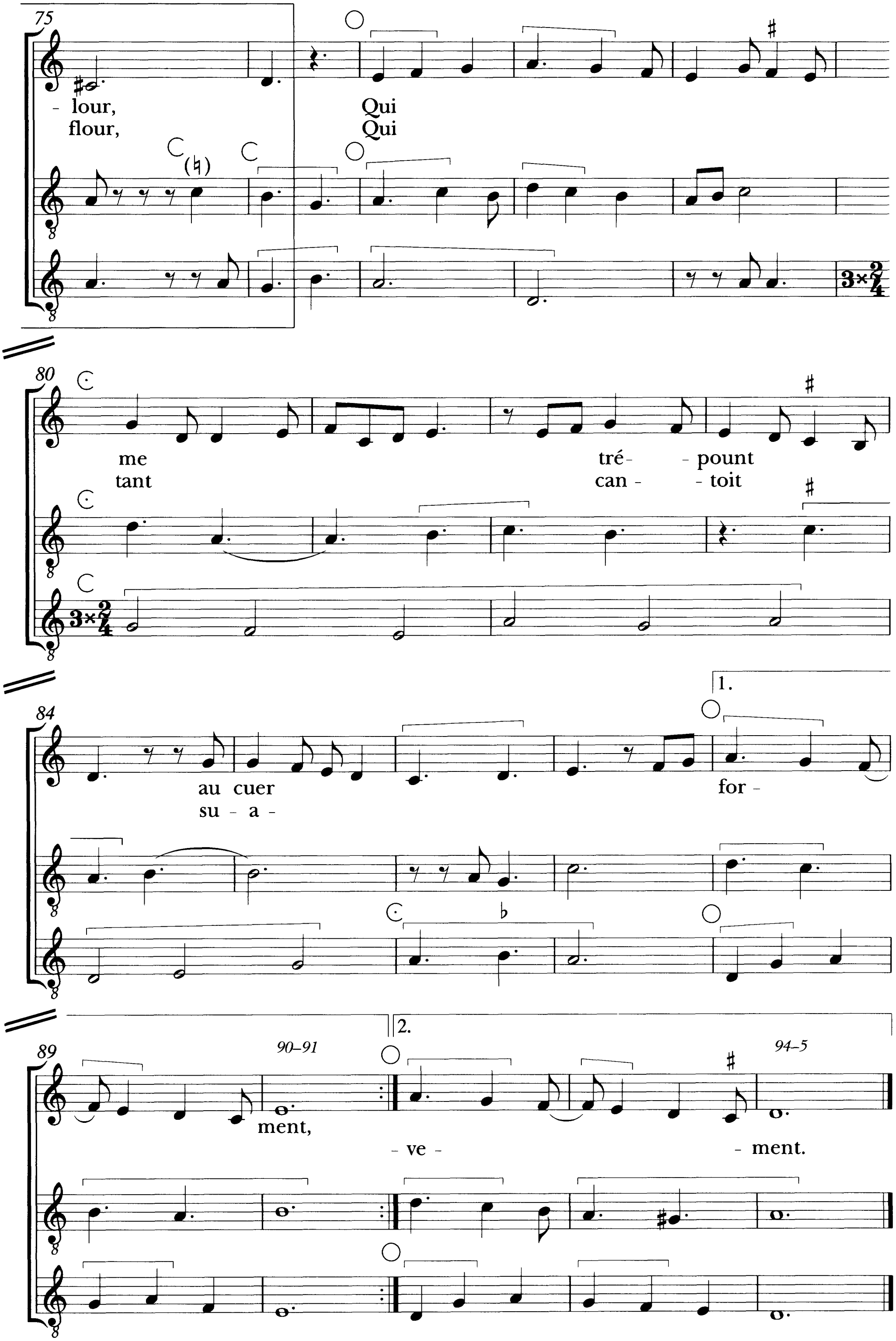

15
re - - mi - rant O - - y
re - - ci - vant Pa - - vour
20
chan - - ter
tré - - mour
24
si dou - - ce - - ment Que
et an - - gos - - ment Que
29
mon cuer, corps et
fer du - - is cer -


35
pen - - se -
- tay - - ne -
40
- ment Re - ma -
- ment Tant suy
45
- rent pris
de ly
50
3×2/4
54–5
en a - - ten - - dant.
ve - - oir dé - - si - - rant.

'En attendant soufrir m'estuet' (bb. 51–4)


56
2. D'a - - voir
3. Seul de
61
mer -
ve -
65
- chi
- oir
70
de ma do -
ce no - - ble

'De ma dolour' (bb. 70–76)


75
- lour,
flour,
Qui
Qui
(♮)
3×2/4
80
me
tant
tré-
can -
- pount
- toit
3×2/4
84
au cuer
su - a -
1.
for -
89
90–91
ment,
2.
- ve -
94–5
- ment.

the two sources that transmit the work. The first is a fragment of an early fifteenth-century manuscript of Paduan origin, now in Oxford (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. Pat. Lat. 229; hereafter Oxford 229); the second source is the early fifteenth-century manuscript Modena, Biblioteca Estense e Universitaria, MS α.M.5.24 (hereafter Modena A), compiled at least partly in the environs of Milan. The two sources differ in their use of the numerous mensuration signs found in the piece, as shown in Table I. In all cases (except the O, which is used identically in the two sources) the Modena manuscript's use of the signs is normative and the use in Oxford 229 eccentric with respect to codified French mensural theory. The first three mensurations shown in the table are three of the standard combinations of *tempus* and *prolatio* codified by the 1340s in French Ars Nova theory, most popularly in the *Libellus cantus mensurabilis secundum Johannem de Muris*. The fourth mensuration, imperfect time and minor prolation with diminution by one-half (*tempus imperfectum diminutum*), is found in abundance in turn-of-the-fifteenth-century sources, represented by Ↄ; that sign is described by Ciconia himself, as well as other theorists of the period.[8] Once again, the sign in the Paduan source, the number 3, is eccentric.[9]

TABLE I

Interpretation of Mensuration Signs in Oxford 229 and Modena A

Oxford 229 sign	Modena A sign	mensuration
O	O	*tempus perfectum prolatio minor*
Ↄ	C	*tempus imperfectum prolatio minor*
C	Ͼ	*tempus imperfectum prolatio maior*
3	Ↄ	*tempus imperfectum diminutum*

The quotation of Filippotto's three ballades in 'Sus une fontayne' has led most commentators on the piece to hypothesize a personal relationship between the two composers, and to read the piece as Ciconia's homage to the certainly older Filippotto.[10] The unusual use of mensuration signs and other eccentricities of the notation of 'Sus une fontayne', to be discussed later, have led some scholars to suggest that Ciconia was at an early stage in his career, perhaps even a student of Filippotto, when he wrote the piece, and that he was struggling to master the complexities of *ars subtilior* notation.[11] The only scholar to have offered a substantially different view of the work is Ursula Günther, who argued that the text does not support an interpretation of a personal relationship between the two composers, and that the piece is too complex and artfully conceived to have been a student work. Rather, she wrote, it represents the 'pinnacle of late-medieval learnedness' and 'the first homage-composition *par excellence* in the history of European music'.[12]

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[8] In the three largest sources of French polyphony of Ciconia's time, Ↄ is used consistently to indicate this mensuration, and never to indicate anything else. Other notational means were in some cases used, but the association between Ↄ and *tempus imperfectum diminutum* is clear. The sources are Modena A; Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Musée Condé, MS 564 (hereafter Chantilly 564); and Paris, Bibliothèque de France, n. acq. fr. 6771 (Reina Codex). For a theoretical description of the sign, see Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Expositiones tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis Johannis de Muris*, ed. F. Alberto Gallo ('Antiqui musicae italicae scriptores', iii), Bologna, 1966, p. 142. Ciconia, in his *De proportionibus*, lists Ↄ as a sign of imperfect time and minor prolation, but does not refer to its proportional relationship with C (ed. Ellsworth, p. 443). For a comparative discussion of the notation of the Modena and Chantilly codices, see Anne Stone, *Writing Rhythm in Late Medieval Italy: Notation and Style in the Manuscript Modena, Biblioteca Estense, a.M.5.24* (unpublished dissertation), Harvard University, 1994, Chap. 2.

[9] Although there is no obvious logic evident in the use of signs in the Paduan source, there is a tendency towards representing opposites: Ↄ in Oxford 229, for example, replaces C, thus representing a visual reversal. The other two signs reverse 2's and 3's: the C, normally representing minor prolation (two minims in a semibreve) here represents major prolation (three minims in a semibreve); and the proportional number 3 here represents duple diminution of the semibreve, causing a 4:3 proportion of the minim, a proportion that is often represented by the number 2 (or 4). The number 3 most often represents a 3:2 proportion of the minim.

[10] Richard Hoppin, review of Suzanne Clercx, *Johannes Ciconia*, in *Musical Quarterly*, xlvii (1961), 416–20. Suzanne Clercx and Willi Apel both believed that 'Sus une fontayne' was composed in Avignon around 1370 (Apel, *French Secular Compositions of the Fourteenth Century* ('Corpus mensurabilis musicae', liii), Rome, 1970, i, p. xxiv). The relationship between Ciconia and Filippotto da Caserta has also recently been discussed by Reinhard Strohm in 'Filippotto da Caserta ovvero i francesi in Lombardia', in *In cantu et sermone: a Nino Pirrotta nel suo 80° compleanno*, ed. Fabrizio Della

In the pages that follow, I should like to reconsider the question of 'Sus une fontayne' 's meaning by re-examining its notation and text, as well as its historical and literary relationship to the quoted works of Filippotto da Caserta. While I agree with Günther that 'Sus une fontayne' is the work of a master, not a student, I question her reading of the work as a 'homage-composition *par excellence*', for I believe that various aspects of the text, music and notation resist an interpretation of straightforward homage. Quotation is very often an ironic act in which the author self-consciously breaks the narrative of his own work to introduce, with a wink to his audience, a fragment of another author's work. And I should like to suggest that in 'Sus une fontayne' the game of quotation, and its accompanying irony, involves more than the mere allusion to three of Filippotto's works; it also engages the narrative strategy of 'Sus une fontayne' 's text, and even, I shall argue, extends to the musical notation in the eccentric use of mensuration signs in Oxford 229. On my reading, the conflicting use of mensuration signs in the work's two sources is not an insignificant by-product of scribal error, or of the general instability of musical signs in the late fourteenth century, nor is it a result of Ciconia's inexperience. Rather, I believe that the non-normative signs in the Paduan source of the work represent the intention of the composer, and their eccentricity is part of a larger ironic strategy of the work as a whole. I suggest that the irony pervades so many aspects of the work that it is impossible to know for sure whether there is 'true' homage; the knowing audience would leave a performance of the work more dazzled by Ciconia's gamesmanship than convinced of his reverence for Filippotto.

On first reading, the laudatory tone of 'Sus une fontayne' does indeed pay tribute to the 'noble flower that sings so beautifully'. The first-person speech, the plaintive tone and the rhetoric of unfulfilled desire all place the text in the tradition of the French courtly love lyric. Here, however, the speaker of the poem seems to be a hearer, not a lover, since the text presents a fictionalized account of a listener being moved by a singer (composer) whose music he is hearing from afar.[13] Although some translations

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Seta & Franco Piperno, Florence, 1989, pp. 63–74, and Yolanda Plumley, 'Ciconia's *Sus une fontayne* and the Legacy of Philippus de Caserta', in *Johannes Ciconia, musicien de la transition*, ed. Philippe Vendrix, Paris, in press.

[11] Hoppin, who was the first to point out the extent of the quoted material from Filippotto da Caserta, wrote that 'this act of homage suggests a close personal relationship between the two composers, perhaps that of student to teacher' (review of *Johannes Ciconia*, p. 417); Bent and Hallmark refer to unspecified 'awkward notational solutions' that suggest to them that the piece is a student work (Ciconia, *The Works of Johannes Ciconia*, p. 216).

[12] 'Zitate in französischen Liedsätzen der Ars Nova und Ars Subtilior', p. 67.

[13] Note that the term 'singer' in the fourteenth century is used to refer to both singer and composer, a semantic blurring that we need to remember in order fully to understand the relationship expressed in the song. This is seen most clearly in the theoretical literature; in his discussion of notational practices, for example, Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi refers to 'aliqui cantores qui ponunt . . . breves rubeas vel nigras vacuas . . .' ('some singers who put red or black hollow breves') in his *Expositiones tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis Johannis de Muris*, ed. Gallo, p. 134.

of this text render the last line as 'so much do I desire to see her', suggesting that the speaker's desire is of the traditional erotic variety, the pronoun *li*, it seems to me, refers back to the feminine *flour*, and does not indicate the gender of the person for whom the *flour* is a metaphor.[14] Indeed, there seems to be little doubt that the unseen singer is Filippotto da Caserta, since it is his text and music that is quoted in the course of the song, and the theme of unfulfilled desire seems to represent an attitude of homage.

However, I would suggest that other features of the text mediate, if they do not entirely contradict, the poem's attitude of veneration. It is significant that Filippotto is not named in the text (as is Machaut, for example, in the beautiful double-texted ballade composed upon his death by Eustace Deschamps); he is only identified indirectly, through his music. In order for the message of homage to be communicated, then, the listener must play an active role; he must be able to recognize the quoted music and thereby to identify the 'noble flour' as Filippotto. The obliqueness of this identification recalls the common practice in contemporaneous French poetry of authorial self-naming through anagrams, recently explored by Laurence de Looze.[15] De Looze shows how readers of Machaut, Deschamps and Pizan have a mock-hermeneutic role to play when, prompted by instructions in the text, they unscramble anagrams of the poet's name. This process gently problematizes the act of reading, and calls attention to the reader's role in the establishment of the author's authority: fourteenth-century literature, according to de Looze, 'vociferously refuses to name its author directly and calls upon the reader to author the author out of the scrambled text of the anagrammatic puzzle' (pp. 167–8). In a similar way, but with an interesting twist on this process, the listener of 'Sus une fontayne' is asked to identify not the author of the composition being heard, but the author of the quoted songs to which the text refers.

Thus on one level, a performance of 'Sus une fontayne' constitutes a kind of 'name that tune' game constructed by the composer for his audience. French songs of this period are full of quotations and allusions, however, and in this regard 'Sus une fontayne' is remarkable only for the quantity of its quoted material. But the way the borrowed quotations function within the central narrative of 'Sus une fontayne' results in an unusually, if not uniquely, rich narrative structure.[16] For not only are the text and music of Filippotto's songs quoted, but acknowledgement of the quotation is incorporated into the narrative of 'Sus une fontayne', a song about someone hearing someone else singing. The result is something like the musico-narrative structure of a song within a song: the quotations serve as intra-diegetic musical numbers, heard and acknowledged by the narrator, while Ciconia's music extra-diegetically accompanies the narrative. The narrative of 'Sus une fontayne' thus fictionalizes the act of listening, creating a fictional listener whose experience hearing Filippotto's songs mirrors that of the listener hearing Ciconia's song.[17]

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[14] Since Machaut is called 'flour de toutes flours' in the ballade 'Armes, amours, dames, chevalerie'/'Flour de toutes flours', there is no question that a 'flour' can refer to a man. I do not mean to suggest that there is no erotic tone here; rather, it seems to me, the borrowing of the commonplace poetic accoutrements of courtly love to describe hearing music eroticizes the act of hearing in a manner similar to the eroticization of the act of writing in some courtly poetry; see Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: the Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry*, Ithaca, NY, 1987, pp. 96–103.

[15] 'Signing Off in the Middle Ages: Medieval Textuality and Strategies of Authorial Self-Naming', in *Vox Intexta: Orality and Textuality in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. N. Doane & Carol Braun Pasternack, Madison & London, 1991, pp. 162–78.

[16] For the use of quotation in the fourteenth-century song literature, see Günther, 'Zitate in französischen Liedsätzen der Ars Nova und Ars Subtilior'; Yolanda Plumley, 'Citation and Allusion in the Late *Ars nova*: the Case of *Esperance* and the *En attendant* songs', *Early Music History*, xviii (1999), 287–363; and Elizabeth Eva Leach, 'Fortune's Demesne: the Interrelation of Text and Music in Machaut's *Il mest avis* (B22), *De fortune* (B23) and Two Related Anonymous Balades', *Early Music History*, xix (2000), 47–79.

The relationship between the real and the fictional listeners becomes blurred, however, when the first quotation begins in bar 11, for the 'real' listener recognizes the song of the fictional singer as a 'real' song, 'En remirant vo douce portraiture' by Filippotto da Caserta. The real and the fictional listener hear the quoted song simultaneously. The work thus establishes a fictional listener/performer relationship and then ironically undermines the fiction by making the songs heard within the fiction real. This is a narrative strategy that, following the definition of Patricia Waugh, could be called metafictional.[18] According to Waugh, 'The lowest common denominator of metafiction is simultaneously to create a fiction and to make a statement about the creation of that fiction' (p. 6). Here the fictional story of a narrator hearing music is metafictionally disrupted by the reality of the heard music, a disruption that serves to remind the real listener of his own role as a listener, and the status of the song as fiction.

The intrusion of the 'real' song, 'En remirant vo douce portraiture', into the fictional narrative of 'Sus une fontayne' also raises the question whether there is a 'real' correlation with the fictional speaker who is hearing the song. If the speaker of 'Sus une fontayne' is hearing a song that the audience recognizes as a real song outside the fictional world of Ciconia's song, that audience is invited to associate the poetic speaker with Ciconia himself, and to interpret 'Sus une fontayne' 's narrative autobiographically.[19] The juxtaposition of fiction and reality within the song thus causes us to hear the narrator's yearning for the fictional singer as the real Ciconia's homage to the real Filippotto. But we should be aware that there is an intricate edifice of fiction that supports this autobiographical interpretation, and the perceived autobiography may be a part of that fiction. It does not necessarily have to be an either/or situation, as the author may well be expressing autobiographical sentiments by creating a fictional voice, but we need to be aware that the text can be read both literally and ironically.[20]

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[17] Sylvia Huot offers a similar interpretation of the role of manuscript illumination of the *Roman de la Rose*. As the narrator first approaches the garden he sees allegorical images painted upon the walls, and in certain manuscripts transmitting the *Roman*, each allegory is represented in a miniature; as a result, 'reading this text of labeled images enables the reader to share in—indeed, to re-enact—the narrator's original experience. The poem, spaced between and alongside these rubricated miniatures, is the narrator's commentary on the images; it is as though he is speaking to us from inside the book about the pictures that we, like him, see on its pages' (*From Song to Book*, p. 87).

[18] Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction: the Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*, London & New York, 1984. For a reading of Machaut's narrative structure in the two Judgement poems (*The Judgement of the King of Bohemia* and *The Judgement of the King of Navarre*) as metafictional, see R. Barton Palmer, 'The Metafictional Machaut', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, xx (1987), 23–40.

[19] This brings up a related question: whether the 'real' Ciconia wrote the text of 'Sus une fontayne'. There is no way to be sure about this, of course, though it seems very likely that the composer did write the text, and I will refer to it as Ciconia's. But this question is only really of interest for historical reasons, not interpretative ones. From the point of view of the interpretation of the text a more interesting question is: regardless of the 'real' authorship of the poem, should we take the poetic speaker to be a fictional representative of the composer? If so, then should we assume that the feelings stated by the poetic speaker represent in some way the 'real' feelings of Ciconia? I suggest that we are encouraged to associate the poetic speaker with the composer by the quotation of the real songs. If the poetic speaker were hearing fictional songs, we would not be prompted to ask about his relationship with the real composer.

[20] Our uncertainty on this score is a result of a tension between autobiography and fiction that is found in abundance in French narrative poetry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and has been studied particularly in the works of Machaut. The most famously recalcitrant of Machaut's narrative works in this regard is the *Voir dit*, which purports to tell the 'true story' of the elderly Machaut's amorous relationship, conducted mostly in letters, with the very young 'Tout-belle'. The degree to which the *Voir dit* is autobiographical as opposed to fictional has been debated by scholars for years. For an overview of the debates, see William S. Calin, *A Poet at the Fountain: Essays on the Narrative Verse of Guillaume de Machaut*, Lexington, 1974, pp. 167–72. On the question of truth in the fourteenth-century lyric, see Jacqueline Cerquiglini, *'Un engin si soutil': Guillaume de Machaut et l'écriture au XIV^{e} siècle*, Geneva,

The second quotation, 'en attendant', closes the A section of the virelai, and seems to comment upon its own position, waiting to continue the sentence interrupted by the cadence in bar 54. It also, of course, provides the ending to the whole song, and as such it takes on a different, rather provocative, meaning. The text and the music seem so inconclusive that Ursula Günther has proposed that the piece is not intended to end at this point, suggesting that the textual enjambment between lines 4 and 5 may be mirrored by an ambiguity in the music.[21] The cadence in bar 54 of the published transcription, the end of the A section, is on G, while the end of the B section is on D. Günther notes that an ending parallel to that of the B section is found in bars 65–7, that is, at the point in the music where the completion of the phrase 'en attendant d'avoir merchi' occurs. She suggests accordingly that bar 67 is the true ending of the piece, so that the music, like the text, carries through the expected formal break between the two sections.

While Günther's suggestion is ingenious, it ultimately seems to undermine the irony of the placing of the words 'en attendant' at the end of the song. While there is no doubt that the listener would hear the parallel endings, the musical parallelism might in the course of a performance of the whole virelai cause the listener to be confused about where the true end of the work is. The listener would hear two possible endings, the first at 'en attendant', articulated by the repetitions of the B section of the virelai; and the second at 'd'avoir merchi de ma dolour', articulated both by the grammar of the text and the parallel ending in the music. This ambiguity seems to be intentional on the part of the composer, but it should not lead us to assume that the more conclusive of the two possible endings must necessarily be the intended one; the ambiguity, I suggest, only provides another twist to the paradox of ending the work with the open-ended 'En attendant . . .'[22]

The ballade quoted at this moment, 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet', has a history as a participant in another intertextual constellation. As Reinhard Strohm has pointed out, it is one of three interrelated ballades whose first lines begin with the text 'En attendant' and then go on to quote the text of something else. 'Soufrir m'estuet' was the motto of the Milanese ruler Bernabò Visconti (d. 1385); the other two ballades are Senleches's 'En attendant, Esperance conforte', and Galiot's 'En attendant d'amer la douce vie', both of which quote text from the anonymous song 'Esperance, qui en mon cuer s'embat'.[23] The theme of the personified Esperance found in Senleches's quotation pervades the other two works as well, as recently explained by Yolanda Plumley. 'Sweet Hope' appears in the second line of 'En attendant d'amer', and 'En attendant, Esperance conforte' not only introduces the personified Hope in the opening line but quotes the music of the anonymous 'Esperance, qui en mon cuer

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1985, pp. 159–79. On the idea of 'pseudo-autobiography' as an inherent component of the lyric, see idem, 'Le clerc e l'écriture: le *Voir Dit* de Guillaume de Machaut et la définition du *dit*', in *Literatur in der Gesellschaft der Spätmittelalters*, ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, Heidelberg, 1980, pp. 151–68, and Laurence de Looze, *Pseudo-Autobiography in the Fourteenth Century*, Gainesville, 1998, esp. pp. 1–39.

[21] Günther first suggested this interpretation in 'Zitate in französischen Liedsätzen der Ars Nova und Ars Subtilior', pp. 65–7, and later amplified it in 'Fourteenth-Century Music with Texts Revealing Performance Practice', in *Studies in the Performance of Late Mediaeval Music*, ed. Boorman, pp. 253–70, at pp. 264–6.

[22] Another possibility, which is pure speculation, is that *Sus une fontayne* might lead directly into a performance of 'En attendant', with the overlapping phrase 'En attendant' connecting the two works so that no break would occur. In this case, 'Sus une fontayne' would act as something like a trope of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'.

[23] The relationship between the three 'En attendant . . .' ballades is discussed in Reinhard Strohm, 'Filippotto da Caserta ovvero i francesi in Lombardia'. Strohm suggested that Galiot's 'En attendant' ballade quotes Machaut's 'En amer la douce vie', but this has been corrected by Yolanda Plumley in 'Citation and Allusion in the Late *Ars nova*', p. 297.

s'embat' in its refrain. 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet' quotes 'Esperance' in a more veiled way.[24]

That the words 'en attendant' are highlighted in the way that they are by Ciconia's setting might suggest that Filippotto's ballade has a special role to play in 'Sus une fontayne', and a glance at its full text confirms this suspicion:

En attendant, soufrir m'estuet grief payne	While waiting, I had to suffer grievous pain
Et en languor vivre c'est ma destinee,	And it is my destiny to live in languor,
Puisqu' avenir ne puis a la fontayne,	Because I cannot approach the fountain,
Tant est de ruissius entour avironee.	So surrounded is it by streams.
Tell vertu li a Dieu dounee	Such virtue is given to it by God
Que puet assouvir chascun a souffisance	That is can satisfy each according to his needs
Par sa dignite et tres noble puissance.	Through its dignity and very noble power.
Les grans ruisanz qui la font leur demaine	The great streams that lead to the fountain
Si ont les conduis de la font estoupee,	Have indeed stopped up the paths of the fountain,
Si c'on n'i puet trouver la droite vaine,	So that one cannot find there the right path.
Tant est courompue l'iauë et troublee,	So broken and troubled is the water,
Gouster n'en puis une seule halenee,	I cannot taste even a single mouthful,
Si unble pite n'a de moy ramembrance	Unless humble pity remembers me
Par sa dignite et tres noble puissance.	Through its dignity and very noble power.
Si pri a Dieu que a droit la ramaine	Thus I pray to God that he puts it to rights
Et la purefie sanz estre entamee,	And purify it without any contamination,
Quar verement, c'est chose bien certaine,	For truly, it is a certain thing,
Je n'en puis aprochier nuit ne matinee.	I cannot approach it night or morning.
Et s'a moy estoyt qu'ainsi fust ordenee,	And if it were ordained to me to do so,
Je vivroye en espoir d'avoyr bone estance	I would live in the hope of having a good position
Par sa dignite et tres noble puissance.	Through its dignity and very noble power.

The speaker here suffers the grief common to all three of the quoted texts—'I had to suffer grievous pain, and it is my destiny to live in languor'—but it is the reason for his suffering, revealed in the third line, that promises a richer relationship to 'Sus une fontayne': 'because I cannot approach the fountain, so surrounded is it by streams'.

The description of the fountain dominates the rest of the text. In the second stanza of the ballade, we learn that the fountain is in a state of some disrepair, because the streams surrounding it have made it impossible for the speaker to find the true fountain; and in the third stanza the speaker prays to God to purify it and rid it of contamination, because he cannot approach it night or day. If this could be done, he adds significantly in the last two lines of the poem, then he would live in hope of having a good position through the 'dignity and very noble power' of the fountain.

While the mere presence of a fountain in two fourteenth-century song texts is hardly evidence of an intertextual relationship, the direct relationship between the fountains here seems indisputable. Filippotto's speaker mourns that he cannot approach the fountain, while Ciconia's speaker, standing by the fountain, hears a distant voice singing about—among other things—not being able to approach the fountain.

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[24] Plumley, 'Citation and Allusion in the Late *Ars nova*', pp. 294–301; she has also pointed out that a snatch of the melody of 'Esperance, qui en mon cuer s'embat' appears in the cantus of 'Sus une fontayne' soon after the 'En attendant' quotation, in the section of the piece that Günther argues it is true close. It is hard to say whether this is indeed a quotation of the anonymous 'Esperance . . .', which might serve as a winking reference to the intertextual game of the three 'En attendant' pieces, or whether Ciconia was merely quoting Filippotto's 'En attendant', where the 'Esperance' melody appears beginning in bar 12.

Ciconia's text thus shifts the narrative perspective to retell Filippotto's story from his own point of view.[25] In attempting to assess the context for this striking intertextual move, a review of the known composition histories of the two works is necessary.

* * *

The relationship between the two texts' fountains has already been noted by both Ursula Günther and Reinhard Strohm. Both attribute historical significance to 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet' because, as stated above, the phrase 'soufrir m'estuet' was the motto of the Milanese ruler Bernabò Visconti. Strohm pointed out the connection as part of a larger network of pieces, including the three that begin 'En attendant', that he traces to the Visconti court in Milan.[26] In her discussion of this work's relationship to Ciconia's 'Sus une fontayne', Günther noted what she termed the 'political' nature of the text, although she did not pursue it beyond echoing Geneviève Thibault's opinion that it was a work of homage for Bernabò.[27]

On closer inspection, however, the text seems to represent less a work of homage than a thinly veiled request for a job. The fountain's 'virtue', described at the end of the first stanza, is to 'satisfy everyone according to his needs', and in the refrain it is praised for its 'dignity and very noble power'. This is praise surely more fitting to a ruler than to a fountain. In the second stanza the speaker asks for 'humble charity' to help him to the fountain, and then states at the end of the third stanza that if the fountain can be purified he can 'live in the hopes of having a good position through its dignity and very noble power'. Thus the image of the fountain here seems to represent a source of a very practical nature: a 'good position' for the poem's speaker.

The spectacular and well-known end to Bernabò Visconti's political career suggests itself as the likely *terminus post quem non* for the composition of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'.[28] Beginning in 1378, upon the death of the Milanese ruler Galeazzo Visconti, the territories of Milan were divided between Galeazzo's brother Bernabò, and his son, Giangaleazzo. The two maintained different residences, the uncle in Milan and the nephew in Pavia, the preferred home of his father. Although it is difficult to sort out historical veracity from propaganda, many contemporary accounts portray Bernabò as something of an uneducated thug, a bellicose and tyrannical ruler who kept his nephew under his control and clearly envisaged shouldering him aside and taking over his portion of the Milanese territories. Giangaleazzo seems on the other hand to have been more circumspect and sophisticated in his tastes; he is remembered for having greatly expanded the university at Pavia that was founded by his father, and for patronizing artists, literati and early humanistic intellectuals.[29] Giangaleazzo's childhood relationship with Petrarch has been glorified in an anecdote widely transmitted by Visconti historiographers: the child Giangaleazzo was asked by his father to point out the wisest man in a room full of courtiers, and Giangaleazzo immediately identified Petrarch.[30] Petrarch is also said to have designed a heraldic emblem, consisting of a bright sun and a turtle-dove, for the eight-year-old Giangaleazzo on the occasion of his wedding to Isabella Valois in 1360. His early exposure to cultural and intellectual excellence did not prevent Giangaleazzo from growing up to be as politically ruthless as his uncle, however, and in 1385 he ambushed Bernabò just outside Milan and seized control of his portion of the Milanese territories. Bernabò died, imprisoned in his own castle by Giangaleazzo, within months of his overthrow.

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[25] A Bloomian would surely make much of the fact that, in the retelling, the poetic speaker (Ciconia?) is cast in the limelight, centre-stage, pushing the older composer off-stage, and allowing him to be heard only filtered through the direct speech of 'Sus une fontayne' 's narrator.

[26] 'Filippotto da Caserta ovveri i francesi in Lombardia', pp. 69–70.

[27] Günther, 'Zitate in französischen Liedsätzen der Ars Nova und Ars Subtilior', p. 64, citing Geneviève Thibault, 'Emblèmes et devises des Visconti dans les oeuvres musicales du Trecento', *L'Ars nova italiana del Trecento*, ii, Certaldo, 1970, pp. 131–60.

[28] A thoroughly documented history of the Visconti in Milan is the multi-volume *Storia di Milano*, vols. v and vi (Milan, 1955). See also Francesco Cognasso, *I Visconti*, Varese, 1966, and on Giangaleazzo Visconti, see E. R. Chamberlin, *The Count of Virtue*, New York, 1965.

[29] For a documentary history of the cultural life of Pavia under Giangaleazzo Visconti, see Carlo Magenta, *I Visconti e gli Sforza nel Castello di Pavia*, Milan, 1883.

It seems unlikely that a song prominently displaying Bernabò's motto would have been composed after his death, and we can with reasonable assurance look for possible composition opportunities before 1385. Filippotto had at least an indirect connection with Bernabò in the early 1380s, to judge from the political circumstances that provoked the composition of two other works. His ballade 'La grant senz' has been identified by Nigel Wilkins as a celebration of the attempt to take control of Naples by Louis duc d'Anjou, in a military campaign of 1381–2.[31] This expedition was financed both by the Avignon Pope Clement VII and by Bernabò Visconti, who gave his considerable financial support for the venture in exchange for the agreement of a marriage between his daughter and Louis d'Anjou's son and heir. The agreement meant that if the expedition were successful Bernabò would secure for his daughter a future as the Queen of Naples, a large feather in his own political cap. Not only Louis d'Anjou but also Pope Clement VII was honoured in a composition by Filippotto; the ballade 'Par les bons gedeon', whose refrain praises 'the sovereign Pope Clement', was most likely composed shortly after the Pope's election in 1378.[32] Thus two of Bernabò's allies in the early 1380s were honoured with ballades composed by Filippotto, and 'En attendant' may represent the third such tribute, this one perhaps seeking employment from Bernabò himself.[33]

Ultimately it is unclear whether this text can support an autobiographical reading. The quotation of Bernabò Visconti's motto, tempting to those of us seeking historical clues hidden in musical compositions, may simply be part of the quotation game established in the three 'En attendant' ballades and have no autobiographical significance whatsoever. Yet if we leave aside the historical questions and consider the text from a literary point of view, we can find support—albeit based upon interpretation and not historical evidence—for at least a partly autobiographical reading of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'. The image of the fountain was a commonplace of medieval French poetry, in which its real-life role as a source of water represented metaphorically a source of more abstract attributes—love, virtue and so on. Filippotto's choice of the fountain as a central image of his text participated in a larger discourse, and his fountain surely glistened with the reflected meanings of other medieval poetic fountains. Ernst Curtius has shown how the fountain is a fixture of the *locus amoenus*, the literary topos of the secluded place in nature that is found in an unbroken tradition from the time of the Roman Empire up to the sixteenth century.[34] The *locus classicus* for the image of the fountain in late medieval French poetry was the Fountain of Love from the thirteenth-century *Roman de la Rose*, a work that continued to have enormous influence in fourteenth-century French narrative poetry.[35] Fountains figure as important stage props in several of Machaut's long narrative works. In the 'Dit du Lyon', the narrator finds refuge in a garden from whose magic fountain he drinks. In the 'Jugement du roy de Behaigne', the park of the king's castle, among other beautiful natural elements, contains a fountain 'en la court, qui n'est mie vilaine / Ainz est vive, de roche clere et saine' (ll. 1412–13; 'in the court, which is not at all impure / But rather springs clear and pure from the rock'). In the 'Remede de fortune', a long exchange between the narrator and Esperance takes place by a fountain to which the narrator has retired in order to be alone with his despondency; this fountain is also 'moult clere et moult bele, / D'arbres et d'erbe environnee' ('very clear and beautiful, surrounded by trees and grass') (ll. 826–7).

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[30] Ibid., i. 112.

[31] Nigel Wilkins, 'Some Notes on Philopoctus de Caserta', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, viii (1964), 82–99, at pp. 84–6.

[32] For this dating, see Strohm, 'Filipotto da Caserta ovvero i francesci in Lombardia', p. 69.

[33] Yolanda Plumley has recently connected the imagery of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet' with a group of other texts in which fountains, both working and broken, appear as central images. She suggests that these works have a stronger connection to northern circles than to Italian ones, and she casts doubt upon the hypothesis of Reinhard Strohm that the 'En attendant' trio was composed in Milan. This fits well with my reading of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet' as an attempt to gain patronage by Bernabò Visconti, as does her proposed dating of 1383 for the three 'En attendant' works ('Citation and Allusion in the Late *Ars nova*', pp. 339–46).

A literary fountain that is particularly germane to this discussion is that of Machaut's 'La fonteinne amoreuse'.[36] The narrator is a poet whose sleep is interrupted by the occupant of an adjacent room, who is composing a *complainte*, lamenting that he will soon be separated from his lover. The next day, the eavesdropping poet seeks out and makes the acquaintance of the complaining lover, who turns out to be a nobleman, 'of such noble bearing, / That he seemed a king's son / Or born the sovereign lord / Of the land and all the country'.[37] The nobleman and the poet walk together until they come to a beautiful park, and once inside, the poet recounts that the nobleman

> led me by the bare hand
> Through sweet-smelling, lush grass
> To a very beautiful fountain,
>
> Whose water fell sweet, clear, and clean
> Into a brown marble bowl . . .
> Never in the days of my life
> Had I seen work so very accomplished.
> In the middle was fixed
> A serpent with twelve heads all of gold,
> Through which by machinery and conduits
> It had been designed
> That the fountain without ceasing
> Would flow both night and day.[38]

The depiction of the fountain in Machaut's text is reminiscent of the fountain in Filippotto's ballade (their similarity is unsurprising since both ultimately are indebted to the fountain in the *Roman de la Rose*). Both fountains possess special powers, but while the powers of the Fountain of Love are so potent that the narrator dare not drink, the power of Filippotto's fountain to 'satisfy everyone according to his needs' is compromised by the lack of access to it. Both texts describe the water, but the clarity and purity of Machaut's water contrasts with the 'broken and troubled' water in 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'. Most suggestive of all, whereas the main theme of 'La fonteinne amoreuse' is the noble lover's relationship with his beloved, a prominent secondary relationship is developed between the nobleman and the poet in whose voice the narrative is related. As Barton Palmer explains, these characters are fictionalized representatives of Machaut and his patron Jean de Berry, and Machaut is thus able self-reflexively to 'represent within the poem the patron/poet relationship which occasioned it'.[39] Jean de Berry is not explicitly named in the poem, but his name is encoded together with Machaut's in an anagram, as the poet explains in the introduction to the poem.[40]

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[34] Ernst Robert Curius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask, New York, 1952, pp. 195–202.

[35] The description of the Fountain of Love in the *Roman de la Rose* begins in line 112; see *The Romance of the Rose*, trans. Harry W. Dobbins, New York, 1962, p. 29.

[36] *Guillaume de Machaut: The Fountain of Love (La Fonteinne Amoreuse) and Two Other Love Vision Poems*, ed. & trans. R. Barton Palmer, New York & London, 1993.

[37] Ibid., ll. 1157–60 (p. 153).

[38] Ibid., ll. 1299–303 (p. 159).

The mutual love and admiration between poet and patron is emphasized throughout the text: the poet loves the patron for the nobility of his bearing and the subtlety of his mind, and the nobleman clearly admires the poet, whom he addresses as 'friend' and to whom he confides his sorrows. The two walk together hand in hand in a park of Eden-like perfection, and the nobleman falls asleep by the fountain with his head in the lap of the poet. The idyllic surroundings, in which the fountain plays a central part, both represent and reinforce the Utopian relationship between the poet and his patron, whose idealized portrayal in the text has an autobiographical origin in Machaut's relationship with Jean of Berry.

As I have already noted, the text of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet' also refers obliquely to a noble patron, Bernabò Visconti, through the quotation of his motto in the opening line. But this poet/patron relationship is as troubled as Machaut's is Utopian; the fountain's water is contaminated, and the poet laments that he is cut off from access to it. It is possible, I believe, to read Filippotto's text as a nostalgic revisiting of the kind of Utopian scene presented by Machaut, a scene whose type his audience would surely have been familiar with. I am not proposing a direct intertextual relationship between the two poems, as we do not know that Filippotto knew this particular text of Machaut. However, we do not need to establish a direct connection between the two texts to recognize that Filippotto, like Machaut, is drawing upon a poetic commonplace of the fountain as source and location of artistic as well as amorous happiness. And I would suggest that Filippotto's use of the imagery of the fountain to which he describes access may well be loosely autobiographical in a manner similar to Machaut's 'Fonteinne amoreuse'.

Thus we may perceive a threefold relationship of reference in which the image of the fountain plays a central role: the widely-used image of the fountain as idyllic meeting-place of lovers, or in the case of Machaut's 'Fonteinne amoreuse', of patron and poet; Filippotto's lament over the corrupted fountain, and possibly over his own lack of a patron; and Ciconia's fictionalized overhearing of Filippotto's distress. While Machaut's fountain is included here only as a context for understanding Filippotto's fountain, there is a concrete historical relationship between Filippotto's text and Ciconia's, and it is certain that Ciconia's fountain in 'Sus une fontayne' refers specifically to Filippotto's in 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'.

If we assume that Ciconia's text is, like the other two, partly autobiographical, then Ciconia's whereabouts when he wrote 'Sus une fontayne' may influence our interpretation of Filippotto's text. In positing a date for Ciconia's piece we are helped by the recent research of John Nádas and Giuliano Di Bacco, who have published information showing that beginning in 1390 Ciconia was in the service of Cardinal Philippe d'Alençon in Rome.[41] D'Alençon died in 1397, and Ciconia is not documented in Padua before 1401, leaving at least four years unaccounted for. The texts of two other works of Ciconia seem to be tributes to Giangaleazzo Visconti, suggesting that he may have spent time at the Visconti court—or at least was in the habit of setting Visconti-related texts—during this period.[42] The canon 'Le ray au soleyl' is almost certain to have been composed as a tribute to Giangaleazzo Visconti, as the canon's text consists of nothing but a detailed description of the above-mentioned heraldic emblem designed by Petrarch. And the ballata 'Una panthera in compagnia di Marte' has recently been given an extremely persuasive reading by John Nádas and Agostino Ziino as a pro-Visconti propaganda piece dating to 1399.[43] These years coincide with the most illustrious period of Giangaleazzo Visconti's rule, and one in which he patronized the arts publicly for political ends; the most spectacular example of his political success and the artistic depiction thereof came in 1395 when he was crowned first Duke of Milan by the Holy Roman Emperor Wenceslaus in a ceremony recorded in an elaborate illumination in a Visconti missal.[44] In the years leading up to his sudden death in 1401, Giangaleazzo greatly expanded the territories of Milan both to the east and to the south and was on the brink of an invasion of his longtime enemy Florence that by all accounts would have been successful had he lived.

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[39] Ibid., p. xlviii.

[40] On the common practice of authors of medieval French poetry to encode their names within their texts, see de Looze, 'Signing off in the Middle Ages'. On Machaut's use of signatory anagrams, see idem, ' "Mon nom trouveras": a New Look at the Anagrams of Guillaume de Machaut—the Enigmas, Responses, and Solutions', *Romanic Review*, lxxix (1988), 537–57.

If Ciconia spent time in Milan between 1397 and 1401, it is tempting to postulate that 'Sus une fontayne' dates to those years, and that, as Strohm suggests, the fountain of patronage metaphorically represented in Filippotto's text is the Visconti court. This hypothesis does run the risk of circular argumentation. Filippotto's presumed connection to the Visconti court is suggested only by the use of Bernabò's motto in 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'. The connection between Filippotto and the Visconti is strengthened by the hypothesis that Ciconia was at the Visconti court, and that 'Sus une fontayne' refers knowingly to the 'fountain of Visconti patronage' to which Filippotto referred in 'En attendant'. But the supposition that Ciconia had a connection with the Visconti court relies solely on information gleaned from three of his musical works, one of which is 'Sus une fontayne' and its relation to 'En attendant soufrir'. This potential for circularity does not definitively destroy the hypothesis, but suggests that we should be cautious about treating it as fact.

It is clear, however, that Ciconia knew the three ballades of Filippotto well (and almost certainly had access to a written copy of them), and composed 'Sus une fontayne' in such a way as to create a profound intertextual relationship with both the words and music of 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet', as well as a more straightforward quotation of the other two ballades of Filippotto. These latter quotations, in my view, serve to enhance the central narrative of the composer by the fountain, and as such play a subordinate role in the intertextual design of the work as a whole.

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[41] John Nádas & Giuliano Di Bacco, 'Verso uno "stile internazionale" della musica nelle cappelle papali e cardinalizie durante il Grande Scisma (1378–1417): il caso di Johannes Ciconia da Liège', *Capellae Apostolicae Sistinaeque Collectanea Acta Monumenta*, iii (Vatican City, 1993), 1–74.

[42] Thibault ('Emblèmes et devises des Visconti dans les oeuvres musicales du Trecento') first pointed out the Visconti imagery in Ciconia's 'Le ray au soleil' and proposed that Ciconia may have been in the employ of the Visconti, a suggestion most recently amplified by Reinhard Strohm, 'Filippotto da Caserta ovvero i francesci in Lombardia'. John Nádas & Agostino Ziino, in *The Lucca Codex*, Lucca, 1990, suggested the years 1397–1401 as likely for Ciconia's presence in Milan. Anne Hallmark, however, has pointed out that other pieces found in Paduan sources that refer to the Visconti were not necessarily composed in Milan. See '*Protector, imo verus pater*: Francesco Zabarella's Patronage of Johannes Ciconia', in *Music in Renaissance Cities and Courts: Essays in Honor of Lewis Lockwood*, ed. Anthony Cummings & Jessie Ann Owens, Warren, Michigan, 1996, pp. 153–68, at p. 161.

[43] *The Lucca Codex*, pp. 42–3.

[44] See Edith Kirsch, *Five Illuminated Manuscripts of Giangaleazzo Visconti*, University Park, Pennsylvania, & London, 1991, where a facsimile of the illumination depicting the coronation is given as fig. 3, and discussed on pages 69–74. For the political uses of art in Milan under the Visconti, see Evelyn Welch, *Art and Authority in Renaissance Milan*, New Haven & London, 1995.

The historical context for the two pieces sketched above invites a fresh reading of the enigmatic music and notation of 'Sus une fontayne' and its relationship to the quoted music of Filippotto da Caserta. The richness of the historical relationship posited between the two pieces, and the potential for both to be read as partly autobiographical, suggest that the striking features of 'Sus une fontayne' (the quotation of the ballades of Filippotto, the use of *ars subtilior* notation, the mournful tone) can be interpreted to be far more than a generalized 'homage' to the older composer. Rather, I suggest, they constitute a sophisticated and playful way to signify Filippotto without naming him, with a coyness reminiscent of Machaut's anagrams and Filippotto's use of Bernabò's motto. The melancholy text of 'Sus une fontayne' must thus be allowed to have another, more ironic, layer of meaning in which the tone is seen to have been crafted in emulation of the tone of Filippotto's ballades, and the dramatic situation of the text as an ironic recasting of the situation set up by Filippotto in 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet'. The irony would be rendered all the sharper if, as scholars are tempted to speculate, it was supported by historical circumstance: that Filippotto had sought a position at the Visconti court in the early 1380s, a quest memorialized in 'En attendant soufrir m'estuet', and Ciconia, arriving at the Visconti court perhaps fifteen years later, responded with 'Sus une fontayne'.

* * *

We are now in a position to return to the question of the notation, and in particular to the variant readings for the mensuration signs in the work's two sources. The existence of such a striking variant between the only two surviving sources of the piece needs to be explained, but a thorough explanation can only come after sorting through a variety of factors regarding the manuscripts' origins and the composer's and two scribes' understanding of French mensural practice. The simplest explanation for the variant readings is that the scribe of the Paduan source made a large-scale and self-consistent error, perhaps out of ignorance of the proper use of mensuration signs. This explanation would seem to be verified by the existence of the correct reading of the piece in the concordant source, Modena A. Yet most scholars who have studied the two sources have concluded that the Paduan source is on historical and source-critical grounds more likely to have been copied in the circle of the composer. While the date of the source cannot precisely be determined, it seems very likely to have been compiled while Ciconia was in residence in Padua between 1401 and 1411.[45] Our best information about Modena A is that it was compiled in the latter part of the same decade, in Milan, Pisa and Bologna.[46] Even if Ciconia did spend time at the Visconti court, he had moved to Padua by 1401, and therefore was unlikely to have been proximate to the compilation of Modena A. From a purely circumstantial point of view, then, it seems that the eccentrically notated Oxford 229 was more likely to have been copied within the working environment of the composer than was the conventionally notated Modena A.

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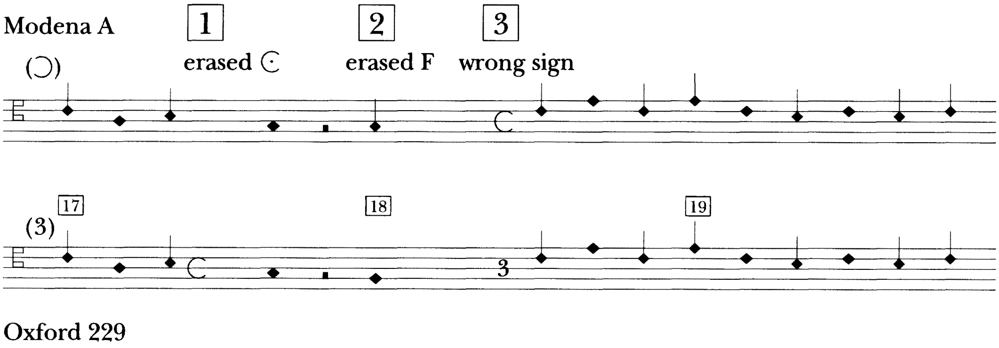
[45] Although no precise date can be given to Oxford 229, research places its copying to before 1410. According to Giulio Cattin, the S. Giustina fragment Padua, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 1225 was copied by the Paduan copyist Roland de Casale between 1407 and 1410. Anne Hallmark's comparative study of the Padua fragments established that the manuscript of which Oxford is a fragment (Pad A) was copied before MS 1225, and therefore well before Ciconia's death in 1412. Although no *terminus ante quem non* can be adduced, it is a reasonable guess (though not crucial to my argument) that Ciconia's music was copied in Padua only after his arrival there. For the dating of Pad A and Pad D, see Cattin, 'Ricerche sulla musica a S. Giustina di Padova all'inizio del Quattrocento: il copista Rolando da Casale—nuovi frammenti musicali nell'Archivio di Stato', *Annales musicologiques*, vii (1978), 17–41, and Hallmark, 'Some Evidence for French Influence in Northern Italy, c. 1400', p. 207.

[46] For discussions of the dating and provenance of Modena A, see Nino Pirrotta, 'Il codice Estense Lat. 568 e la

This conclusion regarding the geographical relationship of the two sources to Ciconia is supported by a comparison of details of their transmissions of 'Sus une fontayne'. In her study of French music in Padua in this period, Anne Hallmark argued persuasively that the Paduan source of the work 'provides a reading closer to the original version of "Sus une fontayne" despite its eccentric mensuration signatures' on the basis of her interpretation of a variant passage between the two sources, where it is obvious that the Modena scribe made a copying error and then corrected it by improvising some new mensuration signs.[47] A second variant passage, not mentioned by Hallmark, even more convincingly demonstrates the Modena A scribe's unfamiliarity with 'Sus une fontayne', though also showing his competence regarding the use of mensuration signs and complex proportions. This passage occurs in the contratenor voice in the part of the piece that quotes Filippotto da Caserta's 'En remirant'; the notation of the two sources is reproduced as Ex. 2.

Ex. 2 'Sus une fontayne', contratenor, bb. 17–19: comparison of Oxford 229 and Modena A readings



Oxford 229, on the lower stave of the example, has a C in the middle of bar 17 (the sign that source uses for major prolation) then in bar 18 a figure 3, which in that source indicates diminution. We can see that the Modena A scribe began to copy this very reading, though with the mensuration signs normalized: there is an erased sign of imperfect tempus and major prolation located on the example by boxed figure 1, corresponding to the sign in Oxford 229. In addition, the G minim marked by boxed figure 2 on the example covers an erased F that looks to have been a semibreve; the erased note again conforms to the reading in the Paduan source. It seems that at the

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musica francese in Italia al principio del '400', in *Atti della Reale Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo*, ser. 4, vol. v, pt. 1 (1944–5), 101–54; Ursula Günther, 'Das Manuskript Modena, Biblioteca Estense, Alpha.M.5, 24 (*olim* lat. 568 = *Mod*)', *Musica disciplina*, xxiv (1970), 17–67; Nádas & Ziino, *The Lucca Codex*; and Anne Stone, *Writing Rhythm in Late Medieval Italy*, Chap. 1.

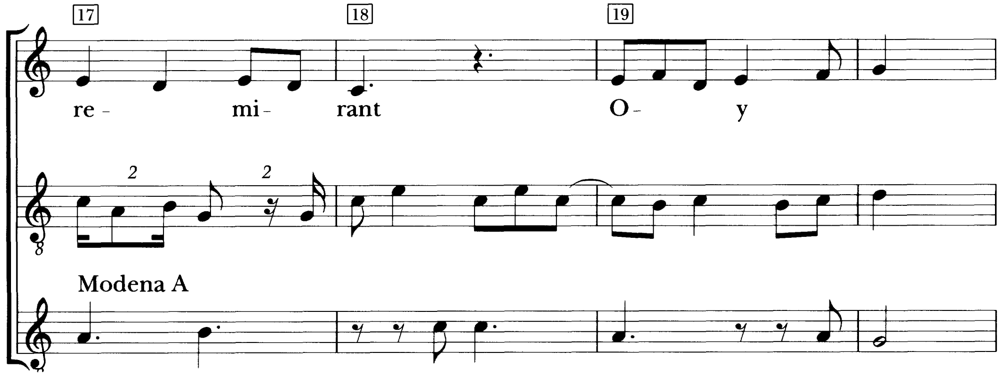
[47] Hallmark, 'Some Evidence for French Influence in Northern Italy, c. 1400', p. 208.

point indicated in the example by boxed figure 3, the scribe's exemplar erroneously transmitted, or he erroneously copied, the sign for imperfect tempus with minor prolation rather than the required sign of diminution, and at some point he realized that there were too many 'beats' in the part. By erasing the previous sign, at figure 1, thus keeping diminution in effect longer, and then turning the semibreve F into a minim G at figure 2, the scribe was able to correct the misalignment, as shown in the polyphonic transcription in Ex. 3a. In doing so, however, he demonstrated that he did not realize that the entire passage through the middle of bar 19 was a quotation of Filippotto da Caserta's 'En remirant', because his changes diverge from the notation of that piece. The Oxford 229 version, shown in Ex. 3b, is consistent with the Filippotto da Caserta model. The Modena A scribe has thus betrayed his ignorance of a very important musical feature of the piece, making it unlikely that he had a close connection with the composer.

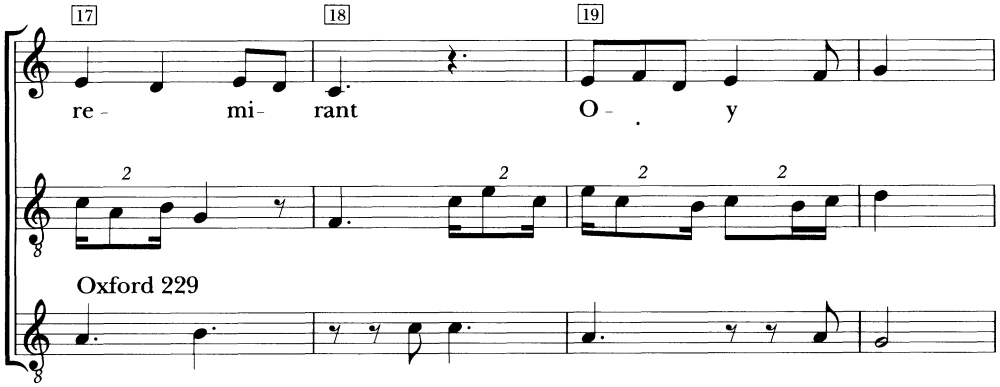
The Paduan source of 'Sus une fontayne' thus seems to have been copied proximate to Ciconia both temporally and geographically, and also seems to contain a better

Ex. 3

(*a*) Modena A reading of 'Sus une fontayne', contratenor, bb. 17–19



(*b*) Oxford 229 reading of 'Sus une fontayne', contratenor, bb. 17–19



reading of the work's musical text than does Modena A. Why then does it transmit eccentric mensuration signs while the Modena source transmits codified ones? An oblique answer may begin to emerge if we consider the copying habits of the Modena scribe. The example of 'Sus une fontayne' is in fact one of several striking examples of variant readings between Modena A and other sources, in which the Modena A reading conforms to notational practice codified in French Ars Nova theory while the concordant source presents an eccentric reading. It seems, in fact, to have been a standard procedure of the scribe of Modena A to edit and to normalize notational devices as he copied pieces into the manuscript.[48]

One other piece, 'Inclite flos orti gebenensis' by Matheus de Sancto Johanne, has a variant between its two readings that is significantly similar in kind to the variant in the two readings of 'Sus une fontayne', and it can be taken as a further example of the working procedures of the Modena A scribe. In the reading found in the concordant source, Chantilly 564, all four combinations of tempus and prolation are used, but represented in an unusual way: rather than represent major and minor prolation with the presence or absence of a dot inside the mensuration sign, coloration or lack thereof is used instead, resulting in the eccentric signs shown in the second column of Table II. The result of this strange use of coloration is a visually striking page in Chantilly 564, in which the cantus and contratenor each change between black and red notation two times. Thus the misuse of the device of coloration seems to be part of the design of the piece, a design that includes a visual component. The Modena A reading of this piece, however, is notated completely conventionally; there is no coloration, and the signs used to indicate changes in mensuration are the codified ones, shown in the third column of Table II.

TABLE II

Comparison of Mensuration Signs in Modena A and Chantilly Readings of 'Inclite flos orti gebenensis'

mensuration	Chantilly reading	Modena A reading (conventional)
tempus perfectum, prolatio minor	O plus color	O
tempus imperfectum, prolatio minor	Ɔ plus color	C
tempus imperfectum, prolatio maior	C without color	Ċ
tempus perfectum, prolatio maior	O without color	⊙

The evidence of other pieces copied in Modena A suggests, therefore, that it is well within the scope of that scribe's activities to change eccentricities of notational usage in order to conform to what he perceives to be notational norms. If the Modena A scribe had received an exemplar of 'Sus une fontayne' that had the same mensuration signs that are transmitted in Oxford 229, it is entirely likely that he would have normalized them; the conventional use of French mensuration signs in 'Sus une fontayne' transmitted in Modena A may well be the product of the Modena A scribe's careful editing, and do not necessarily constitute a more faithful text than the eccentric signs of the Paduan source.

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[48] For more on the Modena A scribe's activity as an editor of rhythmic notation, see Stone, *Writing Rhythm in Late Medieval Italy*, Chap. 3.

We come now to the crux of the matter: what significance, if any, should we attribute to the eccentric mensuration signs in the Paduan source? It is interesting that, to the extent that anyone has discussed the signs at all, no one has suggested that the scribe made a mistake. Rather, there seems to be a tacit assumption that the eccentric mensuration signs in the Paduan source represent a use of these signs that is different from the conventional use but perfectly plausible. In her edition of the work, for example, Suzanne Clercx offered two transcriptions, representing the two sources' use of mensuration signs as alternative readings, without suggesting priority.[49] In her study of the sources, Anne Hallmark claimed that the Paduan source of the work 'provides a reading closer [than that of Modena A] to the original version of *Sus une fontayne* despite its eccentric mensuration signatures', but she did not pursue the eccentricity further, suggesting that she took eccentricity to be a non-remarkable feature of notation of the period.[50] In the edition of the work in *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century*, edited by Hallmark and Margaret Bent, the Modena signs are used in the transcription, and the critical commentary carefully adopts the word 'eccentric' rather than 'erroneous' to describe the signs in Oxford 229, on account of the self-consistency of the latter.[51]

The only strongly articulated view about these signs is found in a recent article by Margaret Bent, in which her interpretation of the variant readings of 'Sus une fontayne' plays a tangential role in a larger argument regarding the early interpretation of Φ.[52] In order to support her contention that Φ did not have a standard usage before the middle of the fifteenth century, she makes a general statement about the instability of notational practice around 1400: 'Among a great variety of proportional signs and colorations used around and after 1400, very few notational usages could have been viewed as standard representations of particular temporal relationships; conversely, very few temporal relationships enjoyed monopoly of a single sign'.[53] Bent offers the variant readings for 'Sus une fontayne' between Oxford 229 and Modena A as her sole example of the instability of the meaning of signs in the period, stating that 'the signatures in the Modena A manuscript are closer to the usage that became standard, but there is no reason to doubt that the signatures in the other source, eccentric in terms of later practice, were the ones Ciconia used, compiled as this manuscript was in Padua, under his nose, and during his lifetime'.[54]

While there is no reason to doubt that the signatures in the Paduan source were the ones Ciconia used, the attendant premiss that Ciconia's use of the eccentric signs was a result of a lack of codification of signs in general does not necessarily follow. In fact, Bent herself seems to disagree with this conclusion; later in the same article she writes that a musician around 1420 would 'have seen a wide and inconsistently used range of signs and colorations in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, showing little standard practice, *apart from the four primary mensuration signs* [my emphasis]'.[55] Since three of these four 'primary' mensuration signs appear in Oxford 229's transmission of 'Sus une fontayne', their eccentric use there requires further investigation.

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[49] Clercx, *Johannes Ciconia*, ii. 78–84. She discusses the mensuration signs in i. 117–18.

[50] Hallmark, 'Some Evidence for French Influence in Northern Italy, c. 1400', loc. cit.

[51] Ciconia, *The Works of Johannes Ciconia*, p. 216.

[52] Margaret Bent, 'The Early Use of the Sign Φ', *Early Music*, xxiv (1996), 199–224.

[53] Ibid., p. 202.

[54] Ibid. Bent's Table 2, showing the comparison of the two sources' use of signs, errs in the second column, where C and Ↄ have been exchanged: the Oxford source uses Ↄ his where Modena A uses C, and C where Modena A uses Ͼ.

Would these four primary mensuration signs established in French mensural theory have been known in northern Italy, which of course had its own notational practice?[56] The answer seems to be yes; as F. Alberto Gallo has shown, the French system of notation was transmitted widely throughout Europe in the *Libellus cantus mensurabilis* attributed to Johannes de Muris, a work that survives in more than 150 copies.[57] According to Gallo, Johannes's work had the widest reception in Italy, where at least 30 surviving manuscript copies of the *Libellus* are found.[58] Several treatises of probable northern Italian provenance transmitting the *Libellus*, or commentaries upon it, may be mentioned here. A manuscript now housed in the Newberry Library in Chicago (MS 54.1), dated Pavia, 1391, contains the *Libellus*, among a number of other music-theoretical works. The *Ars cantus mensurabilis mensurata per modos iuros*, copied in Italy (and possibly in Florence) after 1375, contains a commentary on the *Libellus*. In Padua itself there is ample evidence of musicians' knowledge of French mensural theory. The most important Paduan music theorist after Marchetto, Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, devoted the first treatise of his prolific career to an extended commentary on the *Libellus*, the *Expositiones tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis magistri Johannis de Muris*.[59] Prosdocimo's commentary gives us a clear picture of what an academic Paduan knew about French notation and its mensuration signs, while also shedding light on the diffusion of French practice among musicians in Padua. Most germane to this discussion are Chapters 56–62, which comment upon the presentation of mensuration signs and coloration in the *Libellus*. Prosdocimo takes the opportunity to hold a referendum of sorts on the notational practices of his own day, and throughout these chapters he exhibits a thorough misunderstanding not only of the French theoretical system in general but also of the specific French notational practices of his Italian contemporaries. He points out areas where the practices of *moderni* diverge with those prescribed by the *Libellus* (for example, the use of one punctus, not three, in mensuration signs to indicate perfection), and explains practices of his contemporaries that are not discussed by the *Libellus*, such as the use of Ↄ and the use of coloration and hollowing of minims and semiminims to achieve sesquialtera proportion. His discussion also contains the earliest known mention of the proportional numbers 4/3 and 3/2 used as mensuration signs; they are, according to Prosdocimo, 'signa comunissima', and from the tenor of his discussion he clearly favours their use over the alternatives.[60] According to Prosdocimo's account, therefore, musicians in Padua regularly used French mensural signs, and expanded upon them with the use of Ↄ and proportional numbers.

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[55] Ibid., p. 204.

[56] For a discussion of the interpenetration of French and Italian notational theory in the fourteenth century, see F. Alberto Gallo, *La teoria della notazione in Italia dalla fine del XIII all'inizio del XV secolo*, Bologna, 1966; and idem, *Die Notationslehre im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*, in *Die mittelälterliche Lehre von der Mehrstimmigkeit* ('Geschichte der Musiktheorie', v), ed. Frieder Zaminer, Darmstadt, 1984. The diffusion of French culture generally in fourteenth-century Italy is a commonplace; as stated by Ezio Levi, 'sulla fine del secolo XIV il mondo elegante italiano era completamente infranciosato' (*Francesco di Vannozzo e la lirica nelle corti lombarde durante la seconda metà del secolo XIV*, Florence, 1908, p. 281). Regarding French influence on Italian literature and language, see Adolfo Bartoli, *I primi due secoli della letteratura italiana*, Milan, 1880, pp. 92–110. On French musical style in Padua, see Hallmark, 'Some Evidence for French Influence in Northern Italy c. 1400'. Further information about the prevalence of French music in Padua and other north Italian centres will need to be gleaned by more circuitous means; for example, Giovanni Dondi, the Paduan scholar who taught at Padua and Pavia, had among his books Aristotle, Galen, Petrarch sonnets, and one book of music, 'in lingua Gallica'; see Vittorio Lazzarini, 'I libri di Giovanni Dondi', in idem, *Scritti di paleografia e diplomatica*, Padua, 1969, p. 267.

[57] Gallo, *Die Notationslehre im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*, pp. 298–303.

[58] Gallo writes that the wide dissemination of the *Libellus* in Italy 'is a symptom of the progressive turning of the Italian system towards the French at the cost of its own integrity', *Die Notationslehre im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*, p. 301. For more on the *Libellus*'s distribution, see Ulrich Michels, *Die Musiktraktate des Johannes de Muris* ('Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft', viii), Wiesbaden, 1970, pp. 27–33; and Daniel Katz, *The Earliest Sources for the Libellus Cantus Mensurabilis Secundum Johannem de Muris* (unpublished dissertation), Duke University, 1989.

[59] Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Expositiones tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis magistri Johannis de Muris*, ed. Gallo. The original treatise of 1404 has been lost, but a reworked version from 1412 survives.

The extent of the diffusion of French notation among his contemporaries in Padua, in fact, spurred Prosdocimo to write another treatise in 1412, the *Tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis ad modum Ytalicorum.* In its introduction, Prosdocimo professes chagrin at the degree to which Italian composers have adopted French mensural practices; while we may attribute the inflated rhetoric to cultural chauvinism, it is impossible to dismiss his account of the state of affairs entirely: 'Of late . . . even the Italians have taken to using the French practice—perhaps no less well than the French—and to such an extent that they are neglecting their own practice and reveling in the French, thinking their own defective and the French more elegant, more perfect, and more subtle . . .'[61]

Most significantly, Ciconia himself was the author of a music theory treatise, *Nova musica*, probably written during the decade he spent in Padua.[62] Although the treatise is speculative rather than practical, and does not deal with *musica mensurabilis*, Ciconia revised the third book, on proportions, in 1411, and added a short chapter on 'signs and ciphers of different authors', in which he presented the same signs of mensuration as did Prosdocimo: the four French mensuration signs, Ↄ, and the figure 3. These are precisely the signs found in the Oxford 229 version of 'Sus une fontayne', but in Ciconia's treatise they are assigned the conventional French interpretation prescribed in the *Libellus*.[63] It seems suggestive that the very six signs codified in Ciconia's *De proportionibus* are those found—used 'eccentrically'—in the Oxford 229 transmission of 'Sus une fontayne'.

Thus there is considerable evidence that the French system as laid out in the *Libellus* was known and practised in turn-of-the-century Padua, and even evidence that it was known—and perhaps taught?—by Ciconia himself. The eccentric use of mensuration signs in Oxford 229 thus cannot easily be attributed to a prevailing lack of codification of these signs in Padua. The possibility of scribal error cannot be ruled out, of course, but I should like to leave that possibility aside for a moment and take the mensuration signs in the Paduan manuscript seriously—that is, to imagine that the scribe copied into the manuscript those signs which the composer intended. This hypothesis requires three simultaneous leaps of faith: first, that the composer intended these signs; second, that in intending them he was deliberately going against conventions known to him; and third, that the manuscript's copyist executed them faithfully. This may seem an almost unbearable constellation of suppositions, yet I should like to pursue the idea in order to offer an interpretation of 'Sus une fontayne' that reads the eccentric mensuration signs as an integral part of the ironic strategy of the work as a whole.

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[60] Ibid., p.141.

[61] Prosdocimo de' Beldomandi, *Tractatus practice cantus mensurabilis ad modum Ytalicorum*, ed. & trans. Jay Huff, Rome, 1972, p. 11.

[62] Ciconia, *Nova musica* and *De proportionibus*, ed. & trans. Oliver Ellsworth. The treatise's Paduan connection is suggested by the large number of quotations from Marchetto da Padova's *Lucidarium*, enumerated by Ellsworth, pp. 18–19. Since no fourteenth-century source of Marchetto's works is known to have been copied outside Italy (and in fact his works seem to have had a considerably smaller circulation than those of Johannes de Muris even in Italy) it is unlikely that Ciconia would have been exposed to the *Lucidarium* before he arrived in northern Italy.

[63] *De proportionibus*, ed. Ellsworth, pp. 441–3.

To recap my earlier discussion: for the audience of the piece, the quotations would of course be heard, not seen, and thus function as a purely aural signifier of the unnamed Filippotto da Caserta. The ideal hearer of this piece would be someone already familiar enough with Filippotto's ballades to recognize them at the moment that he heard them in performance. This listener would then comprehend the full aural and narrative story: a singer singing about hearing another singer, and enriching the narrative with quotations that give the heard singer a precise identity.

For the performers of the piece, I suggest, the notation provides yet another way to name Filippotto indirectly; the eccentric mensuration signs in the Paduan source of the work can in fact be understood to be part of a game designed for their benefit. We can recreate the game by imagining ourselves to be performers reading the piece for the first time using the notation of the Paduan source (see Pl. I). We would quickly discover that although each individual line can be made to work using the mensuration signs given, it is impossible to get the parts to concord properly. The only way to determine how to perform the piece is to recognize the quotations from Filippotto's ballades and to extrapolate based upon knowledge of their original mensurations. In fact, the notation of the first quotation, from 'En remirant', in bars 11–19 of 'Sus une fontayne', contains further notational oddities that I suggest are designed to assist the performer to determine the correct interpretation of the mensuration signs. This passage is reproduced as Ex. 4. This example shows the notation of the contratenor of 'Sus une fontayne' beginning in bar 6, with a modern transcription beneath it. Beginning in bar 11, where the quotation of Filippotto's 'En remirant' starts, two versions of that work's contratenor are lined up above the 'Sus une fontayne' quotation.[64] In both sources of the original ballade, the mensuration has major prolation, and the rhythm at the beginning of bar 11 is achieved by putting a punctus between the first two minims of the bar. The addition of three mensuration signs to bar 11 of 'Sus une fontayne', a C, a Ɔ and another C, is completely unnecessary, as the passage would work perfectly well with no signs at all but merely continuing the mensuration that preceded bar 11. The addition of the three signs would seem to be an example of the 'awkward notational solutions' mentioned by Bent and Hallmark that suggested to them that Ciconia was not a master of this complex notation. While it is true that this needless use of mensuration signs can be read as evidence of inexperience, another explanation is that the signs were added precisely in order to allow their interpretation in the piece to be discerned.

These signs placed here in fact call attention to themselves, because they cannot possibly be used in the context in which they are put. The mensural sign C, indicating minor prolation, that precedes two minims with a punctus between them is nonsensical: the only reason for the punctus would be to prevent alteration of the second minim, something that would only occur in major prolation. The following sign, a Ɔ, is equally nonsensical when applied to a single semibreve. Its effect is to diminish the value of the semibreve by one-half; in minor prolation that would make it

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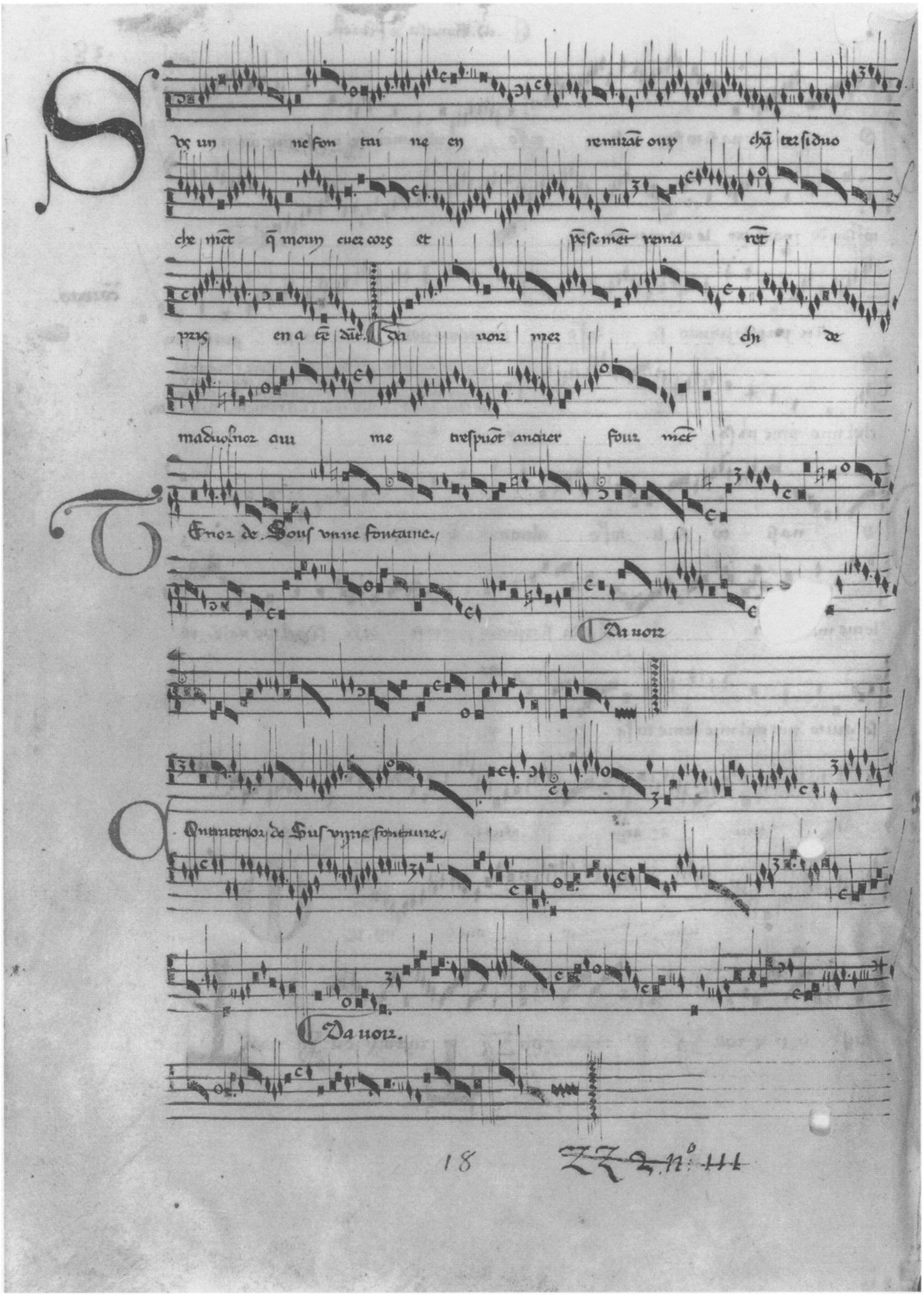
[64] The ballade is found in Modena A, f. 20; Chantilly 564, f. 33^{v}; Grottaferrata, Biblioteca della Badia Greca di San Nilo, MS Collocazione provvisoria 197; and Paris 6771, f. 84^{v}.

PLATE I


Tenor de Sous vnne fontaine.
Da uoir
Contratenor de Sus vnne fontaine.
Da uoir.
18

Ciconia, 'Sus une fontayne', in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. Pat. Lat. 229

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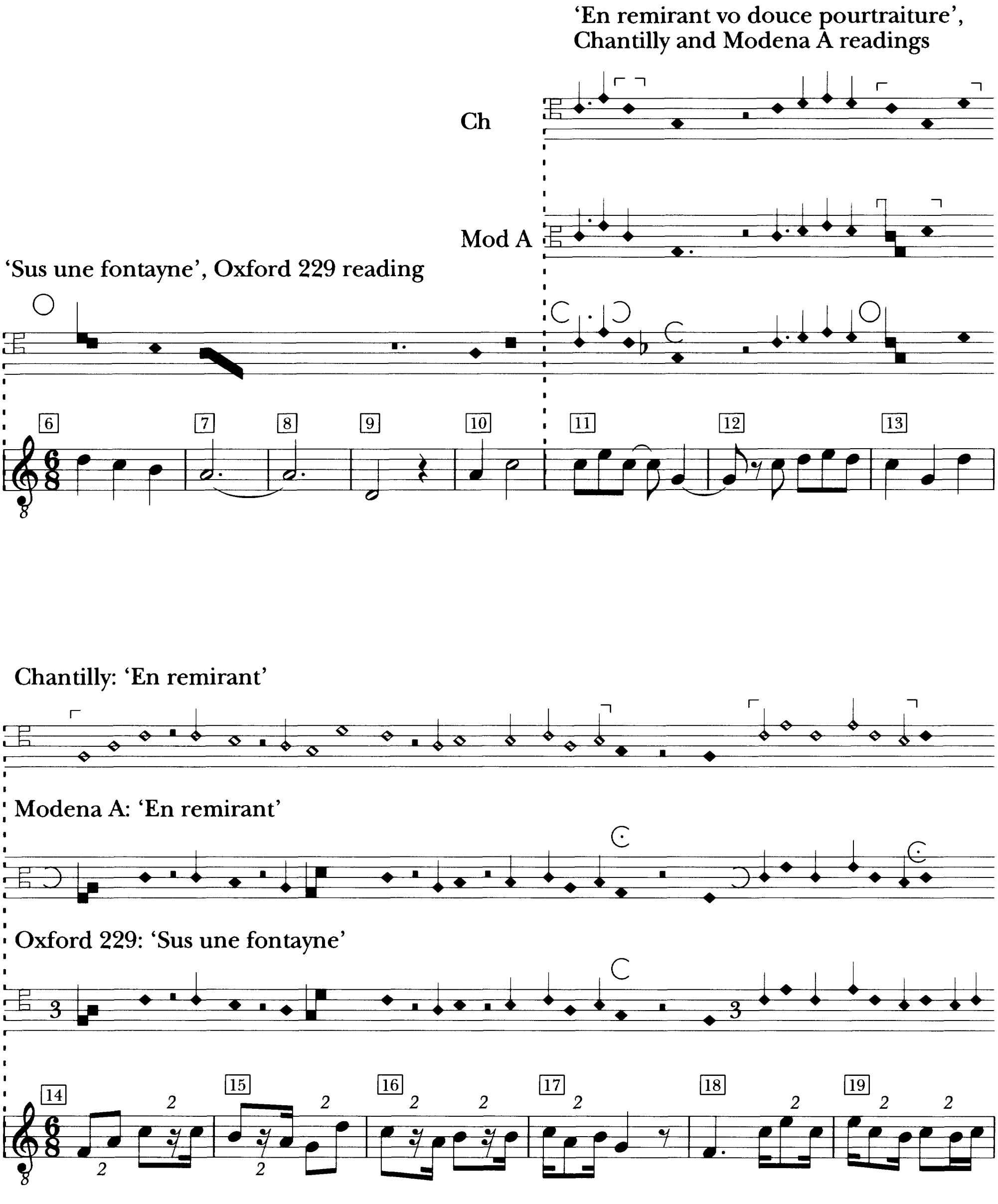
Ex. 4 'Sus une fontayne', contratenor, compared with 'En remirant vo douce pourtraiture' readings in Chantilly and Modena A


'En remirant vo douce pourtraiture', Chantilly and Modena A readings
Ch
Mod A
'Sus une fontayne', Oxford 229 reading
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
Chantilly: 'En remirant'
Modena A: 'En remirant'
Oxford 229: 'Sus une fontayne'
14
15
16
17
18
19

equal to a minim, therefore unnecessary, and in major prolation it would equal one and one-half minims, an irrational duration within the notational system unless accompanied by another diminished semibreve.[65]

What these signs do provide, however, is a way to determine what their meanings must be in the context of this piece. The first sign added in 'Sus une fontayne' 's quotation of the work, governing the two minims divided by a punctus, must indicate major prolation; the sign immediately after it governing the single semibreve must serve to change the prolation to minor prolation because otherwise no sign would be necessary there. Having deduced this much, a performer would determine that something was amiss with the mensuration signs in the piece and be able by a simple process of elimination to discover the correct interpretation of the remaining signs. A performer who knew or had access to a notated copy of the original ballade by Filippotto, of course, could further reconstruct the correct interpretation of the other two signs, the circle in bar 13 and the 3 in bar 14, based upon a comparison of this passage with its counterpart in 'En remirant'. The contratenor part of the quotation of 'En remirant', with its seemingly needless profusion of mensuration signs, thus can act as a canon for the use of mensuration signs in the piece as a whole. The eccentric signs, in turn, name Filippotto by locating a solution to their eccentricity within the first quotation of Filippotto's music.

Thus I suggest that the eccentric use of mensuration signs is part of the ironic strategy of the work as a whole, and constitutes an extension of textual irony into the realm of musical signs. This hypothesis requires further contextualization, which I can only sketch here.[66] In an age when textual irony was integral to the poetic enterprise it is not surprising that composers of courtly songs would look to musical notation as a medium for self-conscious artistic exploration, or, to borrow the concept of Kevin Brownlee, for the creation of a 'poetic identity'.[67] There is ample evidence in surviving manuscript sources that they did so; indeed, one of the hallmarks of the repertory of Ciconia's *ars subtilior* contemporaries is the pride of place given to notation, which, in the words of Willi Apel, 'far exceeds its natural limitations as a servant to the music'.[68] These works include, for example, the ballade 'Or voit tout', in Chantilly 564, ascribed to Guido, whose text deplores the use of 'new note shapes', but whose notated music is ostentatiously full of those shapes.[69] Another example is the double-texted ballade 'Je me merveil'/'J'ay plusieurs fois', in which the text's speaker complains that too many inexpert musicians are becoming composers, and they produce bad imitations of real composers' works.[70] The song's refrain contains exact imitation between the two cantus lines that is nevertheless not notated as a canon; rather, the two imitative voices use different notation to produce the same musical line, enacting a kind of notated emblem of plagiarism. These examples of notational irony are admittedly more transparent than that of ‘Sus une fontayne’, where I suggest that the rhythmic notation is one last forum in which to invoke the relationship between Filippotto da Caserta and the poetic ‘I’ of the text. The irony of this notation refers not to the central narrative of listening to Filippotto’s music, but rather to the attendant issue of writing it down. The use of the ‘wrong’ notation problematizes the act of music writing, and in this it bears a relationship to the examples by Guido and Senleches. By making a game out of the language of musical notation, all these composers spotlight the reading and writing of musical notation as an interpretative act, and engage the performer as well as the audience in the process of making meaning.

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[65] In the repertory of this period, Ɔ is virtually always used after major prolation to achieve *sesquitertia* proportion at the minim level and *dupla* at the semibreve level, and the implicit level of the beat is the perfect semibreve in Ͼ, subdivided in Ɔ into two semibreves and four minims. A very complex syncopated passage might conceivably separate two semibreves under Ɔ, but it is simply not idiomatic to the *ars subtilior* repertory to have a single semibreve under Ɔ.

[66] See Anne Stone, 'The Composer's Voice in the Late Fourteenth-Century Song: Four Case Studies', in *Johannes Ciconia: musicien de la transition*, ed. Vendrix, forthcoming.

[67] *Poetic Identity in Guillaume de Machaut*, Madison, 1984. Brownlee argues that Machaut was the first poet to articulate the modern notion of 'professional' poet.

[68] *The Notation of Polyphonic Music 900–1600*, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, p. 403.

[69] See the discussions of this piece in Günther, 'Das Ende der Ars Nova', and Stone, 'Che cosa c'è di più sottile riguardo l'*Ars subtilior*?'. A modern edition is found in *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century*, xviii, p. 28.

[70] A unicum in Chantilly 564, it is edited in *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century*, xix, pp. 62–5.

In the end, it proves impossible to know whether Ciconia’s text and music represent true homage to Filippotto da Caserta. If the dates of composition proposed here are correct, at least twelve years separate the two works and there is no likelihood that the two composers overlapped at the Visconti court. But one of the richest aspects of an art that celebrates irony in the way that ‘Sus une fontayne’ does is that it leaves unanswerable the question of the composer’s intentions.