



I had always had the inclination to avoid 'mediaeval music' since Michael Morrow (the inimitable Irish eccentric who started *Musica Reservata* in the 1960s, with his buddy, John Beckett) said 'everyone has to knit their own middle ages'! What he meant was, so much has been lost, so much is guess-work for any music before 1500 (in fact before music-printing and Ottaviano Petrucci, Venice, 1501) such that we are all and will always be in the dark about very important details. Therefore, I mused in the early 1970s, I'll stick to Renaissance Music where we can be a little surer that our solutions in performance are somewhat closer to original intentions. (There is a huge amount to debate in that naïve assumption, however!)

But then came along David Fallows – a passionate advocate of the inestimable beauty of fifteenth-century music, and with a plan to persuade me to focus the efforts of The Consort of Musicke for the best part of a year to making the first complete recording of arguably the most beautiful music manuscript ever created. I never regretted a moment! David and I worked very closely on every detail of the work – voicings, choices of instrumentation, even on what kind of instruments we should have built for the project – mediaeval bass lute, harp, vielles, etc. And over and again I fell in love with the exquisite beauty of much of the music: the plangent melodies, the disturbing harmonies, the unremitting logic of the *formes fixes* architecture, the jazz-like rhythms. We inhabited an elevated plane of beauty during the preparations, and David worked us hard.

Much has happened with the performance of fifteenth-century music since the mid-1970s, but I venture to say that there cannot have been a project more devotedly worked on by the entire team, and I sincerely believe that care shows, and stands the test of more than 30 years! Here is a 'Complete Recording' that can proudly sit alongside the exquisite facsimile of this unique double-heart-shaped *chansonnier*, published in 2009.

Anthony Rooley

2009

Anthony Rooley's dream when we made these recordings in 1979 was that any good university or conservatory library should have the LPs, the edition and the facsimile all filed together on the shelf. That plan obviously grew out of his recent recording of Dowland's complete works. But for the *Chansonnier Cordiforme* it seemed absolutely perfect. This remains the only complete recording ever made of an entire fifteenth-century songbook; and it gives everything in its original order, starting from the first page and ending on the last. Moreover, returning to them more objectively after thirty years I do have to say that most of the performances here seem to me as good as any recorded performance of a fifteenth-century song even today.

But the dream has taken some time to become reality. The edition came out over a decade later, in 1991, although I had already completed it and delivered it to the publisher before we started on the recordings. It needed translating into French, and there were various other delays. But the beautifully produced volume, *Chansonnier de Jean de Montchenu*, ed. G. Thibault and D. Fallows, can still be obtained from the Société Française de Musicologie (www.sfmusicologie.fr).

The dream of a facsimile took even longer. Tony and I had both worked hard to try to convince a publisher of its worth, all in vain. But thirty years later, quite out of the blue, I heard from Fernando Grau Orellano of the famous Valencian publishing house Vincent García Editores (www.vgesa.com)

that they planned to publish such a facsimile; and he invited me to write a commentary volume. At that point Tony's dream was long forgotten, the original LPs long sold out (in fact they had been already when the edition was published), and even the Japanese CD transfer of 1993 a distant memory. My initial instinct was that this was all past history for me and they would be better advised to find somebody else. But then they sent me an advance copy of the facsimile and I knew that I must write the new commentary. This was one of the most beautiful and perfect facsimiles I had ever seen. When I went back to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France to compare it with the original and tidy up certain details in the new commentary the custodians of the library several times cautioned me for putting my hand on their precious manuscript when it was in fact on the new facsimile; and when I returned the original at the end of the day the *président* of the manuscript room spent fully five minutes checking that I had not slyly returned the facsimile in its place. This too has the title *Chansonnier de Jean de Montchenu* and was published at the end of 2008. I should warn potential purchasers that it is a luxury production aimed at a luxury market, so it is by no means cheap; but it is worth it. More important, though, Anthony Rooley's dream is at last potential reality.

David Fallows

2010

LE CHANSONNIER CORDIFORME
(France Bibliothèque Nationale Rothschild 2973)

CD 1

1	I	Hora gridar 'oimè' (ct, b, fl, l2)	2'47
2	II	Ben lo sa Dio (ballata) (co, f2, h)	3'07
3	III	Dona gentile (rondeau) [Guillaume Dufay] (ct, b, fl)	4'40
4	IV	Gentil madona [John Bedyngam] (s, h, l1)	2'32
5	V	Chiara Fontana (t, b)	1'27
6	VI	O pelegrina luce (first setting) (ct, 2f, h)	2'09
7	VII	O rosa bella [John Bedyngam or John Dunstable] (ct, 2f, h)	4'31
8	VIII	La gracia di voi (ct, t, fl)	2'12
9	IX	Perla mia cara (ct, t, b)	2'14
10	X	Morte mercè (ct, t, b)	2'53
11	XI	Finir voglio la mia vita (s, fl, l2, h)	0'47
12	XII	O pelegrina luce (second setting) (s, t, h, l2)	2'37
13	XIII	O meschin' innamorati (s, t, l2)	3'03

CD 2

1	XIV	Comme ung homme desconforté (rondeau) (ct, h, l2, fl)	4'46
2	XV	S'il vous plaist que vostre je soye (rondeau) [Johannes Regis] (s, b, l2)	5'50
3	XVI	L'autre jour par ung matin (ballade) (co, b, l1, f2)	3'03
4	XVII	J'ay pris amours (rondeau) (s, t, l2)	4'51
5	XVIII	L'autre d'antan l'autrier passa [Johannes Ockeghem] (co, b, l2)	2'27
6	XIX	De tous biens plaine (rondeau) [Hayne van Ghizeghem] (t, fl, 2l)	4'28
7	XX	J'ay moins de bien (bergerette) [Antoine Busnoys] (t, fl, 2l)	3'50
8	XXI	Vostre bruit et vostre grant fame (rondeau) [Guillaume Dufay] (ct, b, fl)	5'14
9	XXII	Cent mille escus (rondeau) [Caron] (s, t, h, l2)	4'17
10	XXIII	Le souvenir de vous me tue (rondeau) [Robert Morton] (co, h, l2)	3'07
11	XXIV	L'omme bany de sa plaisance (rondeau) [Barbingant] (s, t, h, f2)	4'19
12	XXV	N'aray je jamais mieulx [Robert Morton] (s, t, h, l2, f2)	3'18
13	XXVI	Le serviteur hault guerdonné (rondeau) [Guillaume Dufay] (ct, b, fl)	5'53
14	XXVII	Fortune, par ta cruauté [Vincenet] (s, t, l2)	5'49
15	XXVIII	Est il mercy du quoy l'on peust finer? (rondeau) [Antoine Busnoys] (s, h, fl)	3'52

CD 3

1	XXIX	Comme femme desconfortee (rondeau) (co, 2f)	6'32
2	XXX	Tout a par moy (rondeau) [Walter Frye] (co, fl, l2)	6'52
3	XXXI	Ma bouche rit (bergerette) [Johannes Ockeghem] (s, t, h, f2)	4'37
4	XXXII	Mon seul plaisir, ma douce joye (rondeau) [John Bedyngam] (s, l1, f2)	4'22
5	XXXIII	Ma bouche plaint (s, t, f2)	1'42
6	XXXIV	Vray dieu d'amours (rondeau) (ct, 2f)	3'58
7	XXXV	Hélas! Je n'ay pas osé dire (s, ct, b, h, 2l)	1'03
8	XXXVI	Or ay je perdu (rondeau) (c, 2l)	4'52
9	XXXVII	Adieu vous dy (rondeau) (ct, b, fl)	4'46
10	XXXVIII	Terriblement suis fortunee (bergerette) (s, 2f)	4'20
11	XXXIX	De mon pouvoir vous veul complaire (rondeau) (co, b, l2)	4'48
12	XL	Hélas! n'aray je jamais mieulx (bergerette) (s, t, l2, f2)	3'37
13	XLI	Quant du dire adieu (bergerette) (co, 2f)	3'13
14	XLII	Je ne veis onques la pareille (rondeau) [Binchois or Guillaume Dufay] (ct, t, b)	4'38
15	XLIII	Faites moy sçavoir de la belle (rondeau) (co, 2f)	4'55

The Consort of Musicke
Anthony Rooley

Emma Kirkby, soprano [s]
Margaret Philpot, contralto [co]
John York Skinner, countertenor [ct]
John Elwes, tenor [t]
David Thomas, bass [b]
Lewis Jones, flute [fl]
Frances Kelly, harp [h]
Christopher Page, lute [l1]
Anthony Rooley, bass lute [l2]
Trevor Jones, fiddle [f1]
Alison Crum, fiddle [f2]

David Fallows, Edition and Project supervision

Total timing: 164'06

Of all medieval music manuscripts the Chansonnier Cordiforme lays the strongest claim to the privilege of being recorded complete – not so much because of its extraordinary visual beauty and its unique heart-shaped pages, but because of its date and repertory.

The manuscript was compiled in the early 1470s, at a time when the medieval song tradition stretching back some 150 years was at its ripest. In 1474 Guillaume Dufay died after a long and distinguished career in which he had towered above all his colleagues: practically everything in the Chansonnier Cordiforme shows the influence of this greatest of all medieval composers. His two major contemporaries, Dunstable and Binchois, had died 21 and 14 years earlier respectively. Chief among the rising generation were Ockeghem, Busnoys and Hayne van Ghizeghem, all three just beginning to achieve international fame when the manuscript was made. With the next generation, composers such as Josquin, Obrecht and Isaac were to discard the old style and introduce a manner of counterpoint in which each voice aimed to be functionally equal. The Chansonnier Cordiforme is perhaps the last collection devoted entirely to the old style; and with some 13-15 different composers represented it gives examples of many different approaches. No significant composer of the time is absent from the manuscript.

And the same could be said of the selection of songs found here. The Chansonnier Cordiforme contains the most compact and representative surviving collection of the classic European courtly song repertory in those years. Most of the songs that achieved the widest

popularity at the time are here; and it would be difficult to name more than four songs that were equally widely copied but are not found in this manuscript. Moreover, of the relatively few songs that are unique to the Chansonnier Cordiforme, several were far more widely known then than the surviving musical manuscripts might suggest, for they are quoted in poems of the time and in later songs.

Many other chansonniers survive from these years, collections of up to 200 songs, mostly in French, mostly in three parts with one or two of the parts texted for singing. These volumes are pocket sized but show almost no evidence of having been used for musical performances: they are beautifully copied on high-quality parchment and they often have elaborately illuminated initial letters. They seem intended more for the rich patron who wanted a written record of his favourite songs; and that is surely the intention of the Chansonnier Cordiforme. But none of these volumes is as astonishingly beautiful as the Cordiforme, where the quality of the parchment, the elegance of the copying and above all the sheer magnificence of the illuminations place it in a class of its own.

When the chansonnier is closed it lies on the desk as a red velvet-covered book in the shape of narrow heart. When it opened it combines two shapes in one: first it is again heart-shaped with the upper edge of the heart ridged in a more elaborate form, very much in the decorative style of its time; but of course it is also the shape of two hearts joined, symbolizing the love-longing that characterizes the texts of nearly all the songs it contains.

The owner of the manuscript is known from the coat of arms on the first page. He was Jean de Montchenu, bishop, politician and warrior, a man who seems characteristic of an age when the outrageous worldliness of certain clergy made the reformation almost inevitable. An early chronicler described him as 'a great scoundrel, shameful of conduct, highly unchaste, detestable, dissolute and full of vices'. His family came from Dauphiné, just outside the true kingdom of France but traditionally bearing allegiance to the crown prince. He became a monk of St. Antoine en Viennois (1441), an apostolic protonotary (1460), cellarer of St. Antoine en Viennois and commander of S. Antonio di Ranverso near Turin (1470), bishop of Agen (1477) and then bishop of Viviers (1478-97). He was excommunicated in 1496 and died soon after.

From about 1468 he was an adviser and close confidante to Jean-Louis of Savoy, bishop of Geneva and head of the regents of the Duchy of Savoy; but in 1476 the bishop found a new favourite and Jean de Montchenu was supplanted by a certain Count de Chissey. (This development led to a bizarre early-morning raid on the bishop's house in Geneva when Chissey was kidnapped from the bishop's bed and held against a ransom.)

Jean de Montchenu's chansonnier almost certainly came from the years of his close association with the house of Savoy; we know this anyway because the coat of arms on it does not take account of his own bishopric (received in 1477 after his final break with Savoy); but we know it also because the style of the

illuminations is so close to that of several manuscripts prepared specifically for the Dukes of Savoy.

Savoy was an important centre for fifteenth-century song. Normally this repertory has been described as the 'Burgundian chanson', but the title is misleading. Of the major composers only Binchois, Busnoys and Hayne van Ghizeghem were associated with the Burgundian court; and the evidence suggests that the repertory was composed and performed more extensively in France and Italy. The court of Savoy itself was too unstable in its fortunes to retain important musicians for any length of time; but Dufay, for instance, spent several years there at two stages in his career, and he would clearly have stayed there much longer but for the difficult political climate. What makes Savoy a particularly important and characteristic centre for surveying this repertory, however, is that it straddles France and Italy thereby having access to a far broader and more representative range of music than did Burgundy. Jean de Montchenu's chansonnier is the only song manuscript known to come from French Savoy during the fifteenth century; and it is therefore no surprise that it should contain more than any other manuscript, the finest examples of the song traditions from both sides of the Alps.

As a selection of songs the Chansonnier Cordiforme is important in several ways. All the best song composers of the repertory appear – Dufay represented by three pieces, all gems of his maturity; Ockeghem by two in strikingly contrasted styles; Busnoys by two early works; Hayne van Ghizeghem

by what is probably his first and most successful masterpiece; Morton by his two finest works. The songs reach back nearly forty years (e.g. Nos. 4, 7, 41, 43) but are mostly from the ten years or so leading up to 1470, so there is a concentration here symptomatic of the state of the art at that time. Moreover an astonishingly large proportion of the works are on the very highest creative plane: perhaps there are three or four pieces in the collection that seem slightly disappointing, but even these have been included as representing a broader view of the chanson repertory during the last years of Dufay's life.

Whether it is right to present the songs in the same order as they appear in the chansonnier it is hard to say. We know very little about the kinds of decisions that went into a compilation of this kind. But it is difficult to think of a better sequence for the music. The separation of the Italian songs – more varied in style and form – from the French ones; the close juxtaposition of related pieces; the apparently careful grouping of certain kinds of song; the variety of pace that so often occurs between one song and the next – these all seem to suggest careful planning on the part of the compiler. Jean de Montchenu's chansonnier presents a surprisingly satisfying whole.

Instruments

Most of the instruments used were made specially for this recording. Geoff Ralph made the harp, modeling it after the surviving instrument in Nuremberg (ca. 1500): it has 26 gut strings, from G to d^{'''} tuned diatonically, and brays (used in Nos. 2, 12, 22); chromatic notes were achieved by stopping the string near the tuning pin. The

fiddles were made by Neil Hansford on the basis of illustrations of the time, particularly a mural by Pinturicchio in the Borgia apartments at the Vatican: they have three gut strings, tuned c, g, d', and were bowed with lightly haired (ca. 50 hairs) fixed-frog bows by Alan Crumpler. The flute is by Friedrich von Huene (1972). Both lutes have five courses of gut strings; they were built by Christopher Challen (tenor lute: 1975) and Brian Cohen (bass lute), using particularly the fifteenth-century drawing by Arnault de Zwolle.

Christopher Page used a quill plectrum and Anthony Rooley plucked with his fingers: both styles of playing are mentioned by Tinctoris (ca. 1487) and shown in pictures of the time, but finger technique more easily produced a satisfactory tone on the low and slack gut strings of the bass lute. Gut strings were supplied by Northern Renaissance Instruments of Manchester.

Allocation of the parts

With these instruments available – and there is little evidence of others being used for the polyphonic chanson repertory at that time – the scoring of the pieces presented several problems. One was that notes below tenor C could be played only on the bass lute or the harp: the size of fiddles depicted in the fifteenth century seems to prohibit the use of lower notes. Another was that the flute – again, following the sizes of instruments in pictures – had a range rather higher than the music allocated to it and had to be doubled an octave lower by another instrument, in this case the lute.

A further problem lay in the copying technique used by the scribe of the Chansonnier Cordiforme. He seems to

have proceeded in a way unique to the time. It was an age of transition from the predominantly solo chanson of the 1430s and 1440s to the later style in which two or more voices took equal parts in an increasingly imitative texture. At first the Cordiforme scribe attempted to underlay texts only to those parts which he thought should be taken by a voice, but as he progressed he apparently realised that his judgment on this was open to doubt, and from No. 26 on he attempted to underlay all text covering all eventualities. In the event, text can be added far more easily to some voices than to others, and for the recording every effort was made to suit the music. Decisions here are necessarily subjective, and there is plenty of evidence for many different styles of performance having been used in the fifteenth century; but in most cases one solution seemed better than the others. So homophonic pieces such as Nos. 9 and 10 were set for three voices, whereas pieces with two strongly imitative parts were scored with voices on those two parts (e.g. Nos. 1, 3, 12, 15, etc.) More often than not the phrase structure of a part determined whether it should be sung: in many cases one of the lower parts has phrase-ends and rests at the same places as the upper part, and this suggests texting, whereas in many others the phrase-structure of the lower parts runs against the more clearly cut phrases of the top part and seems to require instruments.

Three decisions were easily made. One was that song forms should be complete: the rondeau form, for instance, is so intrinsic to the nature of the fifteenth-century song repertory that it would be wrong to omit sections, and in one case it was even necessary to graft two lines of poetry from elsewhere on to a song (No. 36)

in order to preserve the form. Another was that the scoring should not change in the course of a song: many recent performances and recordings of this repertory have changed the scoring or omitted voices, particularly for the refrain sections of a rondeau, but the gains in terms of textural variety seemed outweighed by the disturbances to the flow of the music, making music that is already somewhat sectional seem even more so. And finally, since there is no evidence for fixed pitch or pitch-standards in the fifteenth century, pieces were tacitly transposed when necessary or convenient, though in most cases it was convenient to perform the songs at their manuscript pitch using A = 440 cycles. The only large transpositions were in Nos. 12 and 38 (up a 4th) and No. 41 (up a minor 3rd).

Acknowledgements

The music is based on the edition of the chansonnier by the late Geneviève Thibault, Comtesse H. de Chambure. All decisions concerning the edition are the responsibility of David Fallows but benefit considerably from the help of Anthony Rooley and Christopher Page as well as from the observations of Howard Mayer Brown, Lewis Jones, Ephraim Segerman and the singers in the recording; special mention is due however, to the doctoral thesis of Edward L. Kottick (Chapel Hill, NC, 1963) which includes an extensive discussion and a complete transcription of the manuscript. Help with the Italian texts came from Gianfranco Folena (edition), Geoffrey Hull (translation) and Pierluigi Petrobelli (pronunciation); with the French texts from William Rothwell (editing and translation) and Paul Bruthiaux (pronunciation).

David Fallows

CD 1

THE ITALIAN SONGS

As the largest coherent collection of Italian song surviving from the middle years of the fifteenth century, the group of pieces that opens the Chansonnier Cordiforme holds a special place in our understanding of Italian secular music between the glories of the fourteenth century and the rise of the frottola at the very end of the fifteenth. The variety of styles found in these few pieces is testimony to a rich and wide-ranging tradition of which only traces survive. Unfortunately, however, the copyist was unfamiliar with the Italian language and all the texts have required considerable reconstruction to restore them to their probable original form. Moreover, several of the pieces are in dialect, and in one case (No. 8) there is even a serious question as to whether the original language was Italian or Spanish. But the musical readings are good, as one might expect in an area which, politically speaking, covered parts of France as well as of Italy.

I. Hora gridar 'oimè'

The lover pleads against his lady's refusal to see him again and threatens suicide. With its strongly expressed emotions in the poem and its repeated notes in the music, this is the kind of song that could exist only in the Italian tradition. Particularly characteristic here are the long falling lines at the end of the first and fourth lines of the text (and elsewhere when the music is repeated): the gradual descent is made more elegant in the fourth line by an irregularity in the metre of the music whereby syncopation (giving the effect of an extra beat) is inserted into the triple-time, softening the strongly rhythmic pattern established elsewhere in the song.

II. Ben lo sa Dio

The falsely slandered virgin declares that her innocence will be appreciated in heaven even if not on earth. Parts of this poem also appear in settings dating from the very beginning and the very end of the fifteenth century, and seem to belong to the Italian tradition of improvised song which flourished throughout that period. With its highly irregular, declamatory rhythms and its relatively simple accompaniment, the song gives an important clue to the style of the *improvisatori*, singers to their own accompaniment – often on lute or viola – and harbingers of the frottola that was to emerge in the northern courts during the 1490s. But the polyphony here is fully written out in separate parts – as in the frottola – and it would probably be a mistake to perform the song with solo lute as accompaniment: it is improvised music made more formal and assimilated into the chanson repertory. Its form (A b b a A) is that of the ballata, the most widely used form of the late fourteenth-century Italian composers. Three more lines of poetry in the manuscript have had to be omitted here: they are probably part of a further stanza, but not enough survives for a convincing reconstruction.

III. Dona gentile

By any criteria Dufay (ca. 1400-1474) is the greatest fifteenth-century composer. He was born in northern France or what is now Belgium but spent many years in Italy. This is the latest of the few songs in Italian that survive from him and may have been written during his stay at the Savoy court in the early 1450s. Its text is very much in the style of the French Chanson: the lover praises his lady and begs her to accept his love. Similarly

its form is a French one, that of a rondeau – which is by far the dominating form of French song in the fifteenth century (and is described in the commentary to No. 14). Even so, Italian style is evident in the repeated notes (and the repeated words) at the 'daytime soccorso'.

IV. Zentil madona

John Bedyngham (d. ca. 1460) was English and may never have left England. This song appears elsewhere with French text, and it is even possible that it originated as an English song with the text 'Fortune alas, what have I gilt'. Quite often in the fifteenth century, songs had new texts applied to them, either to make them comprehensible to an audience unfamiliar with the language or to incorporate them in a sacred context; and understandably this happened particularly often to songs by English composers. Certainly there is little trace of Italian style here, though there is plenty of evidence that the English song style had its effects in Italy more strongly than in France. The gentle limpidity of the melodic line is characteristic of English song at its best with its elegant waving lines and irregular metrical patterns.

V. Chiara fontana

In line with a tradition found throughout fifteenth-century Europe, this song takes the opening of the famous 'J'ay pris amours' (No. 17 in this chansonier) and builds a small musical commentary upon it. One common characteristic of that tradition is the use of only two parts: this is the only two-part song in the chansonier, and two-part writing is otherwise relatively rare in the fifteenth century. Another characteristic is the use of only one stanza of poetry in such songs: the same thing happens, for apparently the same reasons, in Nos.

6 and 33 of this collection. Perhaps some text has been lost, but that seems unlikely. As so often happens in this repertory, there is some room for doubt as to whether the poem is addressed to a courtly lady or to the Virgin Mary: the art of courtly love has even been described by John Stevens as a 'courtly liturgy'. Here the lady, if she is courtly, is praised as embodying all the virtues and qualities of the courtly ethic.

VI. O pelegrina luce (first setting)

This song is modeled on 'O rosa bella', the very next piece in the manuscript. And this close juxtaposition of model with paraphrase appears several more times in the Chansonnier Cordiforme. The poem, sometimes attributed to the Venetian poet Leonardo Giustiniani, is known in two other musical settings, one of them No. 12 in this collection. Here only four of its lines are used – another example, perhaps, of a shorter poem being used for a piece that is simply a musical paraphrase. It is as though the composer knew that his second-hand material was valid for only a single stanza. But there is another reason. In most of the repertory the poem is the composer's main guiding influence: the poetic form generates the musical form; whereas here a musical texture is the creative stimulus. Musically, this is one of the richest pieces in the collection: each voice is notated in a different metre and each is filled with surprising filigree detail.

VII. O rosa bella

One of the most widely copied and widely imitated of all fifteenth-century songs, 'O rosa bella' raises innumerable historical problems. Although it is normally considered to be by the famous John Dunstable (d. 1453), it may

well really be the work of his contemporary John Bedyngham, the composer of 'Zentil madona' (No. 4). The poem had been set to music many years earlier by Ciconia (d. 1411) and is probably by Leonardo Giustiniani (d. 1446), though it appears in no collection of his poetry earlier than the 1470s. As Ciconia set it, and as it appears in the poetry collections, the poem has the form of a ballata (like No. 2); but the present setting cannot take that form, and the various manuscripts and modern editions show different solutions to the matching of words to music. For the recording we have concluded that the composer, misunderstanding the form of the original poem, intended it to be a song of two simple stanzas (like Nos. 4 and 10). In the poem as it now stands the speaker veers somewhat between addressing his lady directly and addressing the god of love to whom he describes her as a traitress. The music, with its loosely irregular rhythms and its soaring melody, has no apparent precursor among fifteenth-century songs: small wonder that it was copied and imitated so much.

VIII. La gracia de voi

The poem is so garbled that there is some difficulty in knowing whether it was originally Spanish or Italian. As it appears in the manuscript, many of its words and structures are exclusively Spanish; and the form of the *canción* (a-b-b-a) with eight-syllable lines is also a common one in Spain. Moreover the style of the music suggests parallels with surviving Spanish songs from the 1480s. But almost no fifteenth-century Spanish courtly songs survive from before 1480, and if this piece is indeed Spanish in origin it is the earliest of its kind. For the present recording it was assumed that the poem is

in Italian but that somebody in the copying process thought it was Spanish and introduced Spanish phraseology: the transcription of the poem therefore retains the scribe's hybrid of French, Italian and Spanish instead of attempting to hypothesize a distant and probably unattainable Spanish original. The gentle restricted line of the music may itself point to composition at Naples – that strange borderland which was a part of Italy but ruled by Spaniards. As reconstructed here, the poem is rather more complex than most of this repertory. The lover refers to the dual aspect of his lady: one enchanting, the other cruel. He speaks directly to the enchanting aspect, referring to the cruel side in the third person.

IX. Perla mia cara

This song, though unique to the Chansonier Cordiforme, has often been cited by historians as giving a clue to the origins of the frottola. Like 'Ben lo sa Dio' (No. 2), it has within it hints of an improvisatory style that has been written down. Also like 'Ben lo sa Dio', it has a poem that is found in a different context elsewhere: Leonardo Giustiniani's canzona 'Perla mia cara' contains these lines as lines 1-6 of the first stanza and lines 4-6 of the seventh stanza. Perhaps an improviser would have used this simple a-b-a melody and chordal sequence to sing Leonardo's entire 100-line poem: if so he would have had to make changes to fit the ten-line stanza of the longer poem to his three-line music, and he would presumably have added many embellishments. But the Cordiforme version has only three stanzas and is thus – like No. 2 – assimilated into the chanson repertory; so it is sung here by three voices without embellishment. The lady is praised as

being so perfect that no earthly suitor can match her.

X. Morte mercè

Although this setting is unique to the Cordiforme manuscript, a very similar setting appears elsewhere ascribed to the Spanish composer Johannes Cornago (fl. 1455-75). Cornago's version is slightly simpler and more regular in its rhythm: the Cordiforme song differs primarily in its more declamatory style and may well be an adaptation of Cornago's original. Only the first half of the text appears in Cordiforme: the rest is taken from a manuscript containing the Cornago version. The lover begs for death because of the torture he suffers from his unrequited love. As with Nos. 4 and 7, the form is of two simple stanzas; but here the difference is that the music changes metre halfway through the stanza and the poem seems complete and correct in the form we now have (whereas that is probably not the case with Nos. 4 and 7). By a curious copying error, the Cordiforme manuscript has the two halves of this song separated by No. 11: this represents the only respect in which the recording departs from the sequence in the manuscript.

XI. Finir voglio la mia vita

Brief though it is, this song has many of the characteristics of the Italian style: strong declamatory lines with cross-accents in the music, closely linked descantus and tenor (the two main structural voices in this repertory) and a firm striding contratenor bassus that moves separately from the other voices. Six further lines of poetry appear in the manuscript but are omitted here since they seem for several reasons to belong to a different poem.

XII. O pelegrina luce (second setting in ballade form)

This is the full setting of the poem also used in No. 6. Here the form is the a-a-b of the French ballade and seems somewhat foreign to the Italian style. In any case this seems one of the latest Italian songs in the manuscript with its systematic imitation at the beginning, its move to a more declamatory style in line 5 and its change to triple time for the last line.

XIII. O meschin' innamorati

The last Italian song is in some ways the strangest. Rhythmically its lines vary from the long highly irregular opening phrase, through the homophonic declamation of the second, to the most unusual rhythmic figure apparently symbolizing the 'danza'. As with No. 8, its form is best described as that of the Spanish *canción*, and the musical style seems similarly Spanish, as does the use of eight-syllable lines. The dance of love in which the poet finds himself is one of those involuntary perpetual dances that recur so often in early European mythology; blindness in Fortune (as in Cupid) is equally common.

CD2

THE FRENCH SONGS

With the beginning of the French section of the chansonier the copyist is on more familiar territory. Poetic texts tend to be far more accurate and offer relatively few transcription problems. But equally it is a repertory that presents more problems for the listener. It is a 'classical' repertory in the sense that the differences between one piece and the next are less easily perceived than in the Italian songs.

XIV. Comme ung homme desconforté

Based on the famous rondeau 'Comme femme desconfortee' (No. 29, CD3 [1]), this piece is also in rondeau form. This form should be explained here in some detail since it recurs so often. Its poetic form can be seen easily from the printed text, and here, as in all late medieval song, the poetic form always determines the musical form. The first and last stanzas are identical, while the third stanza has the same music as these, for its poetic scheme is the same. The second stanza is the delicate one. It begins like the others, but at its midpoint returns to the opening lines and therefore also returns to the opening music: in musical terms it consists of the first half of the stanza sung twice. So we can express the total form as AB aA ab AB, with the capital letters representing the words as well as the music of the first stanza. One result of this form is that the triple appearance of the 'a' section of music produces a tension expecting the reappearance of the 'b' section, especially when, as here, the 'b' section begins with a striking musical gesture. In such cases that tension provides a momentum which carries through to the end of the complete rondeau form.

In 'Comme ung homme', as in many other rondeau texts, the first stanza has its main verb after the middle of the stanza so that when the first three lines reappear in the second stanza they must take their main verb from the preceding lines thereby both establishing a link between the two halves of the delicate second stanza and subtly altering the meaning of the words.

XV. S'il vous plaist que vostre je soye

Regis (ca. 1430-1485) was closely associated with both

Binchois and Dufay and this work shows a bold use of open textures, a confidence, perhaps, that comes from mixing with the great. In the 'a' section one voice begins the line and is joined by the other voice which then finishes the line alone. The tension of the song is created by the disparity between the treatment in the 'a' section and the more homophonic music in the 'b' section.

XVI. L'autre jour par ung matin

For this more light-hearted song – the closest to the folk tradition of any in the *chansonnier* – the ballade form is used: three stanzas in a-a-b form, each ending with a brief refrain. The opening tag of the text is a variant of a formula that goes back to the thirteenth-century *chason d'aventure*. Also from that tradition is the name of 'Robin' for the true lover; and no listener of the time needed telling that the shepherdess was probably called Marion.

XVII. J'ay pris amours

This is perhaps the most important song of the entire repertory in that it is one of the most perfect examples of the style. Its text opens with a two-line motto which sums up the mood of the entire 'game of love' convention. Summer (beginning on May Day) is the time for seeking new loves. Over thirty later arrangements and paraphrases are based on 'J'ay pris amours', among them No. 5 in this collection.

XVIII. L'autre d'antan l'autrier passa

Ockeghem (d. 1497) was famous even in his own day as a master of canonic or contrapuntal devices and this song shows why. The two voices have close imitative treatment throughout, while the 'contratenor' (played here on a lute) plays a freer line commenting on the

action. In mood the poem is similar to that of 'L'autre jour' (No. 16), and it can be no coincidence that the two appear so closely together in the manuscript. But Ockeghem adds formality to the subject by using rondeau form – here with the extra detail that the final line of the stanza returns to the opening material in both text and music.

XIX. De tous biens plaine

This is probably the earliest of the nearly 20 songs surviving from Hayne (b. ca. 1450), a protégé of the Burgundian court and the youngest of the known composers in Cordiforme. It is also the most widely copied song of its generation, appearing in 24 sources as well as in some 40 arrangements of various kinds. But it presents an important and baffling performance problem: although most of its surviving manuscripts give text only to the upper voice (the 'discantus'), the text fits far better to the middle voice (the 'tenor') which in addition seems more obviously melodic. In the composition of most of these songs the 'discantus' and the 'tenor' are of equal importance. The other voice, the 'contratenor', can easily be omitted: as its name suggests, it is a 'counter' to the 'tenor'; and it is primarily rhythmic rather than harmonic in function, bridging the gaps between poetic lines and adding details to keep the texture rich and varied. In this case the 'tenor' is sung for the text not because that is the only way of performing the song but because it works well that way and shows a different view of the classic *chanson* tradition.

XX. J'ay moins de bien

Busnoys almost certainly wrote this song while he was a

colleague of Hayne van Ghizeghem at the Burgundian court. Like 'De tous biens plaine' (No. 19), it seems to have its most melodic part in the middle line, the 'tenor'; so it is performed here with that line sung. Again, the juxtaposition of two such texturally similar songs seems significant. Moreover the two songs have melodic similarities that may suggest some further connection. Perhaps the unrelieved pessimism of this poem is even intended as portraying a point of view opposite to that in 'De tous biens plaine'. The *bergerette* form, which re-emerged to popularity only in the 1450s, is the French equivalent of the Italian *balata* (seen, for example in 'Ben lo sa Dio', No.2); but it is also closely related to the rondeau, with a form that is similar except that its second stanza has entirely different music, often in a contrasting metre or (as here) a contrasting pitch range. The third and fourth stanzas are missing in Cordiforme and have been supplied from other manuscripts containing the poem.

XXI. Vostre bruit et vostre grant fame

A mature work of Dufay, probably the oldest composer in the manuscript, showing an extraordinary fluidity of melody. Each line of the poem begins with the two voices imitating at the octave. But this simple basic structure is given richness by the variety of rhythmic movement within a fundamentally duple metre: particularly in the 'b' section there is a flexibility of rhythm and melody that provides a clear contrast with the 'a' section. As so often with Dufay, the poem is more oblique and richer in its allusions than most of those in the repertory. It also contains examples of the 'rime équivoquée', or punning rhyme, in the first couplet of each of the first two stanzas.

XXII. Cent mille escus

Caron, though a relatively prolific composer of chansons and masses, has so far eluded certain identification. This song, as it happens, is ascribed to Busnoys in two sources, but two more of greater credibility give it to Caron, and that is the attribution normally accepted. Here, whereas the 'b' section opens with a figure remarkably similar to one at the beginning of the second line in the 'a' section, the song gains a particular continuity because both returns of the opening lines link on directly to the preceding text. And that may be another clue to the nature of the repertory: this continuity between stanzas is the main gesture of the song and is supported by an equal continuity within the stanza. Indeed one could hear every single line of the music as being derived from the falling fourth of the first phrase.

XXIII. Le souvenir de vous me tue

Morton was an Englishman who worked at the court of Burgundy from 1457 to 1476 and was therefore closely associated with Busnoys and Hayne van Ghizeghem. But he was probably older than them, and his musical style is far more concentrated than that of either colleague. The voice part of 'Le souvenir' is one of the most perfectly formed melodies in the whole repertory, with the lower range of the second line balanced firstly by the rise in the third line to the highest note and secondly by the similar shape at a higher pitch of the fourth line. Here again, the second stanza of the poem leads back directly to the refrain. This is one of the relatively few songs in which a woman speaks, addressing her absent lover and awaiting his return.

XXIV. L'omme bany de sa plaisance

This song is ascribed in one source to Barbingant, about whom we know nothing though several other works of his survive; and in another it is ascribed to Johannes Fedé who was connected between 1443 and 1477 with various institutions, including the Papal chapel and the Cappella Giulia at Rome as well as the Sainte-Chapelle and the Royal Chapel at Paris. Evaluation of those two manuscripts, as well as a citation of the song by the theorist Tinctoris who says it is by Barbigant, suggest that the latter was probably the composer. The wide variety of styles within the song is most unusual for this repertory: each line of the stanza has music quite unrelated to that of the others. But the song suffers from no lack of coherence: as in Caron's 'Cent mille escus' (No. 22), the refrain is linked both times it returns (l. 7 and l. 13) and brings the piece a splendid unity of conception in spite of its pronounced melodic diversity. Perhaps too it is the richness of the unremitting expression of sorrow that provides a poetic unity whereas the slightly cynical wit of 'Cent mille escus' needs a more unified music to give it form.

XXV. N'aray je jamais mieulx

This is Morton's (see No. 23) most successful song, to judge from its fifteen surviving manuscript sources. Whereas twelve of the sources contain only three voices, three of them, including Cordiforme, have an extra fourth voice – the one played here by the fiddle. The new voice is probably not by Morton: adding a new voice or voices to a popular piece was a common activity in the later years of the fifteenth century, and Henry VIII did the same in the next century. Although the new voice adds momentum and thickens the texture it contributes

relatively little musically, and it is a moot point whether the four-part version is an improvement. Yet the work stands as the only four-part piece in Cordiforme and is thus an example of an important development during the years in which the manuscript was prepared. The bold soaring lines of the music add a surging passion and intensity to a poem that might otherwise seem excessively self-pitying.

XXVI. Le serviteur hault gerdonné

There has been some discussion as to whether this piece is really by Dufay: it is ascribed to him only in one late Italian manuscript that is inaccurate in many respects, and Heinrich Besseler has suggested that the style is not Dufay's. Be that as it may, this is one of the most magnificent songs of its generation and it is difficult to think of any composer but Dufay who had the resource to write such a work. The three voices are superbly integrated, both by imitation and by the use of related musical material; each of the long-drawn lines has a suppleness that is characteristic only of Dufay; and the many subdivisions of the triple time (with 6/4 and 6/8 figurations within a basic 3/2) are hints of the kind of treatment he was to employ in his late mass cycles. This euphoric text is matched by some of the most sublime music of the age.

XXVII. Fortune par ta cruauté

Vincenet was associated with the Aragonese court at Naples in the 1470s and may have died by 1479, but all his four surviving songs (one of them to a Spanish text) probably date from the 1470s. This is the finest and the only one to survive in more than one manuscript, remaining popular well into the next century. Its long,

relaxed lines and its high flowing soprano line in the 'b' section are as distinctive as the strangely modern sounding contratenor line (played here on the lute) moving in fourths and fifths. As an exception within this repertory, the song is addressed not to a lover but to Fortune whose adversity stimulates fortitude.

XXVIII. Est il mercy de quoy l'on peust finer

A song of considerable finesse and complexity. The three lines of the 'a' section all open with imitation involving all three voices, but the third line also includes in the contratenor (played here by a harp) a pre-echo of the figure that will open the 'b' section. When the 'b' section arrives, with line four, the texture changes entirely and the two lower parts move together much more, keeping separate from the top part. It is worth remembering, in the context of a song like this, that the interrelationships of the parts as described in the commentary to No. 19 remain valid: for all its use of imitation and shared material, the contratenor remains structurally and functionally an added part. Perhaps one might see in the melody's frequent leaps and outlines of a fifth the mood of continuous desperate questioning that permeates the poem.

CD 3

XXIX. Comme femme desconfortee

The three preceding songs are among the grandest and finest of the repertory: now come three more on the same level. 'Comme femme' is ascribed in one such manuscript to Binchois (d. 1460), but it is so much later in style than anything securely his that this ascription has been questioned. Moreover the Cordiforme version is to some extent unique, for its contratenor part is different

from that in the nine other sources. Comparison suggests that somebody felt the other contratenor was less than ideal and rewrote it to produce the Cordiforme version which is in many ways far superior, particularly in the five bars leading up to and including the works 'desire la mort'. That section, incidentally, is most unusual in its affective declamation for what becomes the key phrase of the entire song.

XXX. Tout a par moy

Frye (d. 1475) was an English composer from whom a substantial body of music survives. This song is ascribed to him in two manuscripts and to Binchois in a third. It seems unlikely that this could be by Binchois; and that ascription has normally been rejected. The song itself had a great success: apart from masses by Agricola and Tinctoris based on it, Josquin wrote his mass 'Faisant regretz' on the opening bars of the 'b' section – a classic case of the 'b' section being so distinctive as to draw special attention to itself and thereby create the tension of its delayed reappearance (as mentioned in the commentary to No. 14). Self-imposed loneliness – a theme that recalls some of the poetry of Christine de Pizan and Charles d'Orléans – was of course the supremely 'anti-social' gesture within courtly society.

XXXI. Ma bouche rit

Ockeghem was a close friend of the older composer Dufay and this song, perhaps his most masterly, shows Dufay's influence, not only in its economical and freely rhapsodical melodies but also in the fine textures produced by overlapping voices (at 'Qu'il eut', 'qui la mort', 'De ainsi faulser'). Rhythmically the song is splendidly resourceful, making varied use throughout of

the simple three-note figure at the beginning and moving imperceptibly into an implied triple time for the closing line of each section. For the bergerette form, see the note on No. 20. The contrast of inward torment and outward sociability is a recurring theme in courtly poetry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, particularly in Christine de Pizan: dishonesty, feigning and the preservation of courtly graces bring out true bitterness in the poem.

XXXII. Mon seul plaisir ma douce joye

The poem is by the greatest of fifteenth-century courtly poets, Charles d'Orléans, but very slightly adapted for musical use. Dufay is credited with the music in one manuscript; and it is certainly a superb song, but another ascription to Bedyngnam (see note to No. 4) is more generally accepted; and it even seems likely that he wrote his music for the English version of Charles's poem which survives from the fifteenth century. Relatively brief though it is (particularly by comparison with the six enormous songs that precede it), 'Mon seul plaisir' mixes simple declamation with extended melismatic writing at the end of the first and fourth lines. A special feature of this song (like the preceding one) is the textural reduction of all three voices to the same range for the first half of the 'b' section (lines 3 and 4), preparing for a sudden burgeoning of the texture before the final cadence. In a characteristic paradox, the poet explains to his lady that he is too tongue-tied to describe his longing for her.

XXXIII. Ma bouche plaint

A song based on the materials of 'Ma bouche rit' (No. 31), in that it takes Ockeghem's opening words, opening music and closing mysterious Phrygian cadence. And it

is in that context that the absence of further text seems understandable (cf. note to No. 5). But, as so often, the paraphrasing song takes relatively little further material from its model: Ockeghem's piece provides merely the starting point. The two sung voices are in fairly strict canon throughout and have very little in common with Ockeghem's treatment. Even the poem has none of the internal paradoxes of 'Ma bouche rit', being a simple declaration of deepest despair at being spurned by the loved one.

Here the mood changes somewhat. Of the ten remaining songs, seven are unique to the Cordiforme manuscript and another appears in only a single further source, whereas only one of the earlier French songs (No. 14) is unique to the manuscript. To some extent that may be merely a function of the manuscripts that happen to survive, yet this grouping together of unique songs towards the end of the manuscript is probably significant. The American scholar Edward L. Kottick has even suggested that these pieces may have originated in Savoy. That is perhaps stretching a point, if only because one of them (No. 37) specifically bids farewell to the city of Dijon in Burgundy. But there is undoubtedly a change of mood and intent for the last ten songs, not towards frivolity (which had been popular forty years earlier and was to be again twenty years later) but towards a less densely argued musical style. These songs are easier to perform and easier to listen to.

XXXIV. Vray dieu d'amours

A woman speaks and confesses her change of heart, but only in the third stanza does she explain that it is because of her lover's unfaithfulness to her. More than

any other song in the manuscript this one is composed of a simple relaxed melody with a minimal accompaniment that becomes more florid only towards the end of the fourth line.

XXXV. Hélas! Je n'ay pas osé dire

This may well be a rondeau with the subsequent stanzas missing but, like No. 24, it gives each line of the poem such different music that formal unity over a full rondeau might be difficult to achieve. 'Faulx Dangier' is a personification of a kind popular from the *Romance of the Rose*, that most widely read of medieval poems in which the lover reaches his 'rose' after encounters with characters such as 'Faulx Semblant' (False Seeming) and 'Raison' (Reason). 'Faulx Dangier' (Sham Aloofness) inspires the lover with totally unwarranted fear.

XXXVI. Or ay je perdu

Again, 'Faulx Dangier' is the main culprit in this song where the two lower parts are, exceptionally, far more florid than the top part. Lines five and six are missing from the manuscript and have been grafted in from other poems of the time: the music is so rich that it seemed a pity to curtail the form for the lack of ten words. 'Fortune' is another personification – that ferocious lady whose wheel can carry its victim up or down unpredictably.

XXXVII. Adieu vous dy

A farewell to the Burgundian capital of Dijon, and in some ways perhaps the least successful song in the collection. The relatively strict imitation at the octave between the two sung parts has none of the rhythmic suppleness that characterizes the finest songs in the repertory. But the ambivalent feelings expressed in the

poem make even this song a satisfying experience.

XXXVIII. Terriblement suis fortune

This is one of the few songs on this collection that is known from sources other than the *Chansonnier Cordiforme*. There are four other sources for the music as well as three more containing the poem and the song was used as the basis of a mass cycle by Barbingant (see No. 24). The change of metre for the second stanza is characteristic of *bergerette* form at that time, just as is the syllabic declamation after the slightly more florid writing in the first stanza. Musically, this is one of the most concentrated songs in the collection with scarcely a note wasted and all the melodic features closely interrelated. A woman speaks.

XXXIX. De mon pouvoir vous veul complaire

A carefully constructed *rondeau* on a topic of contemplation and gentle persuasion. The link between line six and the following refrain is nicely done and the standard delay of the return of the 'b' section (at line eleven) is made more successful both by the contrasted style at the beginning of the 'b' section and by two extra notes at the top of the range kept back until the last line.

XL. Hélas! N'aray je jamais mieulx

Although it appears in only one further source, this *bergerette* must count among the finest songs in the manuscript; and there is even a case for attributing it to Dufay. Its loose but economical texture is very similar to that of several *bergerettes* securely attributed to him. Its oblique and even mystical poem is similarly characteristic of those set by Dufay. By way of exception, there is no abrupt change of style or metre for the second stanza, though the melodic lines here become more irregular in

shape. The poem is perhaps related to that of 'N'aray je jamais mieulx' (No. 25), expressing the same emotions in stronger and more direct terms.

XLI. Quant du dire adieu

The idea of the heart having an existence separate from its owner and retaining a love which the owner knows he must leave is a common one throughout the courtly literature. To judge from its musical style this *bergerette* could well be one of the earliest pieces in the manuscript, and its lines recall the songs that Binchois was writing in the 1430s. Here the poem is complete but the music for the second and third stanzas is lacking so I have composed the missing section of the music – attempting to stay close to the style of Binchois.

XLII. Je ne veis onques la pareille

One of the few songs in the repertory that can be connected with a specific occasion, this was sung at the 'Banquet du faisan' in 1454 when Philip the Good of Burgundy staged a magnificent feast at Lille to celebrate his departure on a crusade to save Constantinople from the Turks. Though the crusade turned back at Regensburg the feast was one of the most famous extravaganzas of the Burgundian court. Of the many manuscripts for the song, one ascribes it to Dufay who was probably not present on the occasion, and one gives it to Binchois who may well have been there even though he had retired from the court chapel a year earlier after a quarter of a century of service. No satisfactory decision has yet been made as to which composer wrote the piece. Certainly the wonderful change in texture at the beginning of the 'b' section (line three) suggests Dufay as the composer.

XLIII. Faites moy sçavoir de la belle

A wistful anonymous song to end the collection. Its simple harmonies and its gentle lilting rhythm suggest that it is fairly early, in any case some time before about 1460 when it was intabulated in the Buxheim keyboard manuscript. The two outer lines contain the melodic peak and contrast with the lower range of the middle lines.

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[1] I. Hora gridar 'oimè'

Hora gridar 'oimè' posso ben io
E consumare in pianti li óchi mei,
Poi che veder più lei
Non posso oimè meschin', come solea.

Hora gridar 'oimè' posso ben io.

O lingua maledetta iniqua e rea
Che stata sei casone de tanto male,
Tu m'ài condotto a tale
Che viver' m'è venuto en dispiacere.

Hora gridar 'oimè' posso ben io.

S'i' non credessi più poder vedere
Come solea el mio caro tesoro,
Cum un capestro d'oro
Al collo finirà la vita mia.

Hora gridar 'oimè' posso ben io.

[2] II. Ben lo sa Dio

Ben lo sa Dio de vergine e pura
Sono e ben fare spero,
Ché fals' infamia non remove el vero.

Se jelsia dà falsa casone,
Non posso contra la Fortuna ria.

Alla vendetta non quero rasono
Ché la virtù sarà la schusa mia.

Ben che'l pensare dolore me sia
[Malgrado il cuor' sincero]
E'l no se passa cussi de legero.

Ben lo sa Dio se vergine e pura
Sono e ben fare spero,
Ché fals' infamia non remove el vero.

[3] III. Dona gentile

Dona gentile e bella come l'oro,
Che sopra le altre portate corona,
Come per l'universo se rasona,

Now indeed can I cry 'alas'
and flood my eyes with tears
for I can no longer see her
as I used to, woe is me.

No indeed can I cry 'alas'.

O accursed tongue, evil and sinful,
that caused me so much pain,
you have brought me to such straits that
life has become a misery.

Now indeed can I cry 'alas'.

If I cannot believe that I shall ever again
see my dear treasure as I used to,
with a golden noose
around my neck my life shall end.

Now indeed can I cry 'alas'.

The Lord knows well that I am a pure maid
and wish to do good,
since false slander does not change the truth.

If jealousy bears false witness against me
I am powerless against evil Fortune.

I seek no justification for vengeance
because virtue shall be my defence.

Although that thought brings me sadness
in spite of my honest heart
it will not pass away so lightly.

The Lord knows well that I am a pure maid
and wish to do good,
since false slander does not change the truth.

Noble lady and fair as gold,
carrying the crown over all others,
as heaven and earth agree,

Datime soccorso, stella, ch'io moro.

Che più non stago en questo purgatorio,
Traquillitate en ver di me Fortuna,
Dona gentile e bella come l'oro,
Che sopra le altre portate corona.

Lasso, io sono de tale martoro
Che vivere non posso salvo in una
Che mi trovo con voi, chiara luna,
Per sempre servire quella ch'io adoro.

Dona gentile e bella come l'oro,
Che sopra le altre portate corona,
Come per l'universo se rasona,
Datime soccorso, stella, ch'io moro.

[4] IV. Zentil madona

Zentil madona, deh, non m'abandonare:
O preziosa gemma, o fior de margherita,
Tu sei quella che tien la mia vita
In tua guardia: deh, non mi far morire,

La mia vita in dolorosi guai finire.
Perché anzi crudele soi de mi enverso?
Tu sai ben che mirando el to bel viso
Tu mi festi di ti enamorare.

[5] V. Chiara Fontana

Chiara fontana de belli costumi
Dentro la quale se vede ogni virtù,
O chiara luce del mio core, tu
Sola mi poi dare morte e salute.

[6] VI. O pelegrina luce (first setting)

O pelegrina luce, o chiara stella,
O solo specchio in cui mia vita jace,
Vedi quest'alma afflitta e tapinella
Che sol' per te languisse e se desface.

[7] VII. O rosa bella

O rosa bella, o dolc' anima mia,
Non me lassar morire, in cortesia!
Ai lasso me dolente, devo finire

give me help, my star, for I die.

That I may stay no longer in this purgatory,
please calm Fortune towards me,
noble lady and fair as gold,
carrying the crown over all others.

Alas, I am in such torment
that I cannot live unless
I am helped by you, fair moon,
always to serve her whom I adore.

Noble lady and fair as gold,
carrying the crown over all others,
as heaven and earth agree,
give me help, my star, for I die.

Gracious lady, oh do not desert me:
O precious jewel, O priceless flower,
you hold my life
in your care: oh do not make me die,

to end my life in sad sorrows.
Why are you so cruel to me?
You know well that admiring your fair looks
You made me fall in love with you.

Limpid fountain of courtly grace
within which all virtue is seen,
O bright light of my heart, you
alone can give me death and salvation.

O wondrous light, O bright star,
O only model in whom my life lies,
look at this afflicted and miserable soul
which destroys itself languishing for you alone.

O fair rose, O my sweet soul,
do not let me die, for pity's sake!
Woe is me, sad one: must I die

Per ben servire e lealment' amare?

O dio d'amor, che pena è quest'amare!
Vede ch'io moro per questa judea.
Seccorime del mio langore:
Cor de cor mio, non me lassar morire.

[8] VIII. La gracia di voi

La gracia de voi, donzela,
Honestà, gentil, garnida,
Mi face membrar di quela
Che face penar mia vida.

Come quer che non pensé
Che l'avess'abandonada,

Ma esta gracia che tiené
Ai mia fede sì blacada.

Che pensé che cuerdes ela
Per gracia di Dio e vida,
Sì mi può membrar di quela
che face penar mia vida.

[9] IX. Perla mia cara

Perla mia cara, o dolce amore,
Tu sei più bella che dir non so,
Sola regina del mio core.

Tu sei madona l'amante mia:
Già da gran tempo, dolce perla bella,
Per te languisco e languiria.

Io sono un picciol to servitore,
Ma tu sei degna, a mio parere,
D'altro gran' regno e gran' signore.

[10] X. Morte mercè

Morte mercè: gentil aquela altera,
Ché'l tempo passa e crudeltà mi sfida
Che senza guida solo mi trovo in guerra.

Amor con l'arco teso el cor m'afferra
Ché rumper non se pò l'aspra cadena
Dal primo jorno astreta,

for having served well and loyally loved?

O god of love, what pain this loving is:
see that I am dying for this traitress.
Help me now from my distress:
heart of my heart, do not let me die.

Your charm, honest, noble
and beautiful lady,
reminds me of her
who makes my life a torment.

So I beg you not to think
that I left her,

but rather that your charm
quite erased that love.

Whatever you think,
by the grace of God,
thus I can remember her
who makes my life a torment.

My dear pearl, oh sweet love,
you are fairer than I can say,
only queen of my heart.

You, lady, are my love:
for a long time, my fair pearl,
I have languished and shall continue to do so.

I am the least of your servants,
but you are worthy, in my opinion,
of another kingdom and a greater lord.

Pity me, death, you noble eagle,
for time passes and cruelty defies me
so that I find myself alone and helpless in strife.

Love with his bow stretched grasps my heart
that cannot break the harsh chain,
taut since the first day,

Che me conduce a sì crudel martire.

Amore m'asal': credendo a lui fugire,
Cercando scampo mi ritrovo in foco:
A poco a poco moro e vivo torno,

Sperando ardendo ormai di jorno in jorno,
Lieto vederme sol' con dolce riso.

Da poi che m'à conquiso,
Mostrami crudo e non mi val difesa.

[11] XI. Finir voglio la mia vita

Finir voglio la mia vita
Con pianti, con dolore
Da poi che'l mio signore

M'ha tradita:
Lassa mi poverella
Che m'ha lassata trista
Tapinella.

[12] XII. O pelegrina luce (second setting)

O pelegrina luce, o chiara stella,
O solo specchio in cui mia vita jace,
Vedi quest'alma afflitta e tapinella
Che sol' per te languisse e se desface.
Porzime adiuto, o pelegrina bella:
Se non m'adiuto, io languisco e moro,
O caro tesoro.

[13] XIII. O meschin' innamorati

O meschin' innamorati,
Io me meto ja con vui:
Quanto male avemo nui
Che ogni dì semo in danza.

Nostra fortuna se monstra
Come a ceco, ché non vede;

O quanto caro ne costa
Desiderando vedere.

Per una hora de piacere
Mille jorni de dolore:
Quanto male avemo nui
Che ogni dì semo in danza.

which brings me to such cruel destruction.

Love assaults me: thinking I could flee it,
searching escape, I find myself back in the fire:
slowly I die while always returning to life,

hoping, as I daily burn,
to find solace in that sweet smile.
Since love has conquered me
he is harsh to me and I cannot defend myself.

I wish to end my life
of sighs and sadness
because my lover
has betrayed me:
alas, poor girl that I am,
since he has left me sad
and wretched.

O wondrous light, O bright star,
O only model in whom my life lies,
look at this afflicted and miserable soul
that destroys itself languishing for you alone.
Grant me help, O strange beauty:
if you do not help me I shall languish
and die, O dear treasure.

O wretched lovers,
I count myself among you now:
how much pain we have
when every day it makes us dance

Our fate appears
as to a blind man who cannot see;

Oh how much it costs us
wishing to see.

For one hour of pleasure
a thousand days of sadness:
how much pain we have
when every day it makes us dance.

[1] XIV. Comme ung homme desconforté

Comme ung homme desconforté
 Qui de longtems a transporté
 Son cuer en paine et en destresse,
 Suis pour l'amour de ma maistresse
 A qui me suis du tout donné.

Se par elle n'est conforté
 Du grief torment qu'il a porté
 Languir me fauldra en tristesse,
 Comme ung homme desconforté
 Qui de long temps a transporté
 Son cuer en paine et en destresse.

Je espoire au fort que Francheté
 Fera muer sa volunté
 Tant que Pitié vers moy se adresse
 Veu que tousjours j'ay pris l'adresse
 D'Amours et m'y suis deporté.

Comme ung homme desconforté
 Qui de longtems a transporté
 Son cuer en paine et en destresse,
 Suis pour l'amour de ma maistresse
 A qui me suis de tout donné

[2] XV. S'il vous plaist que vostre je soye

S'il vous plaist que vostre je soye,
 Pensez que bien vous ameray
 Et loyalement vous serviray
 Tant que vivray ou que je soye.

Du tout seray remply de joye
 Et jamais aultre ne querray
 S'il vous plaist que vostre je soye:
 Pensez que bien vous ameray.

De tous biens auray la montjoye,
 Et ne croyz que jamais fauldray
 A vous amer, ou que seray,
 Aultrement je me defferoye.

I am like a dispirited man
 who for a long time has carried
 his heart in anguish and distress;
 and all for the love of my mistress
 to whom I have given myself entirely.

If (my heart) is not relieved by her of
 the deep torment it has borne
 I must languish in sadness,
 like a dispirited man
 who for a long time has carried
 his heart in anguish and distress.

I earnestly hope that Noble Behaviour
 will change her mind
 so that Pity turns towards me,
 considering that I have always followed
 the path of Love and frequented it.

I am like a dispirited man
 who for a long time has carried
 his heart in anguish and distress;
 and all for the love of my mistress
 to whom I have given myself entirely.

If you wish me to be yours
 remember that I shall love you well
 and serve you faithfully
 as long as I live, wherever I may be.

I shall be entirely filled with joy
 and shall never desire another
 if you wish me to be yours:
 remember that I shall love you well.

I shall have all I wanted
 and I do not believe I shall ever cease
 loving you, wherever I may be,
 otherwise I would kill myself.

S'il vous plaist que vostre je soye,
 Pensez que bien vous ameray
 Et loyalement vous serviray
 Tant que vivray ou que je soye.

[3] XVI. L'autre jour par ung matin

L'autre jour, par ung matin,
 Esbatre m'en aloye;
 Je trovay en mon chemin
 Pastoure simple et coye
 Qui chantoit et menoit joye
 De ce qu'elle oyt chanter
 Robinet en ma la voye:
 'La triory, la virredon,
 Falory dondaine'.

Je luy prins a demander,
 Pour tant que je l'amoie:
 "Me voudriés vous point amer
 Et vostre je seroye,
 Mon flajol vous donneroye,
 Ce c'estoist vostre plaisier,
 Et de cuer je chanteroye:
 La triory, la virredon,
 Falory dondaine'.

'Par ma foy, mon bel amy,
 Amer ne vous pourroie
 Ne tous les galans aussi
 Du pais de Savoye.
 Voicy Robin qui me esjoye:
 De son flajolet joly
 Veult jouer par sa montjoye,
 La triory la virredon,
 Falory dondaine.'

[4] XVII. J'ay pris amours

J'ay pris amours a ma devise
 Pour conquerir joyeuseté:
 Eureux seray en cest esté
 Se puis venir a mon emprise.

If you wish me to be yours
 remember that I shall love you well
 and serve you faithfully
 as long as I live, wherever I may be.

The other day I went out
 early to disport myself.
 I found as I went
 a simple and gentle shepherdess
 who sang and rejoiced
 at hearing Robinet
 as he came along:
 'La triory, la virredon,
 Falory dondaine'.

I began to ask her,
 because I loved her so:
 'Would you not wish to love me
 and I would be yours?
 I would give you my flageolet,
 if that was what you wanted,
 and I would sing from my heart:
 'La triory, la virredon,
 Falory dondaine'.

'Indeed, my handsome friend,
 I could love neither you
 nor all the gallants
 in the land of Savoy.
 Here is Robin who delights me
 with his pretty flageolet
 he wishes to play for his enjoyment
 'La triory, la virredon,
 Falory dondaine'.

I have chosen 'Love' as my emblem
 to win happiness:
 I shall be happy this summer
 if I can reach my goal.

S'il est aulcun qui m'en desprise
Il me doit estre pardonné!

J'ay pris amours a ma devise
Pour conquerir joyeuseté.

Il me semble que c'est la guise
Qui n'a rien, il est debouté
Et n'est de personne honoré.
N'est ce pas donc droit que je y vise?

J'ay pris amours a ma devise
Pour conquerir joyeuseté:
Eureux seray en cest esté
Se puis venir a mon emprise.

[5] XVIII. L'autre d'antan l'autrier passa

L'autre d'antan l'autrier passa
Et en passant me transperça
D'ung regart forgié a Millan,
Qui m'a mis en l'arriere ban,
Tant malvais brassin me brassa.
L'autre d'antan, l'autrier passa.

Par tel façon m'espicaça
Que de ses gaiges me cassa
Mais, par Dieu, elle fist son dan:
L'autre d'antan l'autrier passa
Et en passant me transperça
D'ung regart forgié a Millan.

Puis après nostre amour cessa
Car onques puis qu'elle danssa,
L'autre d'antan, l'autre d'antan,
Je n'eu ne bon jour, ne bon an,
Tant de mal en moy amassa.
L'autre d'antan, l'autrier passa.

L'autre d'antan, l'autrier passa
Et en passant me transperça
D'ung regart forgié a Millan,
Qui m'a mis en l'arriere ban,
Tant malvais brassin me brassa.
L'autre d'antan, l'autrier passa.

If anyone should value me less
for it I must be forgiven:
I have chosen 'Love' as my emblem
to win happiness.

I think this is the way of things:
he who has no love is rejected
and is respected by nobody.
So is it not right that I strive for it?

I have chosen 'Love' for my emblem
To win happiness:
I shall be happy this summer
if I can reach my goal.

Some time ago somebody passed by,
and in passing pierced me
with a look forged in Milan
which made me the least of her suitors,
she got me into such a mess,
some time ago when somebody passed by.

She embraced me in such a way
that she dismissed me from her following
and, by God, she ruined me:
some time ago somebody passed by,
and in passing pierced me
with a look forged in Milan.

Then after our loving had ended,
never since she danced off
(some time ago, some time ago),
have I had one good day or one good year,
such evil did she bring me.
Some time ago somebody passed by.

Some time ago somebody passed by
and in passing pierced me
with a look forged in Milan
which put me into her power,
she got me into such a mess,
some time ago when somebody passed by.

[6] XIX. De tous biens plaine

De tous biens plaine est ma maistresse,
Chascun luy doit tribu de honneur,
Car assovie est en valeur
Autant que jamais fut deesse.

En la voiant j'ay tel lyesse
Que c'est paradis en mon cuer:
De tous biens plaine est ma maistresse,
Chascun luy doit tribu de honneur.

Je n'ai cure d'autre richesse
Sinon d'estre son serviteur;
Et pour ce qu'il n'est rien meilleur
En mon mot porterais sans cess:

De tous biens plaine est ma maistresse,
Chascun luy doit tribu de honneur,
Car assovie est en valeur
Autant que jamais fut deesse.

[7] XX. J'ay moins de bien

J'ay moins de bien que s'il n'en estoit point,
Ainsi le veult ma dame et ma maistresse;
Mais je scay s'elle veult qu'en destresse
Use mes jours demorant en tel point.

S'en tel estat longuement je demeure
Morir me fault, eschaper je n'en puis;

Mais pensez bien que toujours je labeure
De mectre fin a mes tres grieux ennuys.

D'estre dehait je ne suis pas en point
Se confort n'ay dont le mal qui m'opresse
Deffiner puist et aussi la tristesse
Qui m'a fait dire pour ce que trop me point:

J'ay moins de bien que s'il n'en estoit point,
Ainsi le veult ma dame et ma maistresse;
Mais je scay s'elle veult qu'en destresse
Use mes jours demorant en tel point.

My mistress has every quality
and everyone owes her homage,
for she is as full of goodness
as ever any goddess was.

Seeing her gives me such delight
that there is a paradise in my heart:
my mistress has every quality
and everyone owes her homage.

I care for no other wealth
than to be her servant;
and because nothing is better
my words shall always be:

my mistress has every quality
and everyone owes her homage
for she is as full of goodness
as ever any goddess was.

I have less reward than if I had nothing,
for my lady and mistress wishes it so;
but I do not know whether she wishes me to waste
the rest of my days languishing in such distress.

If I remain long in that condition
I must die, I cannot escape it;

But bear in mind that I shall always toil
to put an end to my deep sorrows.

I am not ready to be cheerful
if I have no comfort to end the sickness
which oppresses me and the sadness
which has made me say, because it stings me too much:

I have less reward than if I had nothing,
for my lady and mistress wishes it so;
But I do not know whether she wishes me to waste
the rest of my days languishing in such distress.

[8] XXI. Vostre bruit et vostre grant fame

Vostre bruit et vostre grant fame
Me fait vous amer plus que fame
Qui de tous biens soit assouvie.
Ne ja d'autre servir envie
N'auray plus que de rendre l'ame.

En rien ne craing reproche de ame,
Je vous tien et tiendray ma dame
En accroissant toute ma vie.
Vostre bruit et vostre grant fame
Me fait vous amer plus que fame
Qui de tous biens soit assouvie.

Et pourtant donc ce que je clame
C'est vostre grace sans nul blâme,
Au moins que je l'ay deservie
Ne veullés pas que je desvie
Car vous perdrîés part du royaume.

Vostre bruit et vostre grant fame
Me fait vous amer plus que fame
Qui de tous biens soit assouvie,
Ne ja d'autre servir envie
N'auray plus que de rendre l'ame.

[9] XXII. Cent mille escus

Cent mille escus quant je vouldroye
Et paradis quant je morroye,
Plus ne sçauroie souhaidier,
Si non user de mon mestier
Aucune fois quant je pourroye.

De rien je ne me soussieroye
Mais les dames je festieroye
Se je avoye pour moy aidier
Cent mille escus quant je vouldroye
Et paradis quant je morroye,
Plus ne sçauroie souhaidier.

Service de court laisseroye
Car on y a plus deul que joye;
Plus ne m'en vouldroye empeschier

Your repute and your great fame
make me love you more than any other woman,
however much endowed with qualities,
and I shall never wish to serve another
any more that I would wish to die.

I do not fear what anyone says:
I consider you my lady and shall continue to
do so increasingly all my life.
Your repute and your great fame
make me love you more than any other woman,
however much endowed with qualities.

Yet that which I ask for
is your immaculate grace,
so at least if I have merited it
do not wish me to die
for you will lose your share of the Kingdom (of heaven).

Your repute and your great fame
make me love you more than any other woman,
however much endowed with qualities,
and I shall never wish to serve another
any more that I would wish to die.

A hundred thousand crowns when I want them
and paradise when I die;
I could not wish for more
except to exercise my craft
whenever I can.

I would worry about nothing
except celebrating the ladies
if I had as my help
a hundred thousand crowns when I want them
and paradise when I die.
I could not wish for more.

I would leave courtly service
for that brings more sadness than joy;
I would not wish to be caught up any more

Mais en brief du tout despechier
Se j'avoye en une monnoye

Cent mille escus quant je vouldroye
Et paradis quant je morroye.
Plus ne sçauroie souhaidier,
Si non user de mon mestier
Aucune fois quant je pourroye.

[10] XXIII. Le Souvenir de vous me tue

Le souvenir de vous me tue,
Mon seul bien, quant je ne vous voy,
Car je vous jure sus ma foy
Que sans vous ma joye est perdue.

Quant vous estes hors de me veue
Je me plaing et dis a par moy:
Le souvenir de vous me tue,
Mon seul bien, quant je ne vous voy.

Seulle demeure despourveue,
De nully confort ne reçoï;
Ce deul porte sans faire effroy
Jusques a vostre revenue.

Le souvenir de vous me tue,
Mon seul bien, quant je ne vous voy,
Car je vous jure sus ma foy
Que sans vous ma joye est perdue.

[11] XXIV. L'omme bany de sa plaisance

L'omme bany de sa plaisance,
Vuydé de joye et de leesce,
Comblé de deul et de tristesse
Suis sans nul espoir d'allegance.

Aspre rigueur ma mort avance
Car desespoir jamais ne lesse
L'omme bany de sa plaisance,
Vuydé de joye et de leesce.

Fortune m'a sans ordonnance
Mis en exil par grant rudesse,
Tousjours me fait des maux sans cesse.

but quickly cut free
if I had in cash

a hundred thousand crowns when I want them
and paradise when I die.
I could not wish for more
except to exercise my craft
whenever I can.

The memory of you kills me,
my only joy, when I do not see you,
for I swear to you on my faith
that without you my happiness is lost.

When you are out of my sight
I weep and say to myself:
"The memory of you kills me,
my only joy, when I do not see you".

I remain alone and deprived,
I receive comfort from nobody;
I bear this sadness quietly
until your return.

The memory of you kills me,
my only joy, when I do not see you,
for I swear to you on my faith
that without you my happiness is lost.

The man banished from his happiness,
deprived of joy and delight,
overcome with grief and sadness
I am, without any hope of respite.

Bitter constraint brings my death nearer,
for hopelessness never leaves
the man banished from his happiness,
deprived of joy and delight.

Fortune has without authority
brutally exiled me,
has always given me ceaseless ills.

Partout me appelle par oultrance

L'omme bany de sa plaïssance,
Vuydé de joye et de leesce,
Comblé de deul et de tristesse
Suis sans nul espoir d'allegance.

[12] XXV. N'aray je jamais mieulx

N'aray je jamais mieulx j'ay?
Suis je la ou je demoray,
M'amour et toute ma plaïssance?
N'arez vous jamais cognoissance
Que je suis vostre et le seray?

Ne faites sus moy plus d'essay,
Car vous cognoissés bien de vray
Que je suis mené a oultrance.

N'aray je jamais mieulx que j'ay?
Suis je la ou je demoray,
M'amour et toute ma plaïssance?

Je me rens et si me rendray.
Aultre deffense n'y metray,
Car vous avez trop de puissance
Et pover de prendre vengeance;
Mais dites moy si le scauray:

N'aray je jamais mieulx j'ay?
Suis je la ou je demoray,
M'amour et toute ma plaïssance?
N'arez vous jamais cognoissance
Que je suis vostre et le seray?

[13] XXVI. Le serviteur hault guerdonné

Le serviteur hault guerdonné,
Assouvy et bien fortuné,
L'eslite des eueux de France
Me treuve par la pourvoiance
D'ung tout seul mot bien ordonné.

Il me semble a prime estre né,
Car après deul desordonné
Suys fait par nouvelle aliance
Le serviteur hault guerdonné,

So everywhere, in desperation, I call myself

the man banished from his happiness,
deprived of joy and delight;
overcome with grief and sadness,
I am without any hope of respite.

Shall I never improve my lot?
Am I where I was,
my love and all my joy?
Will you never acknowledge
that I am yours and will remain so?

Try me no more,
for you know full well
that I am driven to the extreme.
Shall I never improve my lot?
Am I where I was,
my love and all my joy?

I give myself and shall continue to do so;
nor will I erect any defence,
for you have too much power
and ability to take revenge;
but tell me if I shall ever know:

Shall I never improve my lot?
Am I where I was,
my love and all my joy?
Will you never acknowledge
that I am yours and will remain so?

The highly rewarded servant,
satisfied and fortunate,
the first among France's happy men
I find myself, as a result of
a single word well placed.

I feel as though I am new born,
for after endless sorrow
I have become, because of a new liaison,
the highly rewarded servant,

Assouvy et bien fortuné,
L'eslite des eueux de France.

Je estoie ung homme habandonné
Et le dolent infortuné
Lors quant vostre humble bienveillance
Voult confermer mon esperance,
Quant ce beau mot me fut donné.

Le serviteur hault guerdonné,
Assouvy et bien fortuné,
L'eslite des eueux de France
Me treuve par la pourvoiance
D'ung tout seul mot bien ordonné.

[14] XXVII. Fortune, par ta cruauté

Fortune, par ta cruauté,
Pour deul ou pur adversité,
Ne pour douleur que tu m'avanches,
Je ne perdray ma pacience
Et ne penseray lascheté.

Plus tu as contre moy heurté,
Moins suis doubteux, plus ay seurté
Car j'ay le baston d'esperance,
Fortune, par ta cruauté,
Pour deul ou pur adversité,
Ne pour douleur que tu m'avanches

J'ay bien maulgré ta malheureté,
J'ay ris de ta diversité,
J'ay plaisir de ton actavance,
J'ay fierté contre ta puissance,
Car tout me vient de loyauté.

Fortune, par ta cruauté,
Pour deul ou pour adversité,
Ne pour douleur que tu m'avanches
Je ne perdray ma pacience
Et ne penseray lascheté.

[15] XXVIII. Est il mercy du quoy l'on peust finer?

Est il mercy de quoy l'on peust finer?
Est il pitié qu'on peust en vous trouver?

satisfied and fortunate,
the first among France's happy men.

I was a lost man
and the unfortunate lamenting
when your humble good will
deigned to confirm my hope
and that fair word was given to me.

The highly rewarded servant,
satisfied and fortunate,
the first among France's happy men
I find myself, as a result of
a single word well placed.

Fortune, by your cruelty,
for sorrow or for adversity,
nor for the sadness that you bring me
I shall not lose my patience
and shall not think of giving up.

The more you have battered against me
the less I doubt, the more I am sure,
for hope shall be my support,
Fortune, by your cruelty,
for sorrow or for adversity,
nor for the sadness that you bring me.

I am well in spite of your ill-will,
I laugh at your unpredictability,
I have pleasure at your persistence
I have pride against your power,
for everything comes to me from loyalty.

Fortune, by your cruelty,
for sorrow or for adversity,
nor for the sadness that you bring me
I shall not lose my patience
and shall not think of giving up.

Is there any mercy to be gained?
Is there compassion to be found in you?

Est il m'amour nulle rien suffisante?
Est il chose tant soit forte ou puissante
Dont je sceusse vostre amour recouvrer?

Pour fondre tout en larmes de plorer,
Ne pour paine que je sceusse endurer,
Est il chose dont vous feussiez contente?
Est il mercy de quoy l'on peust finer?
Est il pitié qu'on peust en vous trouver?
Est il m'amour nulle rien suffisante?

Quel remede puis a mon fait donner
Quant je voy bien que par trop vous amer
Il ne s'ensuit que ma mort evidente
Et toutesfois pour douleur que je sente
Je ne m'en puis tant soit peu destourner.

Est il mercy de quoy l'on peust finer?
Est il pitié qu'on peust en vous trouver?
Est il m'amour nulle rien suffisante?
Est il chose tant soit forte ou puissante
Dont je sceusse vostre amour recouvrer?

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[1] XXIX. Comme femme desconfortee

Comme femme desconfortee
Sur toutes aultres esgaree,
Qui n'ay jour de ma vie espoir
D'en estre en nul temps consolee,
Mais a mon mal plus agavee,
Desire la mort main et soir.

Je l'ay tant de fois regrettee
Puis qu'elle m'a ma joye hostee;
Doy je donc icy remanoir
Comme femme desconfortee
Sur toutes aultres esgaree,
Qui n'ay jour de ma vie espoir?

Bien doy maudire la journee
Que ma mere fist la portee
De moy, pour tant deul recevoir;
Car toute douleur assemblée

Is my love not sufficient?
Is there anything strong or powerful enough
to enable me to regain your love?

By breaking into floods of tears
or by enduring any pain,
is there anything that would satisfy you?
Is there any mercy to be gained?
Is there compassion to be found in you?
Is my love not sufficient?

What help can I give my cause
when I see clearly that loving you too much
only brings on inevitable death,
and, all the same, whatever pain I might feel
I cannot deflect the slightest bit.

Is there any mercy to be gained?
Is there compassion to be found in you?
Is my love not sufficient?
Is there anything strong or powerful enough
to enable me to regain your love?

Like a hapless lady,
lost above all others
without ever any hope
of consolation
but more overwhelmed by my ills,
morning and evening I desire death.

I have so often longed for Death
who took my joy away;
must I therefore stay here
like a hapless lady,
lost above all others
without ever any hope?

Well might I curse the day
when my mother bore me
to receive such sadness
for all sadness is united

Est en moy, femme maleuree,
Donc j'ay bien cause de douloir

Comme femme desconfortee
Sur toutes aultres esgaree,
Qui n'ay jour de ma vie espoir
D'en estre en nul temps consolee,
Mais a mon mal plus agavee,
Desire la mort main et soir.

[2] XXX. Tout a par moy

Tout a par moy affin qu'on ne me voye,
Si desplaisant que plus je ne pourroye,
Je me tiens seul comme une ame esbaye,
Faisant regrés de ma dolente vie
Et de Fortune, qu'ainsi me guerroye.

Pensés quel deul mon desplaisir m'envoye,
Car j'ay des maux assés et grant montjoye
Tant que ne craing que brief je ne me occye.
Tout a part moy affin qu'on ne me voye,
Si desplaisant que plus je ne pourroye,
Je me tiens seul comme une ame esbauye.

Mais nonobstant se morir j'en devoie
A la poursuite de vous servie, ma joye,
Et feussiez vous plus fort, mon ennemye,
Je n'ay pouvoir qui jamais vous oublie,
Car c'est mon sort qu'il fault que vostre soye.

Tout a par moy affin qu'on ne me voye,
Si desplaisant que plus je ne pourroye,
Je me tiens seul comme une ame esbaye,
Faisant regrés de ma dolente vie
Et de Fortune, qu'ainsi me guerroye.

[3] XXXI. Ma bouche rit

Ma bouche rit et ma pensee pleure,
Mon oeil s'esjoye et mon cuer maudit l'eure
Qu'il eut le bien sa sancté déchasse,
Et le plaisir qui la mort luy pourchasse,
Sans reconfort qui m'ayde ne sequeure.

in me, unhappy woman,
wherefore I have reason to lament

like a hapless lady,
lost above all others
without any hope
of consolation
but more overwhelmed by my ills.
Morning and evening I desire Death.

All by myself so as not to be seen,
as discontented as one can be,
I keep myself alone like an afflicted soul,
bemoaning my sad life
and Fortune who assails me thus.

Think what sorrow my sadness sends me,
for I have enough ills in great quantity
so that I fear I shall soon kill myself.
All by myself so as not to be seen,
as discontented as one can be,
I keep myself alone like an afflicted soul.

But nevertheless if I had to die from
aiming to serve you, my joy,
and if you, my enemy, were stronger,
I am not able ever to forget you
for it is my fate that I must be yours.

All by myself so as not to be seen,
as discontented as one can be,
I keep myself alone like an afflicted soul,
bemoaning my sad life
and Fortune who assails me thus.

My mouth laughs and my mind weeps,
my eye rejoices and my heart curses the day
when it had the luck that drives away its
health and the pleasure which brings it
death without comfort to help or succour me.

Ha! cuer pervers, faulsaire et mensongier,
Dictes comment avés osé songier
De ainsî faulser ce que m'avés promis.

Puisqu'en ce point, vous vous volés vengier,
Pensés bientost de ma vie abregier,
Vivre ne puis au point ou m'avez mis.

Vostre pitié veult donques que je meure,
Mais rigueur veult que vivant je demeure,
Ainsî meurs vif et en vivant trespasse,
Mais pour celer le mal qui ne se passe
Et pour couvrir le deul ou je labeure,

Ma bouche rit et ma pensee pleure,
Mon oeil s'esjoye et mon cuer maudit l'eure
Qu'il eut le bien sa sanceté déchasse,
Et le plaisir qui la mort luy pourchasse,
Sans reconfort qui m'ayde ne sequeure.

[4] XXXII. Mon seul plaisir, ma douce joye

Mon seul plaisir, ma douce joye,
La maistresse de mon espoir,
J'ay tel desir de vous reveoir
Que mander ne le vous sçauröye.

Helas! Pensez que ne pouröye
Nesung bien sans vous recevoir,
Mon seul plaisir, ma douce joye,
La maistresse de mon espoir.

Et quant desplaiser me gueröye
Souvente fois a son pövoir,
Et je veul reconfort avoir,
Esperance vers vous m'envöye,

Mon seul plaisir, ma douce joye,
La maistresse de mon espoir:
J'ay tel desir de vous reveoir
Que mander ne le vous sçauröye.

[5] XXXIII. Ma bouche plaint

Ma bouche plaint les pleurs de ma pensee,
Et la douleur que amours m'a pourchassee;

Oh perverse heart, deceitful and lying,
tell me how you dared to think of
thus breaking your promise to me.

Since you wish to avenge yourself in this way
think soon of shortening my life,
for I cannot live in the state you have left me.

Your pity wishes me to die,
but cruelty wishes me to stay alive,
so I must die alive and living die,
but only to conceal the unceasing pain
and to cover the sadness in which I labour,

My mouth laughs and my mind weeps,
my eye rejoices and my heart curses the day
when it had the luck that drives away its
health and the pleasure which brings it
death without comfort to help or succour me.

My only pleasure, my sweet joy,
the mistress of my hope,
such is my desire to see you again
that I cannot put it into words.

Alas, consider that I cannot
receive any joy without you,
my only pleasure, my sweet joy,
the mistress of my hope.

And when displeasure assails me
often to its utmost,
and I wish to be comforted,
hope sends me to you,

my only pleasure, my sweet joy,
the mistress of my hope:
such is my desire to see you again
that I cannot put it into words.

My mouth laments the tears of my thoughts
and the sadness which love has brought me;

Mon cuer maudit de mes yeulx l'entreprise,
Puisque celle ma loyauté mesprise
Et par rigueur mercy a deschasee.

[6] XXXIV. Vray dieu d'amours

Vray dieu d'amours qui vrais amans resjoye,
Je vous requier qu'il me soit pardonné
Se j'ay celuy du tout habandonné
Que tant ou plus que moy amer souloie.

J'ay veu le temps que tres fort je l'amöye
Et que mon cuer je lui avöie donné.

Vray dieu d'amours qui vrais amans resjoye,
Je vous requier qu'il me soit pardonné.

Or desormais amer ne le pouröye
Car faulsement s'est vers moy gouverné
Comme ung homme du tout desordonné:
Certes nul jour bien je ne luy feröye.

Vray dieu d'amours qui vrais amans resjoye,
Je vous requier qu'il me soit pardonné
Se j'ay celuy du tout habandonné
Que tant ou plus que moy amer souloie.

[7] XXXV. Hélas! Je n'ay pas osé dire

Hélas! Je n'ay pas osé dire
Adieu ainsî que je solöye
Pour Faulx Danger qui tout desvoie
De quoy mon povre cuer meurt de ire.

[8] XXXVI. Or ay je perdu

Or ay je perdu mes amours
Or ay je perdu toute joye;
Je ne congnois pas plus que voye
Sinon de mes yeulx le rebours.

[Je regrette mes dolens jours,
Pour ce volentiers fin prendröye:]
Or ay je perdu mes amours,
Or ay je perdu toute joye.

Fortune, mere de dölours,
Ne veult pas qu'en espoir je soye,

my heart curses the ambition of my eyes,
for my lady despises my loyalty
and has harshly chased pity from me.

True god of love who gladdens true lovers,
I beg you to pardon me
if I have entirely abandoned him
whom I used to love as much as myself or more.

There was a time when I loved him deeply
and gave him my heart.
True god of love who gladdens true lovers,
I beg you to pardon me.

Henceforth I can no longer love him
for he has been false with me
like a totally unprincipled man:
certainly I shall never do good for him.

True god of love who gladdens true lovers,
I beg you to pardon me
if I have entirely abandoned him
whom I used to love as much as myself and more.

Alas, I have not dared to say
farewell as I used to
because of Faulx Dangier who disrupts
everything and has made my poor heart die with anger.

Now I have lost my love,
now I have lost all joy;
I no longer recognise anything I see
except through the perversity of my eyes.

[I lament my unhappy days
and will willingly make an end:]
now I have lost my love,
now I have lost all joy.

Fortune, the mother of sadness,
does not wish me to live in hope,

Si prie Dieu que a mon fait pourvoye
De ce Faulx Dangier et ses tours.

Or ay je perdu mes amours,
Or ay je perdu toute joye;
Je ne congnois pas plus que voye
Sinon de mes yeulx le rebours.

[9] XXXVII. Adieu vous dy

Adieu vous dy l'espero de ma jonesse,
Adieu, adieu, le tresor de liesse,
Helas! adieu, mon soulas et deduyt;
Adieu Dijon, ou je me suis deduit,
Esperant grace de ma chere maistresse.

Quant vers vous n'ay plus sentir ne adresse
D'aulcung plaisir, et puis que je vous lesse
Pour le present, puisque ainsi suis reduit,
Adieu vous dy l'espero de ma jonesse,
Adieu, adieu, le tresor de liesse,
Helas! adieu, mon soulas et deduyt.

Le departir de vous tant fort me blesse
Pour la grant joye dont j'ay trouvé largesse
Jouer, galler tout le jour et la nuyt,
Faire grant chere tousjours menant grant bruit;
Mais maintenant, puisqu'il faut que je cesse,

Adieu vous dy l'espero de ma jonesse,
Adieu, adieu, le tresor de liesse,
Helas! adieu, mon soulas et deduyt;
Adieu Dijon, ou je me suis deduit,
Esperant grace de ma chere maistresse.

[10] XXXVIII. Terriblement suis fortunee

Terriblement suis fortunee
Et de grans douleurs atornee,
Puisque celuy
A qui me suis du tout fermee,
Plus que a nully,
M'a de tous pouns habandonnee
Et pris aultry.

so I pray God to help me
against this Faulx Dangier and his tricks.

Now I have lost my love,
now I have lost all joy;
I no longer recognise anything I see
except through the perversity of my eyes.

I bid you farewell the hope of my youth,
farewell, farewell, the store of happiness,
alas farewell, my comfort and pleasure;
farewell Dijon where I have enjoyed myself,
hoping for grace from my dear mistress.

When I have neither path to you nor access
to any pleasure, and since I leave you
for now, because I am reduced to this,
I bid you farewell, the hope of my youth,
farewell, farewell, the store of happiness,
alas, farewell, my comfort and pleasure.

Leaving you wounds me so strongly
because of the great joy which I have found in such quantity
playing, dancing all the day and night,
always to revel making a great noise;
but now, because I must stop,

I bid you farewell, the hope of my youth,
farewell, farewell, the store of happiness,
alas, farewell, my comfort and pleasure;
farewell Dijon where I have enjoyed myself,
hoping for grace from my dear mistress.

I have been most unlucky
and surrounded with great sadness,
for he
to whom I am entirely bound
more than to anybody
has completely rejected me
and taken another.

Il me semble qu'il a mal fait
S'il a deffait
Ung cuer qui luy veult tant de bien:
Par luy povoit estre reffait,
Mais tant a fait,
Que de luy certes n'est plus rien.

De malle heure fus je oncques nee,
Car de tous temps toute donnee
Me estoie a luy;
Or me voy je tant ravallee,
Que presque suy
De tous mes cinq sens forcenee,
Et meurs d'enuy.

Terriblement suis fortunee
Et de grans douleurs atornee,
Puisque celuy
A qui me suis du tout fermee,
Plus que a nully
M'a de tous pouns habandonnee
Et pris aultry.

[11] XXXIX. De mon pouvoir vous veul complaire

De mon pouvoir vous veul complaire
Aussi vous desclarer mon deul.
Aultre que vous jamais ne veul
Pour advocat ne secretaire.

On se en a desormais beau taire
Car tant que pourray ouvrir l'oeul
De mon pouvoir vous veul complaire
Aussi vous desclarer mon deul.

Trop se meslent de fort affaire
S'ilz cuident rompre mon acuel;
Faites moy tousjours bon recueil
Et au surplus me laissez faire.

De mon pouvoir vous veul complaire
Aussi vous desclarer mon deul.
Aultre que vous jamais ne veul
Pour advocat ne secretaire.

It seems to me that he has sinned
if he has destroyed
a heart that wishes him so much good:
it could be healed by him,
but he has done so much
that it is indeed finished.

I was born at an evil hour,
for I had always given myself
entirely to him;
now I see myself thus thrown down
so that I am almost
out of my five senses
and die of anguish.

I have been most unlucky
and surrounded with great sadness,
for he
to whom I am entirely bound
more than to anybody
has completely rejected me
and taken another.

I wish to please you as much as I can
and to tell you of my anguish;
I shall never wish for another than you
as advocate or confidante.

There is no point in being quiet now
for as long as I live
I wish to please you as much as I can
and to tell you of my anguish.

They are taking on too much
if they try to stop me receiving you;
always give me a good reception
and otherwise leave the rest to me.

I wish to please you as much as I can
and to tell you of my anguish;
I shall never wish for another than you
as advocate or confidante.

12 XL. Hélas! n'aray je jamais mieulx

Helas! n'aray je jamais mieulx?
Seray je tousjours en tristesse?
N'est il moyen que quelque adresse
Departist le deul de mes yeulx.

Est il dit que mon aventure
Presente et dure
Me en tiegne la plus doloieuse?

Faut il que tel meschef j'endure
Et vive et dure
Paine grieve et langoreuse?

De ces meschefs me durent tieulx.
La mort depressera en presse
Mon cuer qui de crier ne cesse
Piteusement: 'ouvrez les yeulx!'

Helas! n'aray je jamais mieulx?
Seray je tousjours en tristesse?
N'est il moyen que quelque adresse
Departist le deul de mes yeulx?

13 XLI. Quant du dire adieu

Quant du dire adieu me souvient,
Et que departir me convient
Du regard de vous, ma maistresse,
Helas! et quel despaisir est ce?

Mon cuer, certes, point n'y viendra,
Il demourra, je le scé bien:

Jamais de vous ne partira;
Il sera plus vostre que mien.

Car de vous tout le bien luy vient
Ne d'autre que de vous ne tient:
Jamais ne quiert aultre richesse
Mais le partement trop me blesse.

Quant de dire adieu me souvient,
Et que departir me convient
Du regard de vous, ma maistresse,
Helas! et quel despaisir est ce?

Alas, shall I see no improvement?
Shall I always be in sadness?
Is there no chance of a way
to remove the sadness from my eyes?

Must my continuous
and harsh fortunes
keep me the saddest of all?

Must I endure such misadventure
and live enduring
grievous and languorous pain?

Those calamities stay with me.
Death will quickly squeeze
my heart which ceaselessly cries
piteously: 'open your eyes!'

Alas, shall I see no improvement?
Shall I always be in sadness?
Is there no chance of a way
to remove the sadness from my eyes?

When I think of saying farewell
and having to depart
from your sight, my lady
alas, what displeasure it is.

My heart will certainly not come away:
it will remain, I know well:

it will never leave you;
it will belong more to you than to me.

For so much good comes to it from you
such as it does not receive from elsewhere:
it will never desire other riches,
but the parting deeply wounds me.

When I think of saying farewell
and having to depart
from your sight, my mistress,
alas, what displeasure it is.

14 XLII. Je ne veis onques la pareille

Je ne veis onques la pareille
De vous, ma gracieuse dame;
Vostre beaulté est sus mon ame
Sus toutes aultres non pareille.

En vous voiant je m'emerveille
Disant: 'qu'essecy nostre dame?'
Je ne veis onques la pareille
De vous, ma gracieuse dame.

Vostre tant grant douleur resveille
Mon esprit, et vostre oeil entame
Mon cuer, dont dire puis sans blasme
Puis que a vous servir m'apareille.

Je ne veis onques la pareille
De vous, ma gracieuse dame,
Vostre beaulté est sus mon ame
Sus toutes aultres non pareille.

15 XLIII. Faites moy sçavoir de la belle

Faites moy sçavoir de la belle
Tout ce qui s'en pourra escrire,
Et pour alléger mon martire
Ce que sçavez du vouloir d'elle.

Las! je n'en puis ouir nouvelle
Dont je me tien tres bien de dire:
Faites moy sçavoir de la belle
Tout ce qui s'en pourra escrire.

Et s'il luy plaist que je m'apelle
Son serviteur, plus ne desiré;
Si vous prie que luy veullés dire
Que mon cuer ne souhaite que elle.

Faites moy sçavoir de la belle
Tout ce qui s'en pourra escrire,
Et pour alléger mon martire
Ce que sçavez du vouloir d'elle.

I have never seen the equal
of you, my courteous lady;
I swear that your beauty is
incomparably above all others.

When I see you I am astonished
saying: 'Here is our lady!'
I have never seen the equal
of you, my courteous lady.

Such sweetness as yours awakens
my spirit and your eye pierces
my heart, which I can say without shame
since I am prepared to serve you.

I have never seen the equal
of you, my courteous lady;
I swear that your beauty is
incomparably above all others.

Tell me of the fair lady
everything that can be written,
and to lessen my anguish
(tell me) what you know of her wishes.

Alas, I cannot hear news of her
that does not bring a smile to my lips:
tell me of the fair lady
everything that can be written.

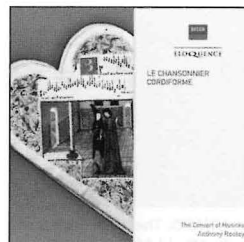
And if she allows me to call myself
her servant, I can desire no more,
so I beg you to tell her
that my heart wishes for nothing but her.

Tell me of the fair lady
everything that can be written,
and to lessen my anguish
(tell me) what you know of her wishes.



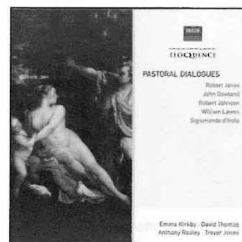
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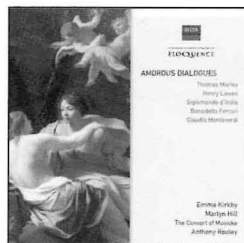
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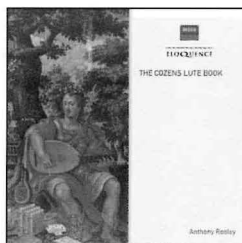
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