

JOSQUIN AND THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY
CHANSON

By HOWARD MAYER BROWN

Read 21 March 1985

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY musicians heard in the music of Josquin des Prez some of the same qualities that we do today. In praising Josquin's *Planxit autem David*, for example, the sixteenth-century theorist Heinrich Glareanus cited the way in which he made David's grief for his dead son Jonathan palpable and real,¹ in terms similar to those Edward E. Lowinsky used in pointing out that in Josquin's great setting of Psalm 50, *Miserere mei Deus*, the composer conceived his music 'as an artistic projection, elevation, and intensification of the spoken word'.² And the sixteenth-century Florentine writer Cosimo Bartoli implied that he too thought of Josquin as a monumental and expressive composer, when he described him as a wonder of nature—'un monstro di

¹ Glareanus's extensive discussion of Josquin and his style is most easily accessible in Heinrich Glareanus, *Dodecachordon* (translation, transcription, and commentary by Clement A. Miller, 2 vols., American Institute of Musicology, 1965), ii. 264–70. He describes *Planxit autem David* on pp. 269–70.

² Edward E. Lowinsky, *The Medici Codex of 1518, A Choirbook of Motets Dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino* (Monuments of Renaissance Music, 3 vols., Chicago and London, 1968), iii. 196. His commentaries on the motets by Josquin in the Medici Codex are the best analyses to date of the character and style of Josquin's music.

The only full-scale study of Josquin's life and works remains Helmuth Osthoff, *Josquin Desprez* (2 vols., Tutzing, 1962–5). For a later collection of essays devoted to the composer, the proceedings of the International Josquin Festival-Conference in New York in 1971, see Edward E. Lowinsky (ed.) in collaboration with Bonnie J. Blackburn, *Josquin des Prez* (London, 1976).

A new critical edition of the works of Josquin des Prez is now under-way. It will be published by the Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, under the supervision of an editorial board chaired by Professor Willem Elders. The present essay is partly the result of work on the first volume of the *New Josquin Edition* to be published (the volume of chansons a 3), edited by myself and Jaap van Benthem.

natura'—in his *Ragionamenti accademici* of 1567, in which he looked back at the recent past, and compared Josquin's achievements in music to those of Michelangelo in painting, sculpture, and architecture.¹

It is not, however, the monumental and expressive side of Josquin's work that I wish to stress here. Instead, I want to explore the more intimate repertory of Josquin's secular music, and especially that part of it that might reveal something about the earlier years of the composer's career, and especially about his relationship with the traditions of courtly French song that in the fifteenth century dominated secular music at the highest social levels everywhere in western Europe.² That is, I shall ignore those impressive and expressive five- and six-part chansons that were attributed to Josquin in various sixteenth-century sources, whose authenticity has often been questioned by scholars because they appeared for the first time in Dutch, German, and French printed books in large numbers in the 1540s and 1550s, twenty or even thirty years after Josquin died, and even the four-part chansons that include a wide variety of types of music, from polyphonic arrangements of bawdy street songs through the contrapuntal ingenuity of *Plus nulz regretz* to the eloquent simplicity of *Mille regretz de vous habandonner*.³ I shall concentrate my attention instead on the altogether more modest repertory of three-part chansons that began to appear in manuscripts in the 1480s and 1490s, and that have been unjustly neglected by performers and scholars

¹ Quoted in Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal* (transl. Alexander H. Krappe, Roger H. Sessions, and Oliver Strunk, 3 vols., Princeton, New Jersey, 1949), i. 21–2.

² For a recent study of the courtly and popular chanson of the late fifteenth century see Howard Mayer Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier from the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Banco Rari 229* (Monuments of Renaissance Music, 2 vols., Chicago and London, 1983), esp. text volume, chap. 9: 'Courtly Poetry and Popular Poetry', pp. 52–70.

³ For a survey of Josquin's secular music, including a preliminary examination of the problems of authenticity, see Osthoff, *Josquin*, ii. 153–238. Jeremy Noble, 'Josquin Desprez' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ix. 713–38, includes a list of the composer's works with suggestions about which of the attributions to Josquin can be considered doubtful. See also Jaap van Benthem, 'Zur Struktur und Authentizität der Chansons à 5 & 6 von Josquin des Prez', *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, xxi (1970), 170–88, and Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'Josquin's Chansons: Ignored and Lost Sources', *Journal of American Musicological Society*, xxix (1976), 30–76.

Plus nulz regretz is published in a modern edition, among other places, in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Albert Smijers, Wereldlijke Werken, 3, Amsterdam, 1925), no. 24, pp. 63–5, and *Mille regretz*, *ibid.*, no. 29, pp. 74–5.

alike.¹ I want, in short, to make a first attempt to sort out the chronology of Josquin's chansons, and especially of his chansons in three voices, and I should like at the same time to establish a few rudimentary guidelines for what we can accept as genuine among Josquin's works and what as false.

Josquin's setting of the French quatrain *Ce pauvre mendiant* over the cantus firmus *Pauper sum ego* (Example 1) is apt to be the earliest, or at least one of the earliest of his chansons to survive, even though it makes its first appearance in a manuscript now in the British Library that was originally compiled during the first decade of the sixteenth century for an official at the Netherlands court.² In London 35087, the chanson is supplied only with the Latin incipit 'Pauper sum ego' beneath all three voices, an excerpt from Psalm 87 in the Vulgate. In a more literal translation than the King James version, it reads: 'I am poor, a labourer from my youth. And being exalted, I have been humbled and troubled.'³ To judge from this manuscript, the piece circulated as a song motet, or just possibly as an instrumental piece with Biblical title (since the British Library manuscript has no words). Appropriately, the lowest voice declaims one of the formulas for chanting psalms.⁴

¹ On the chansons *a 3*, see, besides Osthoff, Jaap van Benthem, 'Josquin's Three-part "Chansons rustiques": a Critique of the Readings in Manuscripts and Prints' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 421-45. Among other studies that take account of Josquin's chansons *a 3*, see especially Martin Picker, *The Chanson Albums of Marguerite of Austria* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965).

² London, British Library, MS Add. 35087 (hereafter London 35087). On the manuscript see William McMurtry, 'The British Museum Manuscript Additional 35087: A Transcription of the French, Italian, and Latin Compositions with Concordance and Commentary' (Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1967), which includes a modern edition of all the pieces in the anthology except those with Dutch texts.

Modern editions of *Ce pauvre mendiant* appear in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, *Wereldlijke Werken*, 4), no. 46; Osthoff, *Josquin*, ii. 385-6; Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 389-90; and McMurtry, 'Additional 35087', pp. 240-3.

³ The translation is taken from *The Hours of the Divine Office in English and Latin* (3 vols., Collegeville, Minnesota, 1963), i. 1323, where it is used as a short responsory for matins on the first Sunday after Epiphany (the feast of the Holy Family), and associated with a completely different chant in such modern liturgical books as the *Antiphonale Romanum*, p. 329, and the *Liber usualis*, p. 473.

⁴ The formula appears as the conventional ending for the *seculorum Amen* in the eighth mode in such standard sixteenth-century manuals as *Compendium musices . . . Cantorinus. Romani cantus utilissimum compendiolum* (Venice, 1549), fols. 8'-9, and in Franchinus Gaffurius, *Practica musicae* (Milan, 1496), pp. 62-5 of the English translation by Clement A. Miller (American Institute of Musicology, 1968).

Johannes Tinctoris, *Liber de natura et proprietate tonorum*, in his *Opera theoretica*

Example 1. Josquin, *Ce povre mendiant / Pauper sum ego*

5

S Ce po- vre men-

T Ce po- vre

B Pau- per sum

10

-di- ant, ce po- vre men- di- ant pour —

men- di- ant, ce po- vre

e- go, et in la- bo-

15 20

Dieu Qui n'a be- ne-fi-

men- di- ant pour Dieu Qui n'a be- ne-

-ri- bus a ju- ven- tu- te

25

-ce ne of- fi- ce, Qui ne

-fi- ce ne of- fi- ce, Qui ne luy

me- a; ex- al- ta- tus

luy vault _____ ou soit pro- pi-
 vault _____ ou soit pro- pi-
 au- tem, hu- mi- li- a-
 35 -ce, Au- tant por- te _____ que _____ sur _____
 40 -ce, Au- tant por- te _____ que sur _____
 -tus sun et con- tur- ba-
 le lieu.
 le lieu.
 -ba- tus.

(ed. Albert Seay, 3 vols. in 2, American Institute of Musicology, 1975), i. 65-108, and translated into English by Seay as *Concerning the Nature and Propriety of Tones* (Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1967); Pietro Aaron, *Trattato della natura et cognitione di tutti gli tuoni di canto figurato* (ed. Willem Elders, Joachimsthal and Utrecht, 1966), partly translated into English in Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History* (New York, 1950), pp. 205-18; and presumably therefore Josquin himself would almost certainly have described *Ce pauvre mendant* as a composition in transposed second mode on A. The disjunction between the mode of the cantus firmus and the mode of the composition as a whole is not unique to Josquin's *Ce pauvre mendant*. Later and much more monumental pieces, such as Josquin's *Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales* and his setting of Psalm 50, *Miserere mei Deus*, for example, involve transposing cantus firmi with polyphonic lines added which are at least partly in contrasting modes.

Indeed, the bass follows a systematic plan that is characteristic of one of Josquin's ways of organizing compositions: the chant formula is stated six times altogether, and with each new repetition, it is transposed down one step from a to d, and then restated once at the end at its original pitch level to form as scaffold a transposing ostinato, a *pes*, over which the upper two voices sing florid and unrelated melodic material.¹

But the style of the music, and especially the fact there is no imitation between the upper voices and the cantus firmus, suggest that the piece is much more likely to have been conceived as a song with cantus firmus—as what some scholars call a motet-chanson—rather than as a song motet, that is, a piece with Latin text but the stylistic character of a chanson.² In fact, in two manuscripts, both of them prepared by members of the professional scriptorium for music at the Netherlands court so ably studied by Herbert Kellman and others, the superius and tenor of the chanson are given French texts or incipits.³

In Florence 2439 the top two voices have only the incipit 'Fortune d'estrangle plummaige', an allusion, I take it, to Lady Fortune, perhaps in some outlandish costume, just possibly a costume in which she appeared at some elaborate court entertainment.⁴ It is not difficult to imagine what might have been the composer's intentions in combining a French poem about fortune with a transposing ostinato. The successive transpositions of the

¹ On Josquin's use of ostinatos, transposed and untransposed, a presumably early stylistic trait, see, for example, Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 65–6, 70, 372–4, 395–8, and 574–83.

² The most extensive discussion of the motet-chanson at the end of the fifteenth century appears in Ludwig Finscher, *Loyset Compère (c. 1450–1518). Life and Works* (American Institute of Musicology, 1964), pp. 205–30. Finscher's dating of various works differs from that suggested in the present essay.

³ That is, Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS 228 (hereafter Brussels 228), published in a modern edition in Picker, *Chanson Albums*; and Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio di musica, MS Basevi 2439 (hereafter Florence 2439), available in a modern edition in Paul G. Newton, 'Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini, Manuscript Basevi 2439: Critical Edition and Commentary' (2 vols., Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1968). On the Netherlands court scriptorium see Herbert Kellman, 'Josquin and the courts of the Netherlands and France: the evidence of the sources' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 181–216, where earlier studies are cited.

⁴ On Lady Fortune in music see Edward E. Lowinsky, 'The Goddess Fortuna in Music', *Musical Quarterly*, xxix (1943), 45–77; and id. 'Matthaeus Greiter's *Fortuna*: An Experiment in Chromaticism and in Musical Iconography', *ibid.*, xlii (1956), 500–19, and xliii (1957), 68–85.

pes downwards by step would have been meant to represent the inexorable turnings of the wheel of fortune.¹ But the music seems not to reflect the meaning of the text closely, for the chant explains that the speaker was once exalted, but is now humiliated, whereas the *pes* descends by step to its lowest point, and then at the end returns to its original pitch.

In the other Netherlands court manuscript that includes *Ce povere mendiant*, Brussels 228, both superius and tenor are supplied with a complete quatrain of French text that comments on and elaborates the meaning of the cantus firmus in the bass much more directly and convincingly. The poem glosses and makes particular the sentiment of the chant. 'I am a poor beggar of God,' it seems to read, 'who has neither benefice nor office which is of any value or help to me, although I am just as burdened with duties as though I did enjoy financial support.'²

Ce povere mendiant might be an incompletely preserved *rondeau*, the more or less fixed poetic form that late fifteenth-century composers used for their secular music almost exclusively. Certainly the phrase structure in the upper voices of Josquin's setting resembles a *rondeau*. But so far as I know, no further text survives in any literary anthology of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, and so it is impossible to state positively that the quatrain is actually the refrain of a *rondeau*, or even that it is the poem for which Josquin conceived the piece. Yet the relationship in meaning between the French words and the chant is so clear and close that I am strongly tempted to see *Ce povere mendiant* rather than *Fortune d'estrangle plummaige* as the original text, and, indeed, even to claim that *Ce povere mendiant*, like *Illibata dei virgo*, *Memor esto verbi tui*, and a few other works, refers directly to the composer's own life.³

¹ An idea suggested in Newton, 'Manuscript Basevi 2439', pp. 36-41.

² In Brussels 228 the poem reads:

Ce povere mendiant pour Dieu
Qui n'a benefice ne office,
Qui ne luy vault ou soit propice,
Autant porte que sur le lieu,

which I would translate literally to mean, 'This poor beggar of God, who has neither benefice nor office which is worth anything to him or is convenient, bears as much (that is, endures as much) as [if he were] on the spot (that is, as if he had such benefits).' Since the meaning of the last line is rather obscure, the translation is provisional.

³ On *Illibata Dei virgo nutrix* see Myroslaw Antonowycz, "'Illibata Dei Virgo': A Melodic Self-Portrait of Josquin des Prez' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 545-59. Glareanus, *Dodecachordon* (transl. Miller), ii. 271-2, reports the story that Josquin wrote *Memor esto verbi tui* in order to remind Louis XII of a

[footnote cont. on p. 126]

The overwhelming majority of *rondeaux* deal with love, and with a particular aspect of love, that is, service to a lady following the ideals of chivalry that were already long outmoded in the fifteenth century, if, indeed, they ever really existed in real life.¹ *Ce povere mendiant* is an exception. It is the supplication of a churchman, perhaps a church musician, and perhaps even of the composer himself. I am encouraged to think that it might be autobiographical since there are a handful of other compositions with French texts from the fifteenth century that do clearly refer to real events. I think, immediately, of Dufay's *Adieu ces bon vins de Lannoy*,² and the various *Vive le roy* chansons by a variety of composers later in the century,³ as well as Dufay's lamentation for the fall of Constantinople,⁴ and all those lamentations on the deaths of great men and great composers, which normally combine a French text with a Latin cantus firmus derived from chant.⁵ In fact, I assume that Josquin was playing with this lamenting convention in writing *Ce povere mendiant*. In Brussels 228 alone, there are a number of compositions written to commemorate particular events: lamentations on the deaths of Marguerite's father and brother, and for Jean de Luxembourg, one of her trusted advisers,⁶ as well as Pierre de la Rue's chanson *A vous non aultre* to celebrate

benefice the king had promised the composer. According to Glareanus, when Louis made good his word, Josquin set another Psalm, *Bonitatem fecisti*, to thank him. On the biographical significance of Josquin's *Missa La sol fa re mi*, reported in the same passage by Glareanus, see James Haar, 'Some Remarks on the "Missa La sol fa re mi"' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 564-88.

¹ For a useful summary of the debate over courtly love see Roger Boase, *The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love* (Manchester, 1977), who provides an extensive bibliography.

² See, for example, David Fallows, *Dufay* (London, 1982), pp. 26-7, who seems to assume that the text of the chanson has biographical significance for Dufay.

³ On three chansons from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries beginning 'Vive le roy' see Howard Mayer Brown, 'A "New" Chansonier of the Early Sixteenth Century in the University Library of Uppsala: A Preliminary Report', *Musica Disciplina*, xxxvii (1983), 171-233.

⁴ Fallows, *Dufay*, p. 71. See also Fallows's list of Dufay's songs, pp. 238-41, which includes various other compositions on French texts that refer to real events.

⁵ For a brief summary of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century lamentations on the deaths of great composers see Davitt Moroney, 'Deploration' in *The New Grove*, v. 379-80.

⁶ On *Proch dolor | Pie Jhesu*, lamenting the death of the Emperor Maximilian, *Se je souspire | Ecce iterum*, lamenting the death of Philip the Fair, and *Cueurs desolez | Dies illa*, lamenting the death of Jean de Luxembourg, all of them anonymous and all in Brussels 228, see Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 56-7.

his fourteen years of service to Marguerite of Austria,¹ and Josquin's *Plus nulz regretz*, honouring the treaty of Cambrai, signed in 1507,² the one sure date we have for Josquin's secular music; *Plus nulz regretz* serves, therefore, as our most secure stylistic guide for our understanding of the development of Josquin's secular style.

Before we can even speculate about when in Josquin's life *Ce povere mendiant* might have been written, however, we need first to enquire, as we always do for Josquin's works, whether the chanson is really securely by him. Can the manuscript's attribution to him be wrong? With Josquin more than with most composers, nothing can be taken for granted, since false attributions abound among his works. *Ce povere mendiant* is given to him only in Florence 2439, a manuscript that includes an unusually large number of attributions, perhaps because it was prepared by the Netherlands court scriptorium as a gift for an Italian, that is, a foreigner who could not be expected to know who wrote chansons for the Netherlands court.³ Or perhaps the scribes wanted to impress this unknown recipient with the artistic distinction and quality of courtly life in the north by including as many great names as possible. Whatever the reason, all the many unique attributions in the manuscript have been accepted by scholars, and form a central repertory of late fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish chansons. Without the information given us in Florence 2439, we would know much less about the men who created this tradition.⁴ Moreover, Florence

¹ On *A vous non aultre* see Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 53-4 and 65-6.

² On *Plus nulz regretz* see *ibid.*, pp. 55 and 71-4, and also Kellman, 'Josquin and the Courts of Netherlands and France', pp. 182-3. Kellman argues that Josquin did not necessarily compose the chanson as a 'result of direct contact with Margaret or Maximilian'. But the chanson seems nevertheless to have been treasured at the Netherlands court, for it is singled out for special attention in Brussels 228, at least in so far as it is the only composition in the manuscript to be given an attribution.

³ On the date and intended recipient of this manuscript see Kellman, 'Josquin and the Courts of Netherlands and France', p. 211, who cites earlier studies.

⁴ Only three of the eighty-seven pieces in Florence 2439 are anonymous. According to the lists of concordances given in Newton, 'Manuscript Basevi 2439', i. 179-269, fifty-five of the attributions in Florence 2439 are unique: fourteen to Agricola (nos. 6, 39, 53-5, 59-66, and 69); one to Brumel (no. 27); one to Busnois (no. 28); one to Colinet de Lannoy (no. 3); one to Compère (no. 46); nine to Ghiselin/Verbonnet (nos. 44, 73-8, and 82-3); one to Jaspar (no. 71); two to Josquin (*A la mort*, no. 72, and *Ce povere mendiant*, no. 81); eleven to La Rue (nos. 8-12, 14, 35, 38, 79-80, and 84); one to Ninot le Petit (no. 87); one to Ockeghem (no. 48); two to Orto (nos. 21 and 42); one to Pipelare (no. 20);

[footnote cont. on p. 128]

2439 confirms a good many attributions found in other manuscripts, and in the few cases where there are conflicting attributions, Florence 2439 is almost certainly correct against the other sources.¹ In short, it seems that the source is unimpeachable, and that we must accept all three of the attributions to Josquin in the manuscript as genuine.

Jeremy Noble is undoubtedly correct to caution us that we need to be as suspicious about attributions in early sources—even those without conflicts—as we are about those attributions to Josquin that appear for the first time in books and manuscripts prepared long after he died, and in places where he never lived.² But challenging early sources does present a difficult problem of methodology, for in discarding attributions in early sources on stylistic grounds, we imply that we know what Josquin's style was like.³ Surely, we can only build up some notion of his style by

seven to Prioris (nos. 24, 31, 36, and 49–52); and two to Cornelius Rigo (nos. 70 and 86).

¹ According to the lists of concordances given in Newton, *ibid.*, Florence 2439 confirms the following twenty-five attributions also found in other sources: eight to Agricola (nos. 4, 5, 7, 56–8, and 67–8); one to Brumel (no. 19); two to Compère (nos. 15 and 45); one to Ghiselin/Verbonnet (no. 16); one to Isaac (no. 37); one to Josquin (*Entrée suis en grant pensée*, no. 23); two to La Rue (nos. 18 and 40); five to Obrecht (nos. 22, 32–4, and 43); three to Ockeghem (nos. 29–30 and 47); and one to Pipelare (no. 25).

There are only four compositions in Florence 2439 with conflicting attributions in other sources. In each case Florence 2439 seems to be correct: no. 2 (*Mon seul plaisir*) is probably by Ninot le Petit, as Florence 2439 claims, rather than by Josquin; no. 13 (*Myn hertz altyt heeft*) by La Rue rather than Obrecht; no. 17 (*Fors seullement*) by Ghiselin rather than Josquin; and no. 85 (*Si dormiero*) by La Rue rather than Isaac.

² A point made by Professor Noble at the conference 'Josquin des Prez, Ein Musiker der Renaissance', sponsored by the Westdeutscher Rundfunk in Cologne, 11–15 July 1984, and included in the proceedings of the conference published in *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, xxxv (1985), 86.

³ Thus, for example, I find it impossible to reject the attribution to Josquin of the setting *a 3* of *Fortuna desperata* in its unique source, Segovia, Archivo capitular de la catedral, MS s.s., fol. 182', even though the piece has been rejected from Josquin's *œuvre* both by Noble in *The New Grove*, ix, 736, and in Osthoff, *Josquin*, ii, 232–3. (On the Segovia manuscript see Norma Klein Baker, 'An Unnumbered Manuscript of Polyphony in the Archives of the Cathedral of Segovia: Its Provenance and History' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1978), and the facsimile of the manuscript published as *Cancionero de la Catedral de Segovia* by Ramon Perales de la Cal in Segovia, 1977.) Josquin's *Fortuna desperata* adds a new 'instrumental' contratenor to the superius and tenor of Busnois's *Fortuna desperata* (published in a modern edition, among other places, in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, Missen, 4), pp. 105–7).

studying closely those pieces in early sources that have attributions to him without conflict. We cannot tell the sources what Josquin's style was: they must tell us.

When can *Ce pauvre mendiant* have been written? Establishing a chronology for Josquin's music is one of the most difficult of all tasks, since there is so little evidence of any kind that can be brought to bear on the question, and since the sources themselves help us so little in answering the question. Few manuscripts containing Josquin's secular music survive from before the 1480s when he was, presumably, in his 40s.¹ On the other hand, a

It is true that *Fortuna desperata* is unlike any of the securely attributed secular compositions by Josquin, even though there are other examples by the composer of 'instrumental' voices added to pre-existent melodic lines. But whereas the scribe of the Segovia manuscript was unreliable in assigning music to Loyset Compère, for example, he appears to have known Josquin's music well. He gives the composer eight pieces: the *Missa L'homme armé sexti toni*, a *Magnificat* (on which, see Osthoff, *Josquin*, ii. 66–7, who does not challenge its authenticity but doubts that it was conceived as a *Magnificat*), *Ave Maria . . . virgo serena*, *O intemerata virgo* (the third *pars* of *Vultum tuum deprecabuntur*), *O Maria* (the fourth *pars* of *Vultum tuum*), *Bergeronette savoysienne*, *In pace* (that is, *Que vous madame* | *In pace*, discussed below), and *Fortuna desperata*. Concordances confirm the attributions of five of the eight pieces. Two of the eight are unique to Segovia: the *Magnificat* and *Fortuna desperata*. The one conflict, between Agricola and Josquin as the composer of *Que vous madame* | *In pace*, should almost certainly be resolved in Josquin's favour, that is, in a way that agrees with Segovia's ascription. Since seven of the eight attributions are probably correct, the eighth is also apt to be correct (at least in the absence of conflicting information). The manuscript evidence, in short, strongly supports the attribution of *Fortuna desperata* to Josquin, especially since the anthology was copied out during the composer's lifetime. It seems to me that we must determine Josquin's style on the basis of such pieces, rather than judging the piece from pre-determined criteria of style.

On the other hand, the attributions of a manuscript like Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, MS Magl. XIX, 178, cannot be taken altogether seriously. It attributes eleven compositions to Josquin; six of the attributions are unique to the manuscript, and at least one of them is patently incorrect, even absurd. The scribe of Florence 178 gave to Josquin the barely competent *Cela sans plus*, which is almost certainly by Colinet de Lannoy. A second attribution, of Johannes Japart's *J'ay bien nourry* to Josquin, is almost equally improbable. Thus, the scribe of Florence 178 seems to be thoroughly unreliable so far as Josquin is concerned, and there is therefore little reason to believe his attributions of another three chansons *a 3* in the manuscript—*Helas madame*, *Je me*, and *Je n'ose plus*—to Josquin, even though Florence 178 was probably copied in Florence in the 1490s, while Josquin was still living in Italy.

¹ The only manuscripts containing Josquin's secular music *a 3* that might have been copied in the 1480s are: Bologna, Civico museo bibliografico-musicale, MS Q16; Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 2356; Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 2794; London, British Library, MS Royal 20

[footnote cont. on p. 130]

relatively large number of manuscripts and printed books prepared after 1500 include chansons and instrumental music by Josquin, but these date from the time when the composer was about 60 (that is, *c.* 1500) until he died, in 1521, presumably in his early 80s. Thus, we cannot merely trace his development as a secular composer by carefully dating the manuscripts in which his chansons appear, especially since the sources all appear to contain a mixture of new and somewhat older compositions. That is, chansonniers like the albums of Marguerite include some compositions obviously written just before the manuscripts were prepared (such as La Rue's *A vous non aultre*, Josquin's *Plus nulz regretz*, and the lamentations), but they also include samples of music by Ockeghem, the major composer of the previous generation (even though he lived into the 1490s), and some chansons that may well have been written several decades earlier, although there is no way, except by inference from their style, to prove such an assertion.

The fact that Josquin's chansons did not begin to appear in manuscripts until relatively late in the composer's life does not differentiate him from any of his contemporaries. His colleagues in Milan in the 1470s—Alexander Agricola, Loyset Compère, Johannes Martini, and Gaspar van Weerbeke—were all about the same age, or at most, so far as we know, only five or six years younger. A few of Compère's chansons were included in two of the great Franco-Burgundian chansonniers of the 1470s, which preserve the central repertory of chansons of the previous generation, but they were added there as later appendices copied in the 1480s or even later.¹ Most of Compère's chansons and all the

A.xvi; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Musica MS 3154; Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 2856; and Seville, Catedral Metropolitana, Biblioteca capitular y Colombina, MS 5-I-43 (of which some of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fonds n.a.f. 4379 was originally a part). All these manuscripts are briefly described, and earlier studies cited, in *Census-Catalogue of Manuscript Sources of Polyphonic Music, 1400-1550, compiled by the University of Illinois Musicological Archives for Renaissance Manuscript Studies*, 3 vols. to date (American Institute of Musicology, 1979-). A complete list of the manuscripts containing Josquin's secular music *a 3*, including brief descriptions, and evaluations of their readings of Josquin's music, will be found in the volume of chansons *a 3* in the *New Josquin Edition*, edited by Jaap van Benthem and myself that is now in the process of being completed.

¹ On the last three chansons added to Dijon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 517 in the 1480s, two of them by Compère, see *Census-Catalogue*, i. 168-9, and Joshua Rifkin, 'Scribal Concordances for Some Renaissance Manuscripts in Florentine Libraries', *Journal of American Musicological Society*, xxvi (1973), 319-20.

secular music by the others were only collected in large numbers in the same group of anthologies as contain Josquin's music, almost all of them the chansonniers prepared from the 1480s on in Italy, where French secular culture was obviously very highly valued. Only a very small number of anthologies of secular music survive from fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century France.¹ We cannot expect to know precisely what was sung in the Netherlands court in the 1480s and 1490s, since the scriptorium for polyphonic music was not organized until the late 1490s.² Marguerite's album (Brussels 228) and Florence 2439 are thus the earliest secular anthologies we have from that court, and perhaps they are the earliest secular manuscripts that were prepared there. One principal reason why we cannot trace more directly Josquin's early style, therefore, is simply because music by him and his exact contemporaries was not copied into the great Franco-Burgundian chansonniers of the 1470s. Evidently, the composers were still too young then to have their works collected by connoisseurs, and in any case, they were all employed in a foreign country.

In short, the dates of the manuscripts cannot help us in deciding when *Ce pauvre mendiant* was written, so we must turn to the text of the chanson, and ask when in Josquin's life he was most apt to request a benefice in order to support himself. Various scholars have noted that Josquin was poorly paid when he first went to the cathedral of Milan in 1459, and that when he later moved to the court of Galeazzo Maria Sforza he was the lowest paid singer in the duke's establishment. That view of the unappreciated Josquin changed radically when Edward E. Lowinsky discovered a document showing that Sforza had in fact had a benefice conferred on Josquin—so far as we know his first—at some time prior to September 1473.³ It may be that the composer thought

On the later additions to the Laborde Chansonnier (Washington, Library of Congress, MS M2.1.L25 Case) see Knud Jeppesen, *Der Kopenhagener Chansonnier* (Copenhagen and Leipzig, 1927; repr. New York, 1965), p. xxv, and Rifkin, 'Scribal Concordances', p. 318.

¹ The best overview of French chansonniers in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is in Louise Litterick, 'The Manuscript Royal 20.A.XVI of the British Library' (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1976), esp. chap. 2: 'London 20.A.XVI and Other Manuscripts of Secular Music from the French Royal Court', pp. 39–82. See also Brown, 'A "New" Chansonnier'.

² See Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 32–5, and Kellman, 'Josquin and the Courts of Netherlands and France', esp. pp. 190–1.

³ See Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Ascanio Sforza's Life: A Key to Josquin's Biography and an Aid to the Chronology of his Works' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 33–40. Of course, we do not know about all the benefices Josquin

[footnote cont. on p. 133]

himself exalted to have been appointed at court, but humbled and troubled because his salary there was so low; but, of course, we can never know what special circumstances dictated his choice of that particular Psalm text, or even whether he intended so close an analogy to be drawn between his predicament and the words he set. In any case, 1473 is the most obvious time when the text of *Ce povre mendiant* seems to apply to Josquin's own situation, if the composer did indeed write his piece as a request to Galeazzo Maria Sforza for the first benefice we know he received.¹

The style of *Ce povre mendiant* would certainly support so early a date. In the first place, and most obviously, the relationship between the music and the words is loose at best. That is, the scribe of Florence 2439 seems not to have taken pains to match individual syllables of the text to particular notes, and since the style is highly melismatic—there are six syllables, for example, in the first phrase of the superius, to fit to twenty notes—we cannot ever be certain we know precisely how Josquin intended the individual words to be sung to the music, if, in fact, he had so detailed a conception of his music.² I do not mean, of course, that the relationship between text and music was entirely arbitrary or irrational. We can, for example, be fairly certain, of the relationship between phrases of text and phrases of music. Josquin's carefully planned cadences clarify the formal structure of the poem, and he built into the music the rhetoric with which the poetry was to be declaimed by the singer. Thus, for example, at the beginning of *Ce povre mendiant*, the composer gave special emphasis to the identity of the speaker, the suppliant, by repeating the first six syllables—'ce povre mendiant, ce povre mendiant'—which he set to two unrelated melismatic phrases, if the scribe of Florence 2439 is to be believed.³ The chanson opens, in other

held during his lifetime, and when he received them. On those from his Roman years see Jeremy Noble, 'New light on Josquin's benefices' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 76–102.

¹ It would not have been inappropriate for Josquin to write his request to the duke in the form of a French song, for we know that Galeazzo Maria Sforza's appreciation of chansons went back as far as his music lessons when he was a child. See Adriano Cappelli, 'Guiniforte Barzizza, maestro di Galeazzo Maria Sforza', *Archivio storico lombardo*, series 3, vol. i (1894), 405, where his teacher reports that the young prince was learning to sing, knew eight French chansons already, and was learning additional ones every day.

² On this point see Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, Text Volume, esp. pp. 52–98, and 168–80.

³ The scribe of Brussels 228 appears to have indicated carefully which phrases of text he thought belonged with which phrases of music, although he

words, with a broad, expansive gesture that draws the listener's attention to the person who is speaking. The middle two lines are more compressed and compact, although the important medial cadence, the mid point of the chanson, is marked by a short melodic extension, which is freely repeated, in the superius. The last line expands again, not only by returning to the same musical space in the superius as at the beginning, but also because Josquin wrote a long and typically repetitive final melisma that pushes the music forward towards satisfactory closure by a series of frustrated feints towards the final; the superius descends from *c'* to various pitches, *a'*, *g'*, and even *e'*, before eventually settling on *a'*, the final of the mode.¹ This sort of loose relationship at the level of syllable underlay, and clear rhetorical shaping at the level of phrase underlay are characteristic of chansons written during the last third of the fifteenth century, but it is a style that seems to disappear towards 1500.

As with most of Josquin's music, the overall formal organization of *Ce pauvre mendiant* is crystal clear. The cantus firmus is stated six times, twice for the first and last phrases of the French text, and once for each of the inner lines, the medial cadence on the fifth scale degree dividing the composition exactly in half at the end of the third of the six statements of the chant excerpt. If *Ce pauvre mendiant* was actually written before 1473, and thus is one of Josquin's earliest, if not the earliest, surviving chanson, it offers strong evidence that the careful planning of formal structures, and the coordination of textual and musical phrases was an integral part of his musical personality from the very first.

The melodic lines in *Ce pauvre mendiant* have the same florid, almost wayward qualities as other chansons written during the last third of the fifteenth century.² That is, the superius does not imitate the tenor, and neither voice makes use of separable motives in any systematic or easily defined way. Rather, the melodic lines unfold in an apparently unforced and natural manner, with the melodic goals of each phrase carefully balanced to offer unity, variety, and a sense of direction. Example 2 gives a summary of what these goals seem to be in the top voice of *Ce pauvre*

may not always have been correct, for he quite irrationally indicates a repetition of the second line of text across the medial cadence, a suggestion the editors of *Ce pauvre mendiant* in the *New Josquin Edition* have ignored.

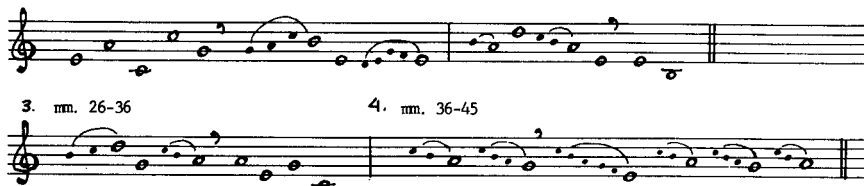
¹ A point noted in Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 85-7.

² For a recent attempt to characterize the melodic style of late fifteenth-century chansons see Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, Text Volume, pp. 71-124.

Example 2. Summary of tonal goals in the superius of *Ce povre mendiant*

1. mm. 1-16

2. mm. 17-25



mendiant, and demonstrates more clearly than words can how one such melody works in balancing ranges and destinations, and leading the listener on from phrase to phrase towards the final goal. Normally, in shaping the four or five phrases of a *rondeau* setting, fifteenth-century composers first established a central tonal territory, then departed from it, and eventually returned to it.¹ Josquin's strategy in *Ce povre mendiant* is rather more complex and circuitous than in most *rondeaux* without *cantus firmus*, just because of the difficulties inherent in writing a melody in the A mode over a tenor that keeps changing its pitch level according to a pre-compositional rational scheme.

Even though the individual melodic lines of *Ce povre mendiant* do not use motives as structural units—as constructive devices to identify, for example, the beginnings or ends of phrases, or even as units of a sequential drive towards a cadence—it would falsify the character of the chanson to fail to emphasize the fact that a network of motives does provide a sense of unity to the melodies in this chanson, even if the motives do not function in any systematically organized way. Wherever he could in *Ce povre mendiant*, Josquin incorporated into his melodies one of two related rhythmic figures, or variants on them: (1) a dotted semibreve followed by two semiminims (♩. ♪♪); or (2) a semibreve followed by four semiminims (♩ ♪♪♪♪). Repeatedly decorating the surface of the music in the same or a similar way gives to the melodies a richness of ornamentation that creates in *Ce povre mendiant* and other similar fifteenth-century chansons the quality of ornate complexity within a clear-cut formal framework, which is the musical counterpart of the elegant variations on a few conventional themes that characterizes the poetry of the late fifteenth-century courtly poetasters.

Whatever the special quality of *Ce povre mendiant*, my brief summary of its style should lay to rest any notion that just because

¹ For a recent attempt to characterize the normal tonal strategies of late fifteenth-century chanson composers see *ibid.*, pp. 150-61.

the chanson appears in Netherlands court sources dating from the first two decades of the sixteenth century, it could have been written after 1500, when Josquin's attention had long since turned to creating a kind of music much more closely integrated with the prosodic and metrical details of the texts he was setting, and with their meaning.¹ In spite of the date of the sources, *Ce pauvre mendiant* could not have been written after 1500; it is much more likely to have been composed early in the 1470s, or perhaps even earlier. But it might not have been conceived as a plea to the duke of Milan for better financial support, for there are at least two very strong arguments against that hypothesis: (1) chansons with Latin cantus firmi, or motet-chansons as they are commonly called in musicological literature, are generally supposed to have been written for northern and not Italian courts; and (2) *Ce pauvre mendiant* appears exclusively in Netherlandish sources.

Musicologists have quite naturally supposed that lamentations with French texts and Latin cantus firmi were written for French-speaking courts, rather than in Italy.² Indeed, the genre of melancholy, sentimental love songs—or even sacred French texts—sung over chant excerpts, perhaps inspired by genuine laments for real people, have been associated principally with the Burgundian court of Philip the Fair and his ill-fated sister, the melancholy Marguerite of Austria, mostly because almost all of the surviving motet-chansons—as well as a whole series of regret chansons and other melancholy love songs—appear principally in Netherlands manuscripts, and especially the albums of Marguerite of Austria and Florence 2439. Most of the motet-chansons were written by Compère, Agricola, and Josquin. But it should be clear that not all of them and not all the regret chansons can have been written expressly for Marguerite or intended for her; at least some of these compositions must already have existed before tragedy repeatedly struck her life.³

In fact, the transmission of these pieces in the sources actually

¹ See, for example, his *Plus nulz regretz* and *Mille regretz*, the two four-voiced chansons most securely dated after 1500.

² See, for example, Finscher, *Compère*, p. 208: 'The "rediscovery" and development of the motet-chanson may well have been an exclusively Burgundian affair in its first stages, connected with the music loving court of Philip the Handsome and especially Margaret of Austria.'

³ For the likelihood that the lamenting motet-chansons and regret chansons in Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS 11239, were not originally intended for Marguerite of Austria see Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 51–2, and Mary Beth W. Marvin, '“Regret” Chansons for Marguerite d'Autriche by Octovien de Saint-Gelais', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, xxxix (1977), 23–32.

suggests when and where the genre of the motet-chanson may have been cultivated, before it reached the Netherlands court. One of Marguerite's chanson albums, Brussels 11239, includes a long series of regret chansons as well as three motet-chansons.¹ In all likelihood, though, Brussels 11239 was not compiled for Marguerite, but rather for some member of the court of Savoy about 1500, even before Marguerite married Duke Philibert and came to live in the château of Pont d'Ain in 1501.² After Philibert's tragic death in 1504, Marguerite took the chansonnier back with her to The Netherlands. It may be that the melancholy character of the chansonnier appealed to Marguerite's temperament, but the fact is it seems to have existed before she came to Savoy. She cannot therefore have inspired these earliest examples of the genre with which she was later closely associated.

Loyset Compère wrote more motet-chansons than either Josquin or Agricola, and some of them are very close in style to those by Josquin.³ Two of them appear in a Florentine manuscript of the 1490s, a rather improbable source of music reflecting the current tastes of the court of Burgundy, and three of them appear in Ottaviano Petrucci's *Odhecaton*, a printed book that seems to have used as its principal sources northern Italian manuscripts; in any case, it is highly improbable that Petrucci had access to Burgundian court documents.⁴ The source situation certainly suggests that some of Compère's motet-chansons, as well as those by Agricola and Josquin in Brussels 11239 were written south of

¹ The contents of Brussels 11239 are published in a modern edition in Picker, *Chanson Albums*. For a compact overview of the manuscript and previous studies of it see also *Census-Catalogue*, i. 91-2. A facsimile of the manuscript has been published as *Chansonnier of Marguerite of Austria* (Peer, Belgium, 1984).

² For a brief summary of the tragedies in Marguerite's life and of her years in Savoy see Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 9-20.

³ They are published in a modern edition in Loyset Compère, *Opera Omnia* (ed. Ludwig Finscher, vol. 5, American Institute of Musicology, 1972), pp. 1-7, and described in Finscher, *Compère*, pp. 209-22.

⁴ The sources of Compère's motet-chansons are listed in *ibid.*, p. 47. The Florentine source of the 1490s is Bologna, Civico museo bibliografico musicale, MS Q17, described with bibliography in *Census-Catalogue*, i. 71-2. Brussels 228, with eight motet-chansons, is probably the largest single collection of pieces in the genre.

Petrucci's *Odhecaton* of 1501 is published in a modern edition as Helen Hewitt (ed.), *Harmonice Musices Odhecaton A* (Cambridge, Mass., 1942). Hewitt does not discuss the possible sources Petrucci's editor used in preparing his edition. Allan Atlas, *The Capella Giulia Chansonnier* (Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, C. G. XIII.27), 2 vols. (Brooklyn, N.Y., 1975-6), i. 250-2, suggests that the *Odhecaton* 'belongs to a group of sources that exemplifies a Northern Italian tradition'.

the Alps before most of the tragedies in Marguerite's life. Moreover, the composers responsible for most of these motet-chansons—Agricola, Compère, and Josquin—did, after all, work together in Milan in the 1470s, but it is most unlikely that they were ever together at the Burgundian court, for only Agricola seems to have been employed there, under Philip the Fair, at the very end of the composer's life.¹ Moreover, Compère and Josquin appear to have had intellectual as well as social contact. They both set *Scaramella fa la galla*, for example, in what can fairly be described as competitive settings by colleagues working at the same place, and the fact that two of Compère's motet-chansons resemble in many ways two of Josquin's also smacks of personal competition.² In short, it seems much more likely that Compère and Josquin began to write motet-chansons, and, at least to some extent, emulated one another, while they were both working in Milan in the 1470s.

It would, of course, be good to be able to confirm such a connection by reference to a Milanese manuscript of secular music from the court of Galeazzo Maria Sforza. But, alas, not a single surviving manuscript can be connected with Galeazzo Maria's court. On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to suppose that some indirect reflection of the tastes of the circle around him might have filtered across to the court of Savoy through his wife, Bona of Savoy, even though she had died in 1485, and that those compositions ultimately wound up in Brussels 11239, and through the influence of the court of Savoy on Marguerite, northwards into the Brussels manuscripts.

It seems to me that the most likely alternative explanation for the composition of *Ce pauvre mendiant* sees the chanson as an elegant request for a new position at the Netherlands court, perhaps

¹ For the documents concerning the three composers in Milan see, among other places, Claudio Sartori, 'Josquin des Pres cantore del Duomo di Milano', *Annales musicologiques*, iv (1956), 55–83. For a brief précis of Agricola's life see Edward R. Lerner, 'Alexander Agricola' in *The New Grove*, i. 162–4. On the difficulties of assigning music by Compère and Josquin to their Milanese years see Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Scholarship in the Renaissance: Music', *Renaissance News*, xvi (1963), 255–62.

² Josquin's *Scaramella* is published in his *Werken* (ed. Smijers, Wereldlijke Werken, 5), no. 54. Compère's *Scaramella* is published in his *Opera Omnia* (ed. Finscher), v. 65–6. The two are compared briefly in Claudio Gallico, 'Josquin's Compositions on Italian Texts and the Frottola' in Lowinsky (ed.), *Josquin*, pp. 447–50. The two motet-chansons by Compère that share some of the same features as Josquin's are: *Le corps / Corpusque meum* and *Royne du ciel / Regina celi*, published in Compère, *Opera Omnia* (ed. Finscher) v. 1–2 and 7, and described in Finscher, *Compère*, pp. 209–12.

immediately following the assassination of Galeazzo Maria Sforza in 1476 or even before, since we know that many of Josquin's associates found jobs elsewhere, and that he himself spent at least some time in 1477 and perhaps later in Aix-en-Provence, as singer in the chapel of good King René of Anjou.¹ But such an explanation is not apt to be true. The text of *Ce povre mendiant* is best read more simply and directly as a request for a new or better benefice, rather than as a request for a new job. The weight of the evidence strongly suggests that Josquin wrote the piece in Milan in the early 1470s or before, at the same time that Compère composed his earliest motet-chansons. Even if my reliance on biographical information to suggest a date for *Ce povre mendiant* turns out to be entirely wrong, and *Fortune d'estrangle plummaige* is discovered to be the text Josquin conceived, without any reference to his own personal life, the style of the composition, and especially its resemblance to Compère's works in the same genre, would still best support so early a date.

We can perhaps go even further, and conclude that another of Josquin's cantus firmus chansons *a 3* found only in Netherlandish sources, *A la mort on prioit à l'heure | Monstra te esse matrem*, also dates from the early 1470s, when the composer was in Milan, just because it, too, resembles Compère's similar pieces, and because it is in many ways so much like *Ce povre mendiant | Pauper sum ego*.² Both set an octosyllabic French quatrain rhyming abba that might be the refrain of an incompletely preserved *rondeau*. In both, the French text is sung over an excerpt of chant that is transposed in the course of the composition and that serves as structural scaffolding for the polyphony, although in *A la mort* the transposition does not involve a short ostinato, but rather a more extended fragment that is stated once, and then repeated a fourth lower. In both, the melodic lines created for the French poetry unfold in florid, melismatic phrases in the manner of late fifteenth-century chansons. And both follow similar formal and rhetorical principles: in both, the melodic phrases of the upper voices have been perfectly co-ordinated with the phrases of the lowest scaffolding voice; in both, the first and last phrases are relatively long and florid, whereas the middle phrases are shorter and more compact; in both, the important medial cadence is marked by a melodic extension, a codetta, in the top voice that is a free variation of the

¹ See Yves Esquieu, 'La musique à la cour provençale du roi René', *Provence historique*, xxxi (1981), 299–312. I am grateful to Herbert Kellman for telling me of the existence of this article, and for sending me a copy of it.

² A modern edition of *A la mort* appears in Newton, 'Manuscript Basevi 2439', ii. no. 72.

immediately preceding figure; and in both, the final phrase consists of a long melisma that drives to the closing by repeated feints towards the final of the mode on which the piece ends.

Unlike *Ce povere mendiant*, on the other hand, *A la mort* sets a sacred French text, a plea to the Virgin Mary to carry the speaker's soul at the time of his death up to Christ.¹ And individual phrases in *A la mort* are laid out very differently from those in *Ce povere mendiant*. Every line in the supplication to Mary opens with relatively slow repeated notes to which the first few syllables are declaimed, and closes with a long florid melisma. Indeed, *A la mort* can serve as a textbook example of the common strategy of the late fifteenth-century chanson composer of declaiming the beginning of each line, often the first four syllables up to the poetic caesura, and then broadening out into a more expansive and florid melisma, which normally occurs on the accented penultimate syllable of the line, if the rhyme word has a feminine ending, or on the antepenultimate syllable if the rhyme is masculine. For example, this is precisely the technique of Compère's motet-chanson, *Royne du ciel | Regina caeli*, which also sets a sacred French text, like that of *A la mort*, and which unfolds over a transposing ostinato drawn from chant, like *Ce povere mendiant*.² It seems to me likely that all these pieces are apt to have been composed for the court of Milan early in the 1470s.

My hypothetical dating of some of Josquin's and Compère's motet-chansons depends partly on the presumed autobiographical significance of one of the texts the composer set, partly on the fact that the two composers were colleagues in Milan, and partly on the known provenance of one of Marguerite's chanson albums, to explain how Milanese music of the early 1470s came to be in Netherlandish manuscripts some fifty years later. The presumed

¹ In its unique source, Florence 2439, the French poem reads:

A la mort au prioit et a leure
 Je te requies ceur tutrit
 Dame de sieulx rens mon
 Devant ton filez Et me sequerue,

which has been most ingeniously emended by Professor René B. Lenaerts to read:

A la mort on prioit à l'eure:
 'Je te requiers de cueur contrit,
 Dame des cieulx, rends mon esprit
 Devant ton filz et me sequeure',

that is, 'At the very hour of death, one prayed: "Lady of heaven, I ask of you with a contrite heart, set my soul before your Son, and save me".'

² On *Royne du ciel | Regina caeli* see p. 137, n. 2 above.

dates of the compositions, in other words, are not completely independent of the date and provenance of the manuscripts that contain them, but there is no direct and simple relationship between the two sets of facts. The situation is different with the third of Josquin's three-part chansons with Latin cantus firmus, *Que vous madame / In pace in idipsum*.¹ What we can guess about when it was composed depends entirely on what we know about the dates of the manuscripts in which it is found, for we have no other kinds of information except the music itself to draw on. That is to say, *Que vous madame* appears in a manuscript anthology now housed in the Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome that was originally prepared as a gift for Isabella d'Este, when she was betrothed to Francesco Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, in 1480.² The manuscript, which seems to consist largely of arrangements of various Franco-Flemish chansons for wind band, was most likely written out in the 1480s. *Que vous madame* is also included in a chansonnier in the Biblioteca Colombina in Seville, a manuscript bought by Fernando Colon in Rome about 1515, but probably assembled in Naples (or just possibly in Rome) in the 1470s or early 1480s.³ *Que vous madame* must have been composed, therefore, by the later 1470s or the early 1480s, for it to have been included in these two manuscript anthologies, just the period when we know least about Josquin's career. Since *Que vous madame* circulated in Italy very shortly after the time when it was most probably composed, it seems likely that he wrote the piece in Italy, during

¹ *Que vous madame / In pace in idipsum* is published in a modern edition, among other places, in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, Wereldlijke Werken, 4), no. 47; Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, no. 44; and Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 461-3.

² On the Casanatense Chansonnier see Arthur S. Wolff, 'The Chansonnier Biblioteca Casanatense 2856, Its History, Purpose, and Music' (Ph.D. dissertation, North Texas State University, 1970). Wolff proposes on pp. 29-32 that the manuscript may have been the one described as 'un libro da canto figurato . . . a la pifaresca' in an archival document, and hence it was intended primarily for wind band. See the footnotes to those pieces in Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, Music Volume, that have concordances with Rome 2856 (listed in the Text Volume, p. 193), for some indications of the way the chansons were edited to make them playable on instruments tuned a fifth apart. For a more complete bibliography of references to the Casanatense Chansonnier see also *Census-Catalogue*, iii. 112-14, and Lewis Lockwood, *Music in Renaissance Ferrara, 1400-1505* (Oxford, 1984), pp. 269-77.

³ On the Seville Chansonnier see Dragan Plamenac, 'A Reconstruction of the French Chansonnier in the Biblioteca Colombina, Seville', *Musical Quarterly*, xxxvii (1951), 501-42, and xxxviii (1952), 85-117 and 245-77; the facsimile reproduction of the manuscript, ed. Plamenac (Brooklyn, NY, 1962); and *Census-Catalogue*, iii. 139-40.

his last years at the Sforza court in Milan or while in service to Cardinal Ascanio Sforza. Had he written the chanson in Aix-en-Provence or wherever else he may have been in France during those years, the likelihood is great, it seems to me, that it would not have been copied into either the Seville chansonnier or Isabella d'Este's wind band book.

Que vous madame was copied not only into Italian but also French and Netherlandish sources from the 1480s on.¹ In fact, it is the most widely distributed of Josquin's three-part chansons, and the reason is not difficult to guess. Unlike *Ce povre mendiant* (or *Fortune d'estrange plummaige*) with its texts appropriate only to particular occasions, or *A la mort* which, quite unusually, sets a sacred poem, *Que vous madame* is the only one of Josquin's chansons with Latin cantus firmus in which the top two voices sing a typical love poem, a *virelai* of the most conventional sort. The poet swears to love his mistress so long as he lives. 'My lady', the refrain begins, 'I swear I have never served another nor ever will.'² And critics have suggested that the composer intended an ironic meaning in having the lowest voice sound at the same time *In pace in idipsum*: 'I will both lay me down in peace and sleep.'³ In any case, the fact

¹ For a list of the sources of *Que vous madame* / *In pace* see Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, Text Volume, pp. 221-2, no. 44, and Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 158-61.

² The whole *bergerette* reads:

Que vous, ma dame, je le jure,
N'est ne sera de moy servie;
Et tant qu'aura vostre serf vie,
Garde n'avez qu'il se parjure.
Une fois à vous me donnay,
Et de recef certes my donne.
Oncquez riens mieulx je n'ordonnay,
Se vostre grace à moy s'adonne.
Grande me soit dicte l'injure
S'aultre à ma franchise asservie;
Et mort vueil avoir desservie,
Se nulle dame me conjure,
Que vous, ma dame, etc.

Brian Jeffery has kindly supplied the following prose translation: 'My lady, I swear I have never served another nor ever will; and as long as your serf remains alive, do not fear that he will perjure himself.

Once I gave myself to you, and yet again I give myself.

Never did I do anything better, so long as I obtain your grace.

May great insult be said to me if ever I serve another; and I wish I may deserve death if any lady ever casts her spell on me but you, my lady, etc.'

³ The Latin text is taken from Psalms 4: 8 and 132: 4. The chant associated

that the poem conforms to late fifteenth-century courtly taste—it could be sung for whatever occasion secular music was performed—doubtless explains why this was the chanson by which the secular side of Josquin's musical personality was most widely known in western Europe by the 1480s.

Certainly, the character of the music of *Que vous madame* is consistent with the early date I propose for its genesis, relatively early in his career, and yet later than either *Ce pauvre mendiant* or *A la mort*. In some ways *Que vous madame* is very much like his earlier motet-chansons, but in other ways it is more refined, its texture better integrated, and its form more elegantly shaped, features that suggest the work of a slightly more mature composer. As in the earlier motet-chansons, *Que vous madame*'s bottom voice states musical material borrowed from a chant, while its top two voices sing a French poem set in a melismatic late fifteenth-century style, with a relatively loose relationship between the prosodic and metrical details of its text and the details of the music, but with very clear co-ordination between text phrases and musical phrases. In *Que vous madame*, Josquin carefully set off the first four syllables of every line from the rest either by marking the poetic caesura with a passing cadence, or by changing the rhythmic character at the ends of phrases, making them markedly faster and less metrical, and reserving the longest melisma for the penultimate or antepenultimate syllable.

Like the earlier cantus firmus chansons, *Que vous madame* opens with a statement that the composer seems to have wished to emphasize, for the first phrase of music sung by the top voice (Example 3) involves repetition, although here it is the opening motive that is immediately repeated at a higher pitch, while the text is stated only once. Like the earlier motet-chansons, too, *Que vous madame* makes a formal gesture of closing at the end of its refrain by broadening out into a long final melisma (Example 4), but here, the gesture is made more manifest than in either *Ce pauvre mendiant* or *A la mort* because the melisma is constructed as a sequence for all three voices. This section, in fact, best reveals the care Josquin took in shaping his formal structures, for here he consciously manipulated the cantus firmus when he added measured rhythm to it, in order to bring the refrain to a satisfactory close. He did not decorate the notes more than usual in this

with it, used as a responsory and verse for Compline on the first Sunday in Lent, is published in facsimile in Walter Howard Frere (ed.), *Antiphonale Sarisburiense* (6 vols., London, 1901–24; repr. 1966), ii. 150, and in a modern edition in Picker, *Chanson Albums*, p. 502.

Example 3. Josquin, *Que vous madame* / In pace, superius, mm. 1-11

Example 3 shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff contains the melody for the superius part, with lyrics underneath: "Que vous ma-da-me, je le ju-". The second staff continues the melody with the lyric "-re,".

Example 4. Josquin, *Que vous madame* / In pace, superius, mm. 29-42

Example 4 shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff contains the melody for the superius part, with lyrics underneath: "Gar-de n'a-vez, gar-de n'a-vez, gar-de n'a-vez, _____". The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics "qu'il se par-ju-re.".

passage, but he did shape them rhythmically so as to produce a sequence, where there was none in the original. Unlike the earlier motet-chansons, *Que vous madame* does not have a cantus firmus forced into some rational pre-compositional scheme; the chant is neither systematically transposed, nor formed into an ostinato. But in this instance, Josquin shaped the music he borrowed in a way that gave to the polyphony a drive to the final cadence, an important feature of a formal structure in which each phrase functions to give shape to the piece as a whole.

In other words, Josquin made subtler and more effective use of musical motives to shape his composition in *Que vous madame* than in the earlier motet-chansons. And the relatively short, well-defined motives also help to integrate the texture better than in the earlier chansons. In *Que vous madame*, the opening motive is almost certainly derived from the cantus firmus. Imitation, by no means ubiquitous in the chanson, occurs at strategic moments: between the superius and tenor at the very beginning, and among all three voices in the last phrase of the couplet. But perhaps the most noteworthy use of motives in *Que vous madame* involves the final phrase of the refrain, and how it returns to the opening musical material of the composition. The first phrase of the chanson (Example 3) divides in half, each associated with a different motive, and each ending incompletely off the final of the mode. The closing phrase (Example 4) reverses the order of events, making a sequence of the second of the two motives, and compressing the first motive and

bringing it to a close on the final of the mode. In short, the skill with which the rhetoric of the poem is matched to the music of *Que vous madame*, the skill with which individual phrases are combined into a shapely whole with beginning, middle, and end, and the skill with which motives are made to integrate the texture and enhance the form, all bespeak the hand of a master.¹

Similarly masterful, too, is Josquin's one *rondeau* setting without cantus firmus in melismatic fifteenth-century style: *La plus des plus* (Example 5).² In it, the broad opening gesture we have come to expect in this group of chansons is made even more explicit than in *Que vous madame*, for the whole first line is stated once, and then all three voices repeat the same material transposed up a fifth. The second line begins with a clear-cut motto, imitated between superius and tenor and stated twice in each voice; its melismatic melodic extension uses the same motives as in the first phrase. And the superius prepares for the important cadence at the mid point of the piece by singing the third line of this *rondeau cinquain* as a sequence, which pushes the motion forwards towards an incomplete cadence on the fifth scale degree, as in so many other *rondeaux* of the late fifteenth century. What at first appears to be a melodic extension in the tenor at the medial cadence actually turns out to be the principal melodic material of the second half; it is set to a two-bar unit of invertible counterpoint that takes us around the circle of fifths to a deceptive cadence in C, leading directly to the last phrase, which rushes towards the final cadence in a sequence based on the same musical material that prepared the medial cadence, but now speeded up and compressed to heighten even more the drive towards closure. In short, like the other chansons by Josquin we have seen, the texture of *La plus des plus* is enriched and unified by a sophisticated use of motives, and,

¹ See Hewitt, *Odhecaton*, pp. 74–6, and Klaus Holzmann, 'Hieronymus Formschneiders Sammeldruck Trium vocum carmina Nürnberg 1538' (Ph.D. dissertation, Albert Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg i. Br., 1956), pp. 91–5, for a discussion of the series of compositions from this period with incipits drawn from Psalm texts, including *Si sumpsero*, *Si dormiero*, *Si ascendero*, and *Si dedero* (which is the *secunda pars* of *In pace*). No one has yet pointed out any significant musical relationship among these pieces, or given a plausible suggestion for the similarity of their textual incipits. I do not think that Josquin's *Que vous madame / In pace* relates in any way to this cycle (which needs to be studied more closely), but it is perhaps significant that *Que vous madame* is followed by Agricola's *Si dedero* and Obrecht's *Si sumpsero* as the last three compositions in Brussels 11239 (modern edition in Picker, *Chanson Albums*, pp. 461–71).

² *La plus des plus* is published in a modern edition in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, Wereldlijke Werken, 4), no. 45, and Hewitt, *Odhecaton*, no. 64.

Example 5. Josquin, *La plus des plus* 5

Soprano: La plus des plus seul-le _____

Tenor: La plus des plus seul-le _____ sans per, la

Contralto: _____

10 sans per, la plus des plus seul-le _____ sans per, _____ seul-

10 plus des plus seul-le _____ sans per, seul- le _____

15 -le sans per _____ Mon cuer se vient, mon cuer se

20 _____ sans per Mon cuer se vient, _____ mon cuer

most important, the chanson exemplifies the way in which a master can shape four or five phrases of music into a satisfyingly complete composition.

There seems to be no way to discover precisely when *La plus des plus* was written. It was first published as a work by Josquin but without text in Ottaviano Petrucci's *Odhecaton* of 1501; some of the later sources appear to be copied directly from the *Odhecaton*, although at least one later German print was undoubtedly based on some other now lost exemplar.¹ We know very little about the

¹ For reasons leading to the conclusion that the version of *La plus des plus* in Zwickau, Ratsschulbibliothek, MS LXXVIII,3, no. 22, was based directly on the *Odhecaton* (and for supposing that the version in the songbook probably

[footnote cont. on p. 146

25

vient ha-ban- don-ner, ha- ban- don- ner

se vient ha-ban- don- ner

30

A vous ser-vir, a vous ser-vir tant qu'il

A vous ser- vir tant qu'il

35

(#)

vi- vra. N'au- tre vou- loir ja-

vi- vra. N'au- tre vou- loir ja- mais n'au- ra, n'au-

40

sources Petrucci drew on to supply music for his editions. If they were, as we suspect, largely manuscripts compiled in northern Italy, it might be that *La plus des plus* was written while Josquin was still in Milan, or at some other point in the years immediately after Galeazzo Maria Sforza's assassination, that is, about the same time the composer wrote *Que vous madame*. That hypothesis cannot, however, be advanced very forcefully, since there is no external

published by Christian Egenolff in Frankfurt am Main about 1535—RISM [c.1535]¹⁴—was possibly copied directly from the *Odhecaton*, see the critical commentary for *La plus des plus* in the *New Josquin Edition* (forthcoming). The version in *Trium vocum carmina* (Nuremberg, Hieronymus Formschneider, 1538) is independent of that published by Petrucci.

45

-maiz n'au-ra, ja-maiz n'au-ra Pour mal qu'il en doy-
 -cre vou-loir ja-maiz n'au-ra, ja-maiz n'au-ra Pour

50 59

-e en-du-rer, en-
 mal qu'il en doy-e en-du-rer, pour mal qu'il en doy-e en-

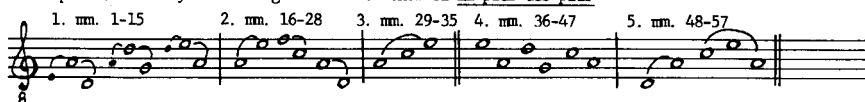
#

-du-rer.
 -du-rer.

evidence one way or the other, although the style of the chanson, and especially its texture, certainly supports so early a date. The lowest voice, the contratenor, plays almost no role in the contrapuntal interplay of motives (although it does move in parallel tenths with the superius in several passages), nor does it always stay below the tenor. It behaves, in short, like a contratenor written in the 1470s rather than in the 1490s, filling out the sonorities of the structural scaffold formed by the superius and tenor, and keeping the motion moving forward at cadences.¹

¹ The tenor of *La plus des plus* typically controls the tonal movement of the composition. By eliminating ornamental notes and enclosing segments of a phrase within a slur, the tenor can be summarized as in Example 6, which

[footnote cont. on p. 148]

Example 6. Summary of tonal goals in the tenor of *La plus des plus*

The *Odhecaton* supplies no text for *La plus des plus*, nor do any of the later sources. No sure proof exists, in other words, that the composition was originally intended to set a French lyric poem, or, if it was, that the octosyllabic *rondeau cinquain* beginning ‘*La plus des plus seulle sans per*’, found in the fifteenth-century song book later owned by Cardinal Armand Gaston Maximilien de Rohan and published in a modern edition by Martin Löpelmann, furnished the words Josquin had before him when he began to compose.¹ So we must look to the form and style of the music to explain the nature of *La plus des plus*. The fact that this particular poem can be made to fit the music so well, with typically declamatory opening mottoes and melismatic melodic extensions at ends of phrases, persuades me that it is apt to be the very *rondeau* Josquin intended. But even if it is not, the pattern of cadences in *La plus des plus*, and the number and the character of the phrases correspond so closely to those normally found in late fifteenth-century *rondeau* settings that I have little doubt Josquin conceived the piece as a setting of some *rondeau cinquain*, rather than, say, as a purely instrumental piece. The autonomous instrumental pieces for three voices by Josquin—*Cela sans plus*, *Ile fantazies*, and *La bernardina*²—are all quite different from *La plus des plus*: the number of phrases in each would not accommodate any *rondeau* or *virelai*, the two kinds of courtly French lyric poetry known to have been set to music at the time; the instrumental pieces make even more extensive structural use of motives than *La plus des plus*; and, most important, all three voices take an equal part in the exposition and manipulation of motives (that is, the bottom voice is fully integrated into the texture). Moreover, the instrumental pieces include many more sequences than the secular vocal music, including those in characteristically ‘instrumental style’, in which

shows how *La plus des plus* atypically moves between the fifths above and below the final A, and achieves a sense of departure away from the central modal octave in the fourth phrase by means of an excursion around the circle of fifths.

¹ The poem appears in Martin Löpelmann, *Die Liederhandschrift des Cardinals de Rohan (XV. Jahrh.)* (Göttingen, 1923), p. 140, no. 171.

² The three instrumental pieces are published in a modern edition, among other places, in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, *Wereldlijke Werken*, 4), nos. 42–4.

two fast moving voices are pitted against one that moves very slowly.

If *La plus des plus* was in fact conceived as the setting of a *rondeau cinquain*, it may even be one of those the composer intended to be performed with shortened medial and final refrains, or at least a chanson in which the performers would have been permitted to sing shortened refrains, if they preferred. Literary scholars have long supposed that the medial and final refrains of purely literary *rondeaux*, from the time of Christine de Pisan on, were normally shortened either to a single line, or merely to a four-syllable *rentrement*, but we musicians have stubbornly ignored them, and insisted that all refrains in *rondeaux* had to be sung complete.¹ Recently, Howard Garey has forced us to rethink our position, and we are beginning to see that satisfactory musical solutions can be devised for performances that better take into account the syntax and rhetoric of the poetry, and correspond more closely to what we think we know about the form of *rondeaux* in the later fifteenth century.² Printing the two versions of *La plus des plus*, one with full and the other with shortened refrains, side by side makes the reasons for choosing one or the other version clear:

La plus des plus seulle sans per
 Mon cueur se vient habandonner
 A vous servir tant qu'il vivra.
 N'autre vouloir jamaiz n'aura
 Pour mal qu'il en doye endurer.
 Nul ne pourroit bien deviser
 Les biens de vous n'asses louer,
 Pource mon cueur vous demourra,
 La plus des plus seulle sans per.
 Mon cueur se vient habandonner
 A vous servir tant qu'il vivra.
 A vous bien à droit regarder,
 On ne sauroit riens demander
 Qu'en vous ne sois mais tant y a
 Que le bruit est tel et sera
 Que l'on vous doit par tout nommer:
 La plus des plus seulle sans per.
 Mon cueur se vient habandonner
 A vous servir tant qu'il vivra.
 N'autre vouloir jamaiz n'aura
 Pour mal qu'il en doye endurer.
 (Best of all, alone without equal, my heart is
 prepared to abandon itself to serving you as
 long as it lives. Nor will it ever have another
 wish, no matter what evil it may endure.

La plus des plus seulle sans per.
 Mon cueur se vient habandonner
 A vous servir tant qu'il vivra.
 N'autre vouloir jamaiz n'aura
 Pour mal qu'il en doye endurer.
 Nul ne pourroit bien deviser
 Les biens de vous n'asses louer,
 Pource mon cueur vous demourra,
 La plus des plus seulle sans per.
 A vous bien à droit regarder,
 On ne sauroit riens demander
 Qu'en vous ne sois mais tant y a
 Que le bruit est tel et sera
 Que l'on vous doit par tout nommer:
 La plus des plus seulle sans per.
 (Best of all, alone without equal, my heart is
 prepared to abandon itself to serving you as
 long as it lives. Nor will it ever have another
 wish, no matter what evil it may endure.

¹ The problem is summarized and previous studies are cited in Howard Garey, 'Can a Rondeau with a One-Line Refrain Be Sung?', *Ars LYRICA*, ii (1983), 10-21.

² See Howard Mayer Brown, 'A Rondeau with a One-Line Refrain Can Be Sung', *ibid.* (forthcoming).

No one can describe your virtues adequately, or sufficiently praise them, which is why my heart stays with you, best of all, alone without equal. My heart is prepared to abandon itself to serving you as long as it lives.

To consider you impartially, one does not know anything to ask of you that is not in you, but there is so much [virtue] there, your fame is and shall be such, that everyone should call you: best of all, alone without equal. My heart is prepared to abandon itself to serving you as long as it lives. Nor will it ever have another wish, no matter what evil it may endure.)

No one can describe your virtues adequately, or sufficiently praise them, which is why my heart stays with you, best of all, alone without equal.

To consider you impartially, one does not know anything to ask of you that is not in you, but there is so much [virtue] there, your fame is and shall be such, that everyone should call you: best of all, alone without equal.)

Both versions make good grammatical sense. In the final long stanza of the full version, the refrain's opening apostrophe—'La plus des plus seulle sans per'—completes the sentence ('Your fame is . . . such that everyone should call you: best of all . . .'), and the remainder of the refrain (beginning 'My heart is prepared . . .') forms an independent sentence, divorced from the first line. But it can be argued that the poem is less unnecessarily repetitive, more effective as a poem, if only its first line—'La plus des plus seulle sans per'—is used as the final refrain, to form a sort of motto or *devise*. The argument, in short, hangs on aesthetic sensibility and rhetorical propriety rather than on questions of sense or nonsense. Both versions can be fitted to the music equally well, the full version by observing the signum congruentiae in the sources, in the conventional way, and the shortened version by making the medial and final cadences at the end of the first phrase (m. 15), on the final of the mode.

If *La plus des plus* actually does offer this alternative possibility of performance, as I believe, then Josquin was experimenting with traditional *rondeau* schemes already in the 1470s (or whenever *La plus des plus* was composed), or, more likely, he was simply making use of the conventions regarding the performance of *rondeaux* that had already grown up in the course of the fifteenth century. But Josquin's other three-part *rondeau* without cantus firmus—*Quant je vous voy* (Example 7)—must certainly be counted an experimental piece, for there is only one other similar *rondeau* in fifteenth-century chansonniers, *Gardez vous bien de ce fauveau* by Josquin's one-time colleague in Milan, Alexander Agricola.¹ There are actually two unusual aspects of *Quant je vous voy*: (1) it has only four syllables per line, whereas almost all fifteenth-century *rondeaux* set to music

¹ The chanson is published in a modern edition and briefly discussed in Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, Text Volume, pp. 58–60.

Example 7. Josquin, *Quant je vous voy*

5

S Quant je vous voy _____ D'ai-se tran- si, Il
 T Quant je vous voy _____ D'ai- se tran-si,
 CT Quant je vous voy _____ D'ai- se tran-si, _____ Il
 m'est ad-vis _____ Que _____ voy ung roy, Il m'est ad- vis, il m'est ad-vis
 Il m'est ad-vis Que voy _____ ung roy, Il m'est ad-vis, il m'est ad-
 m'est advis Que _____ voy ung roy, Il m'est advis, il m'est ad-vis Que voy ung roy,
 Que _____ voy _____ ung roy. Tout hors d'en-noy, tout hors d'ennoy Me _____
 -vis Que voy _____ ung roy. Tout hors d'en-noy, Me treu-
 ung _____ roy. _____ Tout hors d'en-noy, _____ hors d'en-noy, _____ Me treu-
 _____ treu- ve i- cy, Quant je vous voy _____ Aus-si je croy, Et sou-
 -ve i- cy, Quant je vous voy _____ Aus-si je croy, Et
 ve i- cy, Quant je vous voy _____ D'ai- se tran-si. Aus- si je croy, Et sou-

25

-vent dy, Que nulz sous-si A-voir ne doy. Quant je vous voy, quant je vous voy, quant

30

#

sou-vent dy, Que nulz sous-si A-voir ne doy. Quant je vous voy, quant je vous voy, quant

35

#

-vent dy, Que nulz sous-si A-voir ne doy. Quant je vous voy, quant je vous voy, quant

je _____ vous voy, quant je vous voy _____ D'ai- se tran-si,

je _____ vous voy, quant je vous voy _____ D'ai-se tran-

je vous voy, quant je vous voy _____ D'ai-se tran- si _____

#

Il m'est ad- vis _____ Que voy ung roy.

-si, Il m'est ad-vis Que voy _____ ung roy.

Il m'est _____ ad- vis Que _____ voy _____ ung roy.

have octosyllabic or decasyllabic lines; and, most important, (2) its music, like that of *Gardez vous biens*, is, so to speak, through-composed, that is, Josquin wrote new music for all the stanzas, rather than reusing music from the refrain, so that it is only the music for the refrain that repeats musical material literally. Because of this unusual arrangement, though, the refrain cannot be indicated by conventional signs; it must be written out in full (and the necessity to write out the refrains explains how we know that in this *rondeau*, Josquin required a shortened medial refrain, but a full final refrain).

Because Agricola's *Gardez vous bien de ce fauveau* is the only other *rondeau* like this that has so far been discovered, we may even suppose that the two composers worked together to develop new forms of music from older conventions of the *formes fixes*, and that therefore both chansons must have been written at about the same time. The sources, however, do not tell us much about when that might have been. *Gardez vous bien* is unique to one of the rare French provincial anthologies of about 1500— it sets a poem by one of Charles d'Orléans's aristocratic poet friends, Pierre d'Anché, seigneur de la Brosse—and *Quant je vous voy* appears for the first time in a chansonnier prepared for a Netherlandish court official in the first decade of the sixteenth century.¹ If Josquin and Agricola had worked together to renew the courtly chanson as early as the 1470s in Milan, surely one or another of their efforts would have found its way into one of the Italian anthologies at an earlier date (although *Quant je vous voy* was reprinted in Venice in *La Couronne et fleur des chansons à troys* in 1536).²

Gardez vous bien and *Quant je vous voy* are much more likely to have been written, it seems to me, during the 1480s or 1490s, unfortunately just the period when we are least well informed about the whereabouts of both composers. From their early distribution in northern European manuscripts, it is not inconceivable that both chansons were written in France. The truth is that there is very little evidence we can gather about these chansons to help us in knowing when and where they were composed. Once again, it is their style, more than anything else, that most strongly suggests a date. Even the older-fashioned Agricola seems to be trying, in *Gardez vous bien*, to write a kind of declamatory music in which the words are projected plainly, for many of the melodic lines involve repeated notes of a sort relatively rare in his *œuvre*. Certainly, with *Quant je vous voy* we are in a completely different world from that of the complex and florid Franco-Burgundian melodic lines of Josquin's earlier songs. Here, the syllabic declamation and melodic simplicity, with the fanfare-like opening and the near obsession with sequences as a way to

¹ London 35087, on which see p. 121, n. 2 above. *Quant je vous voy* is published in a modern edition, among other places, in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, *Wereldlijke Werken*, 5), no. 65.

² On the 1536 volume see Lawrence F. Bernstein, 'La Couronne et fleur des chansons à troys: A Mirror of the French Chanson in Italy in the Years between Ottaviano Petrucci and Antonio Gardano', *Journal of American Musicological Society*, xxv (1973), 1–68. Bernstein's edition of the chanson appears in his *La Couronne et Fleur des Chansons a Troys* (2 vols., New York, 1984) as no. 28.

extend material, give a fresh, popular flavour to this music that is something genuinely new in the history of French courtly song. Since the style of *Quant je vous voy* resembles the music of the French composers of the following generation, such as Févin and Mouton, more closely than it does the florid chansons of the previous generation, like those by Ockeghem, Busnois, and the younger Compère and Agricola, the chances are that the chanson dates from later rather than earlier in Josquin's career.¹

We can get some idea of what Josquin was doing in the 1480s from studying Josquin's settings of chansons rustiques, and they in turn may shed some light on the question of the date of *Quant je vous voy*, which is written in a similar style. More than half the chansons Josquin wrote for three voices consist of so-called 'chansons rustiques,' polyphonic settings of monophonic songs that circulated as 'popular' tunes everywhere in France during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.² Although these polyphonic settings are found, of course, in courtly manuscripts, and they were composed by royal composers, and performed, presumably, at court occasions, we are, nevertheless, justified in speaking of these songs as a repertory 'in the popular mode', for the poems do not deal with the idealized sentiments of courtiers pretending to follow some imaginary code of courtly behaviour, but rather they speak of urban or rural middle or lower class life, many of them in comic or even obscene terms: the trials of young girls, for example, married to old men, the sexual exploits of the clergy, the attempts of travelling knights to seduce peasant girls, the difficulties of mercenary soldiers going to war, of young girls who find themselves pregnant, and so on. Such strophic popular songs had a tremendous vogue at the court of the populist king, Louis XII.³ His composers, and

¹ On the chansons of the generation of Févin and Mouton see, among other studies, Howard Mayer Brown, 'The Genesis of a Style: the Parisian Chanson, 1500-1530' in James Haar (ed.), *Chanson and Madrigal 1480-1530* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 1-36; and more recently Lawrence F. Bernstein, 'Notes on the Origin of the Parisian Chanson', *Journal of Musicology*, i (1982), 275-326.

² On Josquin's chansons rustiques see van Benthem, 'Josquin's Three-part "Chansons rustiques"', as p. 121, n. 1. On the chanson rustique in general see, among other studies, Howard Mayer Brown, 'The *Chanson rustique*: Popular Elements in the 15th- and 16th-century Chanson', *Journal of American Musicological Society*, xii (1959), 16-26.

³ The largest collections of monophonic 'popular' songs from this period are the two early sixteenth-century manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris: MS fonds fr. 9346, published in a modern edition in Théodore Gérold, *Le manuscrit de Bayeux* (Strasbourg, 1921), and MS fonds fr. 12744, published in a

especially Antoine de Févin and Jean Mouton, seem to have arranged such tunes almost exclusively, abandoning the old-fashioned *rondeau* altogether, although *rondeaux* did continue to be composed at other French-speaking courts in the early sixteenth century, such as that of Marguerite of Austria in The Netherlands.

In most of his three-part popular arrangements, Josquin, like the younger composers who specialized in this repertory, set the monophonic tune most clearly and simply in the tenor, and wrote two glossing voices above and below. But in a sense, all three voices in this repertory play a virtually equal role in stating and extending the important musical material, for the superius and contratenor (though it would perhaps be more accurate to speak of the lowest voice in this repertory as the bass) regularly imitate the tenor, and move at almost the same rate of speed, so that the texture is almost fully integrated.

The texture of these chansons, in fact, reveals something important about compositional technique in the late fifteenth century, and about the onset of the drastic changes in style that occurred about 1500. That is, in most of Josquin's three-part popular arrangements, the older method of basing the polyphony on a tenor-superius scaffolding has already broken down. In most of these pieces, the tenor and superius do not make good, self-sufficient counterpoint; instead, unsatisfactory, unstable intervals, such as fourths, appear on strong beats between the upper two voices, and they need to be completed by the bass.¹

But in two of Josquin's three-part popular arrangements, and only two—*Entrée suis en grant pensée* and *Mon mary m'a diffamée*—there are no structural fourths; the tenor-superius scaffold still

modern edition in Gaston Paris, *Chansons du XVe siècle* (Paris, 1875). On these monophonic chansonniers see Gustave Reese and Theodore Karp, 'Monophony in a Group of Renaissance Chansonniers', *Journal of American Musicological Society*, v (1952), 4-15.

¹ See, for example, *En l'ombre d'ung buissonnet* in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, *Wereldlijke Werken*, 5), no. 60, where the middle voice regularly sings unstable intervals with the top voice, most notably at the medial cadence in m. 26. The editor calls the bottom voice 'tenor' and the middle voice 'altus', but the middle voice functions in most important respects as a traditional 'tenor' in the sense that it states the pre-existent melody clearly and simply (in this particular case, admittedly, not strikingly more so than the top voice), whereas the bottom voice includes 'filler' material and ornamental (or extending) material, and never has a fully coherent version of the pre-composed tune on which the composition is based. *En l'ombre* thus clearly shows the new tendency for the bass rather than the tenor to control the tonal movement.

holds.¹ Their style, in other words, suggests that they were written earlier than the others. As it happens, these are the two chansons rustiques that appear in the earliest sources: both of them in that part of Uppsala 76a, a provincial French chansonnier, compiled in the 1490s or possibly in the first decade of the sixteenth century;² *Mon mary* also in other French and Netherlandish sources of the early sixteenth century, the Brussels and Tournai part-books and London 35087;³ and *Entrée suis* also in Florence 2794, a chansonnier compiled in the 1480s, either in France or by a Frenchman in Italy.⁴ So *Entrée suis* must have been written by the 1480s, and probably *Mon mary* dates from approximately the same time, since it, too, carefully avoids structural fourths between tenor and superius. In short, it seems that Josquin's involvement with the chanson rustique goes back to the 1480s, and the difference in texture between *Entrée suis* and *Mon mary* on the one hand, and the other chansons rustiques on the other suggests that the largest number of popular three-part arrangements date from even later, the 1490s or even possibly the first decade of the sixteenth century.

If that dating is even approximately correct, it helps us to confirm the 1480s as the time when Josquin also composed the *rondeau Quant je vous voy*, for it is written in a style rather similar to that of the chansons rustiques, and with the tenor-superius scaffold intact. And if that dating is even approximately correct, we have some idea, however vague, of the chronology of almost all Josquin's three-part chansons.

From the fragmentary evidence that survives—it is quite possible that the handful of surviving three-part chansons represents only a small part of the song repertory Josquin actually composed—we can begin to understand better the way the

¹ *Entrée suis* is published in a modern edition, among other places, in Josquin, *Werken* (ed. Smijers, *Wereldlijke Werken*, 5), no. 58, and Picker, *Chanson Albums*, p. 479, and van Benthem, 'Josquin's Three-part "Chansons rustiques"', pp. 432–4. *Mon mary m'a diffamée* is published in a modern edition in *ibid.*, pp. 444–5.

² See Brown, 'A "New" Chansonnier'.

³ On London 35087 see p. 121, n. 2 above. On the Brussels/Tournai part-books see *Census-Catalogue*, i. 97–8, and iii. 217.

⁴ On Florence 2794 see George M. Jones, 'The "First" Chansonnier of the Biblioteca Riccardiana, Codex 2794: A Study in the Method of Editing 15th-century Music' (2 vols., Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1972); Joshua Rifkin, 'Pietrequin Bonnel and Ms. 2794 of the Biblioteca Riccardiana', *Journal of American Musicological Society*, xxix (1976), 284–96; and also *Census-Catalogue*, i. 245–6.

composer developed as a secular composer during the earlier years of his career. If this view is correct, he began his career in the early 1470s (or even earlier) with two exceptional pieces—the possibly autobiographical *Ce pauvre mendiant* and the religious *A la mort*—that nevertheless relate closely to earlier courtly traditions, and to the current preoccupations of his colleagues in Milan with the application of cantus-firmus technique to a secular repertory. These early songs reflect the florid decorative style of the Franco-Burgundian composers of the previous generation, but even at this early stage in his life, Josquin's music is distinguished by a clarity of form and an unusually sensitive regard for the relationship between poetic form and phrase structure that mark his later music. Later in the 1470s or early in the 1480s, when Josquin was in his late 30s or early 40s, he wrote the two surviving songs that serve as his contribution to what we can perhaps call the classical repertory of fifteenth-century courtly song. Both *Que vous madame* and *La plus des plus* are notable for the ingenuity and sensitivity with which the composer used a relatively complex motivic structure in the service of shaping his pieces, of controlling and moulding their form.

The next phase in Josquin's development cannot be dated very precisely, but it probably occurred during the 1480s, after the death of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, when Josquin was in the service of Cardinal Ascanio, or King René of Anjou, or just possibly somewhere else in France. It was during this period that he and his colleagues—the extent to which Josquin himself took the lead in the new developments is by no means clear—transformed the courtly chanson from a florid and arguably decadent genre devoted to the preservation of long outmoded ideals into something fresh, lively, and new. It must have been during the 1480s or 1490s when he made the experiment of setting *Quant je vous voy*, inventing a kind of through-composed, syllabic, declamatory music for this one *rondeau* that sets it far apart from the artificial and melismatic examples so prevalent in the previous generation; it closely resembles one of the new three-part popular arrangements based on monophonic street songs that began to be cultivated by French composers and that eventually prevailed at the French court. In the course of cultivating this repertory of chansons rustiques, Josquin eventually abandoned the traditional tenor-superius scaffolding technique that had underpinned all fifteenth-century song, in favour of an equal-voiced texture that in principle gave composers a wholly new flexibility in fitting together independent melodic lines.

The young Josquin was an unusually skilful composer of fifteenth-century chansons, who revealed in the few examples that remain, some of the traits that were to distinguish his greatest and most mature work, and especially his concern that music should support and enhance the words it set. The repertory of three-part chansons shows also how much more progressive he was than his slightly younger contemporaries, Agricola and Compère, for whereas they showed some intelligent understanding and sympathy for the new styles, Josquin adopted them wholeheartedly—and perhaps even led the way in developing them—so that we can rightly claim that he was one of the musicians who helped to transform the late fifteenth-century chanson, and to lead it into a new age.