ADDED LINES AND MISSING VOICES: A REEXAMINATION OF MACHAUT'S RELATIONSHIP TO *AUCTORITAS*

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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The poet and composer Guillaume de Machaut is unique in the fourteenth century for his massive complete-works volumes. However, a potentially anachronistic view of the poet-composer's relation to *auctoritas* has developed in modern deliberations on Machaut. In this thesis I challenge these current notions.

Beginning with a review of select secondary literature in Chapter II, I focus on the ways scholarly consensus has foregrounded an ultimately authoritative author persona at the exclusion of other agents involved in the compilation of Machaut's works.

In Chapter III I approach the question of authority from the perspective of Machaut's own writing through a close reading of select narrative passages and embedded letters in the *Livre dou Voir Dit*.

The analyses of four examples of later-added contratenors to select works by Machaut in the posthumous **MS E** (1390) are the focus of Chapter IV.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Poet-composer Guillaume de Machaut (1300–1377) is well known to scholars today by and for his surviving complete-works volumes. Such rich documentation of this single author makes Machaut a unique figure in the fourteenth century. While Machaut is surely deserving of the special attention he has received for his unusual claim as medieval poet and composer, the emphasis on his status as an author figure can easily tip toward an anachronistic view of his authoritative persona. Such a view is problematic in so far that it elevates Machaut to a point where his products are established as inviolable, untouchable works, and it easily obscures the presence and mediation of other agents, who were active in compiling Machaut's works. An overemphasis on the unalterable work dismisses, moreover, later adaptations and additions found in the complete-works manuscripts. Further, this perspective favors certain sources, such as Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 1584, i.e., **MS A**, because scholars understand this manuscript to be the most authoritative preservation of the poet-composer's intent.

In this thesis I argue that modern understandings of Machaut's relationship to *auctoritas* should be reframed. In what follows, I will do so with a threefold approach. I will review select scholarly literature on Machaut, do a close reading of select passages in the *Livre dou Voir Dit*, and give comparative analyses of contratenor behavior in three voice balades securely attributed to Machaut and later-added contratenors in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 99291, known in the common scholarly parlance as **MS E**.

In the second chapter, I will review select secondary literature with a focus on how scholarly consensus has foregrounded an ultimately authoritative author persona at the exclusion of other agents involved in the compilation and preservation of Machaut's works as we have them today. Whereas several scholars have drawn attention to ways other agents were involved in the 'making' and transmission of Machaut's work (including patrons, illuminators, and scribes), these agents are typically briefly introduced and perfunctorily acknowledged only to be set aside. Thus, while literary and music historians note the presence of other agents, they typically do not challenge the common understanding of Machaut as the single actor. The underrepresentation of such agents likely arises – at least in part – because we have so little concrete historical evidence to flesh out their identities. Despite the seeming paucity of information, I hope to shed a new light on the indispensable roles of these agents. In this chapter I will also briefly introduce Machaut's complete-works manuscripts, and then narrow my focus to the two most disparate volumes; the early **MS C (**Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. fr. 1586) and the relatively late **MS E**.

In Chapter III I will take select examples of Machaut's own writing from the narrative and the embedded letters in the *Livre dou Voir Dit*. I will consider what this text tells us about the circulation of Machaut's musical and literary works during his lifetime. I will pay particular attention to how widely Machaut's works circulated and the methods through which they were disseminated. In this chapter I will call into question not only how much control Machaut may have actually had over his works during his lifetime, but I will also reconsider the amount of control he attempted to exert over his oeuvre.

After arguing for the value of the less authoritative Machaut sources in Chapter II and drawing attention to the flexibility of Machaut's works during his lifetime in Chapter III, in Chapter IV I turn to musical analysis. There I will look closely at four examples of later-added voices to select works by Machaut in the posthumous **MS E** (1390). These later-added contratenors point to a flexible performance tradition of Machaut's works just a few years after his death. Thus, already at end of the fourteenth century, Machaut's works were far from sacrosanct. In this final section, I will provide an overview of the contratenor voice in general, offer a model for contratenor analysis, and then look closely at the four later-added contratenors to Machaut's two-voice balades.

The relevant literature reviews will be integrated into the beginning of each chapter.

CHAPTER II

MACHAUT'S MANUSCRIPTS: RE-READING *AUCTORITAS* IN THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Jennifer Bain's article "Why Size Matters" calls into question the depths of control asserted by Machaut in his complete-works manuscripts. Bain acknowledges the potentially "heretical" nature of her argument for modern scholars, who view Machaut as an unassailable authoritative and named figure in a century with relatively few names. Bain ultimately argues that this intense focus on Machaut's authority is problematic.[1] Building on her critique of the scholarly consensus, I will draw attention to areas in the study of Machaut's manuscripts that need to be rebalanced or reconsidered in their relationship to Machaut's position as an author.

The remarkable (relative) coherence of Machaut's manuscripts and their unique position as a single-author compilation of narrative *dits*, lyrics, and music in the fourteenth century cannot be ignored. Sylvia Huot even suggests that, without other precedence for a compilation of such diverse materials spanning far-ranging topics, Machaut's presence as an author holds together the works combined in his manuscripts; strung together neither by genre nor theme, they instead rely upon the asserted presence of an author figure to cohere into one, author-centric book.[2] The near unquestionability of

[1] Jennifer Bain, "Why Size Matters: Music Layout and Order in the Machaut Manuscripts," *Digital Philology: A Journal of Medieval Cultures,* vol 5, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 73–103.

[2] Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987): 232, 235.

Machaut's authorship and his seemingly strong authoritative persona lends toward a work-centered, author-oriented approach to Machaut in modern scholarship.

The emphasis on Machaut's works – his *authorized* versions and ordering, in particular – obscures the role of other agents behind the complete-works manuscripts as we have them today. In the search for such "authorized versions," Machaut becomes elevated to a creator ideologically on par with Beethoven. The conventional view then would suggest that Machaut is understood to be a (relatively) free agent in his role as a self-conscious creator, with (nearly) singular authority over his works. As the products of a singular, self-conscious, free-agent creator, Machaut's works are read to confirm his authority and to circularly define the genius of their author. From this perspective, the search for his "authorized versions" becomes essential.

In this chapter I will first provide a brief overview of Machaut's six surviving complete-works manuscripts with text and music, and then I will consider select scholarship on Machaut's complete-works manuscripts in two areas. First, I will consider the role of other agents – namely, Machaut's patrons, and the scribes and illuminators of the complete-works manuscripts – involved in the transmission and preservation of Machaut's manuscripts. Second, I will highlight differences in the complete-works manuscripts as demonstrated by Elizabeth Eva Leach, Margaret Bent, and Jennifer Bain on the early **MS C** and the late **MS E**. In all, I hope to build from Bain's challenge by pointing out areas that demand further scholarly attention as modern understanding of Machaut's *auctoritas* is reexamined.

Brief Introduction to Machaut's Complete-Works Manuscripts

Of the six surviving complete-works manuscripts with both text and music, four are dated during Machaut's lifetime.[3] These manuscripts are **MSS C**, **Vg**, **B**, and **A**. Machaut's degree of involvement in the compilation of these manuscripts is unclear, but scholars agree that it is very likely that, in some capacity, Machaut was involved in the compilation of **MSS C** and **A**,[4] and possibly **Vg** as well.[5] **MS B** is a direct (and hastily-executed) copy of **MS Vg**, and therefore these two are often discussed in tandem as **MS Vg/B**.[6] Dated to after Machaut's death are **MSS F-G** and **E**. See **Table 2.1** for an overview of the manuscript sources.

Of these six manuscripts, Margaret Bent has split five into two stemmatic traditions.[7] The first tradition includes **MSS A** and **F-G**, and the second is made up of **MSS Vg**, **B**, and **E**.[8] The earliest Machaut manuscript, **MS C**, is an outlier and does not belong to either of these two traditions; as the earliest manuscript, it contains fewer works

[3] Here I am providing a very brief overview of these manuscripts; for a detailed description of all Machaut manuscripts, see Lawrence Earp's indispensable book: Lawrence Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research,* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1995).

[4] That is, **MS C** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français 1586 (F-Pn fr. 1586); **MS A** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français 1584 (F-Pn fr. 1584).

[5] Lawrence Earp, "Machaut's Role in the Production of Manuscripts of His Works," *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* vol. 42, no. 3 (Autumn, 1989): 479.

[6] See Margaret Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," *Musica Disiplina,* vol. 37 (1983): 60. Here the sigla and their holding institutions are: **MS B** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français 1585 (F-Pn fr. 1585); **MS Vg** Private Collection of James E. and Elizabeth J. Ferrell, Kansas City, United States.

[7] Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," 69. See Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 77–102 for more complete information on the complete-works manuscripts, including the text-only manuscripts. I have not included a discussion of **MS W** (with both text and music) here because of its extremely damaged condition. For a discussion of this manuscript, see Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 79–85.

[8] That is, **MS F-G** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français 22545–22546 (F-Pn fr. 22545–6); **MS E** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français 9221 (F-Pn fr. 9221).

than the later manuscripts, and it also presents significant differences in ordering.[9] Complete up to its time, this codex represents an earlier stage in the poet-composer's life. I will discuss this manuscript further in the next section.

The patron and initial owner of **MS A** is not known; its earliest noted ownership is in the position of Louis of Bruges, sire of Gruuthuyse in the late fifteenth century.[10] This is the manuscript that is considered to be the most "authoritative" by Machaut scholars. Dated to the early 1370s, it was compiled in the last few years of Machaut's life. **MS A** is the most complete of the collected-works manuscripts; it contains a prescriptive index with an inscription "*Vesci lordenance que G. de Machau vuet quil ait en son livre"* ("Here is the order that G. de Machaut wants his book to have"), and it is the first to have the retrospective *Prologue* (inserted after the index).[11] The second manuscript in the first tradition, **MS F-G**, consists of two parts, and music is found only in **MS G**. The music in **MS G** is closely related to **MS A**, yet it is not a direct copy of **MS A**. **MS F-G** is dated in the 1390s, and while representations of a coat of arms in the miniatures may somehow indicate the original owner, the identity of this individual is still unknown.[12] Despite the late date of this manuscript, it is not problematic to scholars in the same way as **MS E** due to its close relationship with the authoritative **MS A**.

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[9] Elizabeth Eva Leach, "Machaut's first single-author compilation," in *Manuscripts and Medieval Song: Inscription, Performance, Context,* eds. Helen Deeming and Elizabeth Eva Leach, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 247–249.

[10] Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 88.

[11] Ibid., 87–88. Further supporting the idea that this index is ordered by Machaut is the ordering of genres in the *Remede de Fortune* (Earp, 469).

[12] Ibid., 91.

Table 2.1. Overview of MSS

Independent Source	Tradition X		Tradition Y		
MS C	**MS A**	**MS F-G**	**MS Vg** →	**MS B** →	**MS E**
1350–6	1370	1390s	1370	1370–2	1390
Contains about ½ the material found in other MSS, with ordering differences.	Prescriptive index From lost exemplar.	Closely related to **MS A**, copied from same exemplar.	From a different, lost exemplar.	Poor copy of **MS Vg**.	Significant differences; uses **MS B** and other, unknown sources as exemplars.

Table 2.1. *This table is a basic overview of the main complete-works manuscripts with text and music, and their relationships to one another.*[13]

Dated similarly to **MS A**, **MS Vg** was decorated ca. 1370.[14] It has some differences in ordering and is presumed to have been copied from a now lost exemplar.[15] **MS B** was copied directly from **MS Vg**, likely as an unauthorized exemplar, ca. 1370–1372.[16] This manuscript is on paper and not parchment, and the scribe who copied the musical portion was not musically educated. The late **MS E**, to be discussed further below, used **MS B** as one of many exemplars. Bent has established that many of the errors transmitted in **MS E** can be attributed to the poor quality of its exemplar, **MS B**, and that the musical scribes of **MS E** in fact worked to solve problems they encountered

[13] See Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," 75 for a more in-depth depiction of stemmatic relationships. Aside from the clear relationship between **MSS Vg** and **B**, relationships between the other manuscripts is more complex. Due to this complexity, Bent ultimately argues for stemmatic relationships for each piece within the manuscripts.

[14] Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 84.

[15] Earp, "Machaut's Role," 475.

[16] Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 85–86.

in this inferior exemplar.[17] **MS E** is dated to ca. 1390, and first appears in an inventory of the library of the duke of Berry in 1402.[18] Both **MSS E** and **C** differ from the other complete-works manuscripts to a significant degree, and I will now turn my attention to addressing these differences.[19]

Scholarly Reception of the Early **MS C** and the Late **MS E**

Through most of the twentieth century, **MS C** had been erroneously dated to the fifteenth century. Containing about half of the works in **MS A**'s prescriptive index, scholars considered this manuscript to be an insignificant source as "a late copy of an early redaction."[20] Then, in 1973, based on art historical grounds, François Avril revised the dating, putting it somewhere between 1350–1356. **MS C** is divided into two sections, CI and CII, and has many high-quality illuminations.[21]

Despite the modern scholarly emphasis on the authority of **MS A** for the most definitive ordering of Machaut's works, in 1988, the editors of the translations of *Remede de Fortune* and *Le Jugement dou roy de Behainge* found that the earlier sources transmitted better concordant readings for words and music.[22] Until that point, editors had chosen to use **MS A** in their texts and translations based upon the weight of the

[17] Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," 71.

[18] Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 93.

[19] See Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, and Elizabeth Eva Leach, *Guillaume de Machaut: Secretary, Poet, Musician* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011): 7–81, for a more complete history of the Machaut MSS and scholarly reception of Machaut.

[20] Leach, "Machaut's first single-author compilation," 247.

[21] Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 78.

[22] Leach, "Machaut's first single-author compilation," 249–250.

prescriptive index and inscription in this manuscript.[23] Thus, the inviolability of **MS A** was already coming into question in the final decade of the twentieth century, at least in the discipline of literary studies. In this case, the editors found that early readings of these two poems (in **MS C** and a related anthology manuscript) gave better readings than those preserved in later manuscripts, leading Leach to conclude that at least some of Machaut's works circulated outside of his compiled collected works in an "earlier and textually better form than is exhibited by the later, more complete codices for which evidence of direct authorial input is more usually adduced."[24] Despite the fact that Avril re-dated the manuscript in the 1970s and literary scholars in the late 1980s recognized superior readings in **MS C**, the importance of this early codex has still struggled to gain traction. In the field of musicology in particular, Leach's chapter is an important and recent advocate for the earliest surviving complete-works manuscript.[25]

Similarly discounted for its alternative presentation of Machaut's works, the posthumous **MS E** contains significant differences from the other collected-works manuscripts.[26] Notable departures include differences in layout, ordering, and changes to the number of voices for some chansons in the musical section of the manuscript. Deborah McGrady, Margaret Bent, and Jennifer Bain have highlighted some of these differences. McGrady writes about layout changes in **MS E** and pays specific attention to

[23] Ibid., 249–250.

[24] Ibid. **MS C** was used for the 1988 text and translation of *Remede de Fortune*, and a closely related anthology manuscript, **F-Pn fr.2165–6** for the text and translation of *Le Jugement dour oy de Behainge* (the only work of Machaut's in this double-volume anthology manuscript.)

[25] Ibid.," 247–248.

[26] Deborah McGrady, *Controlling Readers: Guillaume de Machaut and His Late Medieval Audience* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 130.

the altered layout in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit*. This *dit* contains multiple genres: letters, narrative and *formes fixes* poetry, and musical works. In the other two collected-works manuscripts containing the *Voir Dit* (MSS A and F-G), the reader is reminded that the musical works can be found at the end of the manuscript in the musical section through a title above the lyric poem: "balade et y a chant," as seen in **Figure 2.1.**[27] Only in **MS E** is the notation of these musical settings embedded directly into the *Voir Dit* and then repeated again in the musical section of the manuscript. This prompts McGrady to assert that the layout of **MS E** "implements techniques that favour a public reading of its contents" through oral performance.[28] In addition to this layout change, McGrady finds that the scribes of **MS E** created a new, self-conscious reading of the *Voir Dit* through the use of modernizing orthographical and syntactical changes, more elaborate notation, and a unique layout that "capture[s] the hybrid nature of the work."[29] McGrady's analysis of the *Voir Dit* in **MS E** suggests that differences in this manuscript were the result of an intentional rereading and interpretation. The value of the alternate readings captured in the posthumous **MS E** are further illuminated by the arguments of Bent and Bain, who demonstrate the competence and resourcefulness of the musical scribes in **MS E**, to be further explored in the next section.

Figure 2.1: Indication of Musical Setting

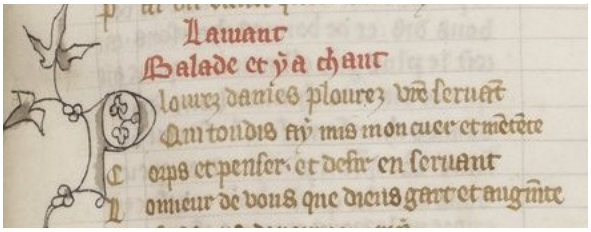

*Figure 2.1: **MS A**, fol. 226r.*

[27] **MS A**, fol. 226r.

[28] McGrady, *Controlling Readers*, 86.

[29] Ibid.

The Role of Other Agents

Scholars are not unfamiliar with the idea that agents other than Machaut played a role in production of his complete-works manuscripts. After all, no autograph manuscript survives, and at least two of the complete-work sources post-date his life. However, more weight needs to be given to the role of patrons, scribes, and illuminators in our modern deliberation of Machaut's *auctoritas* and his relation to surviving sources; in this section I will foreground these agents as they are discussed in the literature.

I. Patrons and Illuminators

In general, patrons have the potential to influence most aspects of their commissioned works. There is at least one example in Machaut's oeuvre in which the patron predetermined the ordering, inclusion, and exclusion of works. Earp postulates that *Le Livre dou Voir Dit* was excluded from **MS Vg** (and subsequently **MS B**, its direct copy) because the patron already owned a copy of this work.[30] Piecing together travel histories and library inventories, Earp suggests that the *Voir Dit* was likely well-known among the connected circles of the Duke of Bar and the King of Aragon, and when **MS Vg** arrived in King Alfonso V of Aragon's library (found in the 1416–1458 inventory), there was no need for the manuscript to contain the work, since his library already owned a manuscript of the *dit.*[31]

The so-called prescriptive index found in **MS A** is frequently cited as evidence of Machaut's desired control over the order of his works. However, Ursula Günther has

[30] Ibid., 130.

[31] Earp, "Machaut's Role," 478–479.

provided strong evidence to suggest that the final ordering of the *dits* in **MS C** can be attributed to the desires of the patron.[32] Günther hypothesized that the initial recipient of the manuscript was meant to be Bonne of Luxembourg; this explains the prominent position of the *dit Jugement du roy de Behaingne,* which is in honor of her father.[33] Earp builds on these arguments to say that the placement of the *Remede de Fortune* immediately after the *Jugement du roy de Behaingne* can be understood equally through an understanding of the patron; this work was written specifically for Bonne of Luxembourg and may have been placed in this prominent position as a memorial to her after her early death, when **MS C** was subsequently completed for Jean le Bon.[34] Yet despite these hypotheses noting the influence of patrons in collected-works sources, scholars are still invested in Machaut's *auctoritas* as exemplified in the predetermined ordering of his oeuvre.

At different times and using different methods, Sylvia Huot and Elizabeth Eva Leach have both addressed the illuminations found in **MS C**. In her 1987 book *From Song to Book*, Huot provides an in-depth analysis of Machaut's role in the production of **MSS A** and **C**. An important, early scholarly work to cross-disciplinary boundaries, Huot's book considers how the illuminations in **MSS C** and **A** have an impact on readings of the stories within which they are imbedded.[35] She specifically uses the strong connection between the illuminations embedded in the *Remede de Fortune* to suggest that

[32] Earp, "Machaut's Role," 467.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Leach, *Guillaume de Machaut,* 70.

Machaut himself oversaw the process of illuminating the manuscript and used both the narrative and illuminations to solidify his identity as poet.[36] Huot does concede that an illuminator with a strong knowledge of the text could have conceived of these images independently, however.[37] But ultimately, she prefers a view that promotes Machaut as an authoritative, unilateral agent who strove to project a certain authorial persona via every medium in his complete-works manuscripts. As with the main of her scholarly contributions, Huot's hypothesis about Machaut as author remains central to the conventional view today.

Huot's reading of the complete-works sources rests on the relationships between Machaut, the literary traditions that he is working within, and the text and its illuminations. She argues that the illuminations in **MS C** depict a progression from trouvère to author, gradually moving from an emphasis on oral performance – for example, through the depiction of scrolls to represent writing that was meant to be experienced aurally – toward an emerging author figure in the "three-fold poetic identity of lover, writer, and performer."[38] Huot suggests that this transformation is intricately tied to this first complete-works compilation as it "captures with extraordinary sensitivity the creative tension between song and book," as the book moves from "a stage for oral performance" to a "stage for the execution of writing and compilation."[39] Huot is even more convinced of this transformation based upon her reading of **MS A**; she posits more

[36] Huot, *From Song to Book*, 248.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid., 269–271.

[39] Ibid., 273.

strongly that Machaut might have overseen the illuminations in **MS A** based on location and dating of both the manuscript and the iconography.[40] The *dit* in this later codex contains far fewer illuminations than **MS C**, and the illuminations are now in a tone removed from the trouvère tradition. Huot reads this change as a shift further away from an emphasis on oral tradition and performance, toward a practice privileging literacy and the written word.[41]

Nearly thirty years later, Leach revisited the illuminations in **MS C** and foregrounded the contributions of other influential agents in the miniatures of Machaut's earliest extant codex. Here Leach is not so much concerned with what the miniatures in **MS C** reveal about the poet-composer and his developing authorial awareness, but instead, she focuses on the potential influence of the book's patron.[42] Leach examines the illuminations in **MS C**'s first five *dits*, connecting the first three to either Bonne of Luxembourg or members of her family. Leach explains that in four of five of these *dits*, there is a "higher density of illuminations than any other manuscript." Rather than connect the illuminations to the trouvère tradition, she argues that the images connected to these four *dits* "provide ample didactic material suitable for Bonne, her husband, and her children."[43] In some cases, these *dits* contain characters who can be viewed as "explicitly or implicitly" representative of John and Bonne of Luxembourg. Further, Leach suggests the entire book may have "served a didactic purpose within the royal

[40] Ibid., 246.

[41] Ibid., 251, 272–273, 277.

[42] Leach, "Machaut's first single-author compilation," 251–256.

[43] Ibid., 253–256.

household," specifically geared towards the young princes.[44] Leach demonstrates that the three male children represented in the illuminations in the *Remede de Fortune* appear to be approximately the age of Bonne's three oldest sons at the time of her death. Specifically, the depiction of these boys on the wheel draws attention to the "subjugation to Fortune of his patrons and their children – the likely readers and owners of his book."[45]

The two readings of these illuminations are not mutually exclusive or incompatible. Leach's perspective does not diminish Huot's interpretation of the illuminations in **MS C**; instead, it refines Huot's analysis of the miniatures. Leach zooms out from the narrow focus on the poet-composer topos (including his relation to the traditions before him and the narrative of the story he has crafted) to include the influence of the book's patrons.

Leach's argument serves as a reminder that Machaut was not a free agent, composing and compiling his narratives, lyrics, and chansons for his own enjoyment. He was an employee with responsibilities to patrons, and this position undoubtedly had an impact on his works as we understand them today.

II. Scribes

In addition to the influence of patrons, scribes may also have made decisions on the ordering of musical works.[46] The role of scribes – including their seeming shortcomings – is often used to discount the significance of **MSS B** and **E**. However, in her foundational article on **MSS Vg**, **B**, and **E**, Margaret Bent urges scholars to

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[44] Ibid., 252–256. She draws from art historian Domenic Leo's work that explores the didactical purpose of the book in the royal household.

[45] Ibid., 256.

[46] Bain, "Why Size Matters," 88–90.

reconsider the value of **MS E** despite its deviation from the main complete-works manuscript traditions. The poor quality of **MS B**, **MS E**'s exemplar in many cases, is central to her argument. Both patron and scribe contribute to the poor quality of **MS B**. Likely a rush job, **MS B** was copied from **MS Vg** by two (likely musically uneducated) scribes. The manuscript has poor musical and vertical spacing, and its scribes were frequently unable to discern the difference between a dot and a rest.[47] Bent suggests that **MS E**'s scribe was musically educated and realizes the inferiority of **MS B**. S/he sought to correct ambiguities or mistakes found in the rushed exemplar, and wherever possible, copied from another exemplar.[48]

Nearly thirty years later, Bain expands on Bent's argument for the redemption of **MS E**. She points out that the scribe of **MS E** – in addition to correcting small details such as clarifying dots and rests – also tackled issues of page layout raised by the large size of the manuscript in an efficient way. For example, in the chanson B17, the scribe of **MS E** recognizes that this triple-texted balade is a canon and adjusts the layout accordingly, writing out the melody only once.[49] In addition to making clarifying examples as found in an ambiguous and faulty exemplar, Bain argues that common scribal practices may explain the seemingly rigid ordering in the earlier Machaut manuscripts and the differences that emerge in **MS E**. Bain is able to demonstrate that the fixed ordering of the motets in each of the other complete-works manuscripts, with the exception of **MS E**, may simply be the result of the larger size of **MS E** in comparison to

[47] Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," 59.

[48] Ibid., 62, 70–71; See Earp 477 for the inferiority of **MS B** tied to the demands of the patron.

[49] Bain, "Why Size Matters," 85.

the other collected-works volumes. The "one motet per opening layout" in the earlier, smaller complete-works manuscripts needed no logistical reshuffling. The uncomplicated layout of the motets – unlike any other genre – allowed for a secure ordering of the motets in the smaller, early manuscripts.[50] This consistently transmitted order (until **MS E**) may give "the impression of a rigid, authorial intent, where perhaps none existed."[51] Bain's paleographic examination of the layout demonstrates that the different order of the motets in **MS E** may not reflect a loosening of authorial control after Machaut's death, but may instead indicate that the fixed order of the motets in the earlier manuscripts simply reflects common scribal practice in the face of layout decisions.

Consideration of scribal practices raises questions about how much the scribe's job and conditions for copying affected any one of the complete-works manuscripts. These conditions include the quality of the scribe's exemplars – primary and secondary – and the scribe's abilities and/or musical education. In the case of **MS E**, the musically educated scribe saw fit to improve upon the authority of Machaut and intervene as an interlocutor. In addition to his/her careful selection of musical exemplars and clarification of ambiguities, the scribe made layout changes that were not only practical but also altered how certain works are experienced by the reader.[52] These changes, considered alongside other departures from the other complete-works manuscripts – such as the later-added contratenors, which preserve a flexible performance tradition – demonstrate

[50] Bain, "Why Size Matters," 85.

[51] Ibid., 90.

[52] McGrady, *Controlling Readers*, 142–151. McGrady writes about how the visual layout in **MS E** impacts readings of the *Voir Dit*.

that the contents of **MS E** were not bound by Machaut's authority although the composer had died only thirteen years prior to the making of the book.[53]

In addition to the clear problems introduced by the musically uneducated scribes of **MS B** into the second manuscript tradition, Lawrence Earp suggests that scribal errors may have already been present in an early exemplar and were never corrected by Machaut.[54] He proposes that perhaps Machaut was concerned with only the order of his complete works, as suggested by the prescriptive index and authorial stamp in **MS A**, and not the minute details.[55] While in some cases it is clear that the logistics of manuscript production took precedence over the index order, Earp also asserts that other oddities can be attributed to scribal confusion over the new order of works indicated by the index (for example, the placement of *Lay de plour* at the end of the section).[56] He also suggests that such misplacements are another indicator that "Machaut did not exercise a very active intervention in the day-to-day copying of the manuscript; he was perhaps not available, or was not consulted, when the professional scribe faced difficulties."[57] To lend further support to this claim, Earp cites a passage from the *Le Judgement dou roy de Navarre*:

> *J'ay bien de besoingnes escriptes / Devers moy, de pluseurs manieres, / De moult de diverses matieres, / Dont l'une l'autre ne ressamble. / Consideré toutes ensamble, / Et chascune bien mise a point, / D'ordre en ordre et de point en point, // Dès le premier commencement / Jusques au darrein finement, / Se tout voloie regarder / – Dont je me vorray bien garder – / Trop longuement y metteroie.*

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[53] See Uri Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E," University of Exeter, last modified July 1, 2013. http://machaut.exeter.ac.uk/?q=node/2104 and Chapter IV.

[54] Earp, "Machaut's Role," 479.

[55] Ibid., 474; 479 (direct intervention of author in MS Vg unclear); 479–80.

[56] Ibid., 485–486.

[57] Ibid., 486. He also makes note that some added corrections may be authorial, but there is still more work to be done on the sorting out of correcting hands in **MS A**.

> For my part, I have many / Written works, of several types, / On many diverse subjects, / Each different from the other. / Considered all together, / And each meticulously perfected / in order and detail, / From the first beginning / up to the last end, / If I wanted to look at everything / – which I would well like to avoid – / I would take too long at it.[58]

However, this picture of Machaut – as a poet-composer who cares tremendously about the order of his works, yet is unconcerned with the details of their transmission – is at odds with the strength of Machaut's *auctoritas* traditionally depicted within the literature. It is certainly incongruent with a nineteenth-century concept of the wholly-authoritative creator.

Is it possible that the prescriptive index in **MS A** is not a fixed, desired order asserted by the author later in his life, but one of many possible, acceptable orders?[59] Could the order that comes down to us from the prescribed index have been specifically arranged for the manuscript's still unknown patron? While the narrative *dits* provide more direct clues about patrons based on their tie to specific people and historical events, can the other two sections (lyrical and musical) of Machaut's complete-works manuscripts be reexamined in light of this knowledge? Bain has questioned not only the influence of patrons on the compilation of the manuscripts, but also the significance of the motet ordering – which has been heavily interpreted by scholars, most notably, by Anne Walters Robertson – through consideration of the manuscript sizes and common scribal practices.[60] It is also important to note that Machaut's prescriptive index in **MS A**

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[58] Ibid., 463–464.

[59] The parallel sequencing of musical genres in the *Remede de Fortune* and **MS A** is indirect evidence that Machaut had at least some large-scale influence on decisions of ordering (Earp "Machaut's Role," 469).

[60] Bain, "Why Size Matters," 88. Anne Walters Robertson, *Guillaume de Machaut and Reims: Context and Meaning in his Musical Works.*

was not given final authority in the execution of the manuscript. Scribal practices and logistical issues took precedence over the prescribed order in the index.[61]

These methods of questioning are a reminder of the multiple agents at work in the compilation and ordering of Machaut's manuscripts. Despite the prescriptive index and Machaut's "stamp of approval" inscribed in **MS A**, both of which have been used to impose meaning on Machaut's works and their order, scholars have also shown that other agents played a role in the compilation (including ordering) of Machaut's manuscripts. In the discussion of Machaut's authority and attempted control over his collected works, more room needs to be made for questions that consider the potential influence of other agents. Finally, another important agent to consider – involved not in the preservation of Machaut's works, but rather, in their transmission – is the messenger. The role of the messenger will be examined in detail in the following chapter.

Conclusion

Scholars, including Huot and Earp, admit that, despite circumstantial evidence suggesting Machaut's strong authorial presence, we still cannot know with certainty the degree to which he was involved in the compilation of his complete-works manuscripts.[62] I argue that more weight needs to be given to this caveat. Not only can we not know to what degree Machaut oversaw the production of his complete-works manuscripts, but we also need to question the concept of *auctoritas* as it relates to Machaut and his works more generally. The need for this reexamination is especially clear in cases in which an

[61] Earp, "Machaut's Role," 482.

[62] Huot, *From Song to Book*, 246.

understanding of Machaut's authority has become so established and unquestioned that it is used as (nearly circulatory) evidence in analyses of his works. Bent's examination of the additional voices in **MS E** and Huot's analysis of the *Voir Dit* provide two early examples of this type of reasoning.

Bent's article is immensely important for reframing the value of the posthumous manuscript and drawing scholar's attention back to the previously dismissed codex. Based upon the newly asserted competence of **MS E**'s musical scribe and the relatively close dating of the manuscript to Machaut's death, Bent posits furthermore that the additions and alterations made in **MS E** could be tied to the authority of the composer. She suggests that scholars should reconsider the new materials, versions, and layout changes in **MS E** as potentially tied to the composer under "at least remote-control 'supervision' by, or authority from Machaut himself."[63] Bent pushed scholars to look again at **MS E** and drew attention to its worth as a competently-created source. Writing before the new philology gained ground in the field of musicology, her work here was a pioneering effort that is still foundational today. Where I differ from her 1983 conclusions is in her hypothesis that these changes were made in connection to the poet-composer's authority. Stylistic and contrapuntal analysis of select additional contratenors in **MS E**, which will be presented in a subsequent chapter, leads me suggest an alternative hypothesis in line with work done by Uri Smilansky.[64] The additional contratenors in **MS E** behave differently – most notably, at structural cadences or through

[63] Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," 74.

[64] The flexible performance tradition for which Smilansky argues will be unpacked further in Chapter IV.

the reinterpreting the harmonic structure of the cantus-tenor pair – than contratenor voices stably transmitted in the earlier complete-works manuscripts.

Additionally, Bent proposes that the close dating of **MS E** to the time of Machaut's death (only thirteen years later) does not exclude the possibility that work on the manuscript began during his lifetime.[65] Even if the work *began* in his lifetime, its drastic differences from the other complete-works manuscripts further challenge the idea that Machaut's collected-works were immutable. There are therefore two possibilities: one, there is a problem with how we think about authority in relation to Machaut; or two, Machaut's authority was an illusion, it was something he strove for but was not able to grasp.

In a similar manner, Huot uses Machaut's established *auctoritas* and craftiness as an overtly controlling creator to support her reading of the letters in the *Voir Dit.*[66] The factual or fictive nature of the letters included in the *Voir Dit* has been heatedly debated by scholars, and Huot's symbolic reading of even the misdating of the letters is not without precedent.[67] Huot asserts that such disorder in his private correspondence is highly unlikely, and instead Machaut intentionally misordered the letters in order to draw attention to the process of compilation and to figuratively represent "the problematics of any attempt to transpose the experience of love into writing."[68]

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[65] Bent, "The Machaut Manuscripts Vg, B and E," 75.

[66] Huot, *From Song to Book*, 283.

[67] Guillaume de Machaut. *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* ed. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998): xxi. For example, Françoise Ferrand's 2003 article continues in this type of analysis of *Le Voir Dit.*

[68] Huot, *From Song to Book*, 283.

Barton Palmer's interpretation of the letters and his argument for their veracity offers another compelling viewpoint.[69] Palmer examines the apparent contradictions in the *Voir Dit* by considering not only the misdating and misordering of select letters, but also close examination of other evidence found in both the story and the letters themselves. Palmer addresses the alignment of details recorded in the *Voir Dit* with historically verified times, places, and events. He considers the irrelevant, quotidian, and uncontextualized details in the letters, and the development of the characters Toute-Belle and the poet in relation to characters typical of the courtly love genre. The misdated letters can easily be attributed to the sequential bundle in which Machaut kept Toute-Belle's letters, as the story here implies.[70] In this case, the task of the scribe who copied the letters may reasonably explain the seemingly impossible (and often symbolically interpreted) misdatings. For example, three letters (39, 40, and 41) may have easily been stored together as there is a large gap before the next letter, and as the scribe copied from the letters he "would have taken the date from the letter at the bottom [and] applied it to each of the tree, assuming that their presence in a bundle meant they belonged together."[71] Palmer and Huot both agree that the letters would not have intentionally been misdated in the *Voir Dit* without reason; whereas Huot searches to extract meaning from the misdatings, Palmer suggests an alternative explanation that calculates for human error and the role of the scribe in the copying of the letters. Considering the misdating and misordering of the letters, Palmer contends that while one "may believe that Machaut

[69] Guillaume de Machaut. *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* xxvi–xl.

[70] Ibid.,, xxx.

[71] Ibid., xxx–xxxi.

engaged in a conspiracy against his readers of postmodern intricacy," there is "no evidence from his other works or from the literary tradition he worked in" to suggest that Machaut would have "conceived and executed such a bizarre compositional plan."[72]

Scholarship on the *Voir Dit* has continued to thrive without reaching a consensus since Huot and Palmer first made their arguments.[73] Although more than a quarter of a century has passed since they published their respective hypotheses, their arguments are important to examine as they remain foundational to Machaut scholarship today. At their core, these interpretations represent two ways of approaching Machaut: 1) Machaut as a poet-composer who took great pains to perfect, mediate, and control every part of his works, works which can, and should, be scoured and interpreted for their hidden meaning; 2) Machaut as a poet-composer who sought to project at least the illusion of control over his works, which he carefully ordered and compiled – yet, he was not the ultimate authority, and, in the end, he was not involved, or possibly not concerned, with the finer details of his books.

Both approaches have something to offer and have produced fruitful and compelling analyses and interpretations. I argue that both readings should be considered when approaching Machaut's works; neither perspective can be, to this point, unequivocally historically verified nor rejected. I seek only to reframe Machaut among the other acting agents who ultimately mediated his works to us today. Questions of scribal agency and patronage are especially tricky because in most cases, we do not have

[72] Ibid., xxix.

[73] I will look at some of these closer in the following chapter.

sufficient information to make historically grounded claims about these figures.[74] However, in the absence of clear historical documentation, these other agents have been acknowledged in the scholarship and then set aside while Machaut has continued to grow as an all-authoritative figure.

If we approach Machaut as an authoritative creator and lose sight of other agents, the danger of circularly reading authority into his texts emerges. An undue emphasis on Machaut's *auctoritas* as a poet-composer can easily lead to an over-interpretation of Machaut's intent in both his individual works, and in our understanding of the manuscripts themselves. Additionally, this perspective privileges one manuscript, **MS A**, over the other complete-works sources in Machaut scholarship. The emphasis on the authority of **MS A** not only risks bestowing an anachronistic understanding of authority onto Machaut, but it also obscures the textual and paratextual evidence in the other complete-works manuscripts.

[74] Leach reminds us of how little we can historically affirm about the poet-composer's life outside of his own works and warns against the dangers of reading truth into fiction. Leach, *Guillaume de Machaut,* 26–33.

CHAPTER III

AUCTORITAS AND THE *VOIR DIT*

Introduction

Machaut's *Livre dou Voir Dit*, or *The Book of the True Poem* is a narrative *dit* with interpolated letters, lyrics, and chansons. It tells the story of a primarily long-distance love between a poet named Machaut and an unidentified young courtly lady. The work presents a complicated problem to historians and literary critics. Not unlike his other narrative *dits,* the *Voir Dit* contains ambiguous details that may correspond to historically verified facts; in addition to the narrator's self-identification as the poet-composer Guillaume de Machaut, other specific historical figures (i.e., duke of Normandy) and events (i.e., the plague) can be recognized.[75] Scholarly interpretation of this self-professing true story is varied; should it be read as a historical document, a work of literature, or somewhere in between?[76]

The epistolary exchange between the older poet and the young girl is embedded alongside chansons and lyric poetry. While the poet-protagonist self-identifies as Machaut, the young courtly lady after whom he pines is never explicitly named: the poet claims that he has embedded her name in the book, and within the rondeau *Dix et Sept* in particular, but nowhere is she unambiguously identified.[77] Instead, she is called "Toute

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[75] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* ed. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998), xxxiii–xxxv.

[76] Palmer and Leech Wilkinson give a thorough outline of scholarly reception of the *Voir Dit* in their introduction to the edition and translation. Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* xix–xxv.

[77] Guillaume de Machaut, L25, L31, L35 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 318–323, 396–401, 434–441. Brooke Heidenreich Findley, "What's in a Name?: Machaut, Deschamps, Peronne, and the Uses of Women for Writers in Fourteenth-Century France," *Project Music,* no. 18 (2010): 16.

Belle," and addressed by Machaut with an array of pet names. The stock characters of the poet-lover and the courtly lady from the *fin' amors* genre are put into a different perspective in this purportedly true narrative. The poet's love is not unreciprocated, and the lady, though geographically distanced from the poet throughout most of the narrative, is not unattainable.

Toute Belle's identity has been the subject of much scholarly work. If indeed she can be identified, and her identity historically verified, the *Voir Dit* preserves rich and early documentation a female poet and a selection of her poems.[78] In the mid-nineteenth century, scholars understood her to be Agnes of Navarre, an identification rejected by Paulin Paris in 1875.[79] In 1995, Lawrence Earp summed up the then current critical understanding that Toute Belle (and for that matter, the entire story contained in the *Voir Dit*) was entirely fabricated.[80] Taking a different position, Barton Palmer and Daniel Leech-Wilkinson affirm a historically-grounded interpretation of the story and the existence of a second poet three years later, in their 1998 edition and translation.[81] In the last ten years, most scholars agree that the name embedded in the *Voir Dit* is Peronne. In addition to the hidden letters RENOP in Machaut's rondeau (and other anagrams found across the work), the name Peronne is presented and verified by Eustache Deschamp's balades 447 and 493, in which he mentions a certain Peronne whom Machaut loved.[82]

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[78] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* xl.

[79] Elizabeth Eva Leach, "Life: Guillaume de Machaut's Living," in *Guillaume de Machaut: Secretary, Poet, Musician*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 37–38.

[80] Lawrence Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1995), 43; Heidenreich Findley, "What's in a Name," 15.

[81] Heidenreich Findley, "What's in a Name," 15.

[82] Ibid., 16, 20–21.

Brooke Heidenreich Findley affirms the name "Peronne," is beyond doubt and the likely historical model for Toute Belle.[83] In this chapter I will therefore refer to her both as Toute Belle and Peronne.

Musicologists have an interest in the *Voir Dit* because of its interpolated musical works, and for what it reveals about Machaut's compositional practices. For example, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and Yolanda Plumley use stylistic and textual analysis to suggest a chronology and dating of select musical works.[84] Pascale Duhamel reconsiders Machaut's statements about music in the *Voir Dit* in order to advocate for greater appreciation of the impact of literacy. My approach in this chapter will be similar to Duhamel's – in so far that I will not focus on the music specifically, but rather, on the cultural implications of the writings contained in the *Voir Dit.*

Furthermore, while Palmer makes a compelling case to support the underlying veracity of epistolary exchange between Machaut and another poet (Peronne),[85] we should remember that the letters are nevertheless edited and embedded within a larger work of carefully crafted fiction. Inside the narrative, the epistolary communication is not a simple and orderly back-and-forth exchange. Some letters must be missing, others rearranged.[86] These letters – reordered, redacted, and inserted in a larger narrative – may

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[83] Ibid., 16. For a more complete history of Toute Belle's scholarly reception, see Heidenreich Findley's complete article, "What's in a Name?."

[84] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, "Le *Voir Dit* and La *Messe de Nostre Dame*: Aspects of Genre and Style in Late Works of Machaut," *Plainsong & Medieval Music,* vol. 2, no. 1 (1993): 43–73; Yolanda Plumley, "La composition par réélaboration chez Guillaume de Machaut: le cas de *Dame, se vous n'avez aperceü* (Rondeau 13)," *Analyse Musicale,* vol. 50 (2004): 64–76.

[85] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* xxvii–l.

[86] Depending on one's reading of the *Voir Dit* (as either historically-based work or entirely crafted fiction), scholars have interpreted this information in radically different ways, and the field is still divided on how the work should be read. For two recent interpretations from a purely literary and a metaphysical approach see: Fasseur, Valérie. "Apprendre l'art d'écrire: Sens de la relation didactique dans le *Voir Dit* de

be a remnant of exchanges between Machaut and Peronne, or they may be one fictionalized part of a magnificent work of fiction.

Despite the likelihood that the correspondence between Machaut and another poet is historically based, the letters in the form they have come down to us do not exist outside the context into which they are embedded and cannot be considered apart from it. Machaut's early reception in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries problematically favored the poet as a historian and sought to plunder his poetic works for their historical value alone (and often with a nationalist bend), disregarding the literary characteristics of Machaut's work.[87] However, the literary character of these historical documents does not preclude their value as historical cultural documents. Sophia Menache points to the historical value of narrative sources in her evaluation of the fourteenth-century narrative chronicles of Pope Clement V. Even if the specific interests, ideologies, and prejudices of the chronicles may exclude these documents from the scientific approach to historical analysis, they are nevertheless valuable cultural documents, and "provide faithful reflections of prevailing attitudes in contemporary society."[88]

In a similar manner, even if one believes the interpolated letters of the *Voir Dit* to be entirely fantastical, they are still valuable cultural documents. The *dit* self-identifies as true and therefore can reflect, to some degree, the society in which it was produced and the audience to whom it was directed in order to be believable and truthful. If Machaut

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Guillaume de Machaut." *Romania,* no. 124 (2006): 162–194; Ferrand, Françoise. "Au-delà de l'idée de progrés: La pensée musicale de Guillaume de Machaut et le renouvellement de l'écriture littéraire dans le *Voir Dit.*" In *Progrès, réaction, décadence dans l'Occident médiéval,* edited by Emmanuèle Baumgartner and Laurence Harf-Lancner, 231–249. Genève: Droz, 2003.

[87] Leach, "Life," 35.

[88] Sophia Menache, "Chronicles and Historiography: The Interrelationship of Fact and Fiction," *Journal of Medieval History,* no. 32 (2006): 334, 345.

crafted these letters to fit his *dit*, the contents of the letters cannot be so fictionalized as to be unrecognizable to his readers.[89] Heinenreich Findley demonstrates this in her analysis of Peronne by setting aside the identity of Toute Belle and demonstrates the usefulness of her letters and poetry in the *Voir Dit* for understanding contemporary attitudes toward gender roles and gendering as a literary device.[90]

In this chapter, I will reevaluate the letters and parts of the narrative as cultural, rather than historical, documents. In my reading of the interpolated epistolary writings, I will focus on three themes that, in my view, further challenge modern understanding of Machaut's *auctoritas*. My goal is to highlight passages, which leave open multiple, ambiguous interpretations, and to re-approach them from a perspective that questions the amount of control Machaut had over his works, and the amount of control he sought to impose. I will first examine what the letters and narrative communicate about the interplay of orality and literacy, especially in the transmission of words and works. I will then position the widespread circulation of Machaut's works, as described in the letters, against the image of a controlling author. Subsequently, I will reconsider Machaut's interest in controlling his works.

Interplay of Orality and Literacy

Most eloquently capturing the relationship between orality and literacy in this work, Toute Belle declares that she loves hearing Machaut's recently received lyric

[89] Anne Stone, "Music Writing and Poetic Voice in Machaut: Some Remarks on B12 and R14," in *Machaut's Music: New Interpretations,* ed. Elizabeth Eva Leach, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 126.

[90] Heidenreich Findley, "What's in a Name," 15–16.

balades read aloud as well as looking at them (*fors en veoir et oir lire*).[91] This pronouncement is in keeping with Ardis Butterfield's study of poetry and music in late medieval narrative *romans à chansons*, where she demonstrates the intricately woven nature of the oral and the written in medieval French literature.[92] Indeed, one finds many passages throughout the narrative and letters of the *Voir Dit* to support the coexistence of orality and literacy in transmitting and learning both lyrical and musical works. In oral and written modes of transmission, other agents are at play. In the *Voir Dit*, these actors are far from invisible; in fact, their role is foregrounded in the letters between Machaut and Toute Belle.

i. Modes of transmission and reception

Both methods of transmission allow for different types of reception, and both media are necessary and foregrounded in this story; the narrative recounts examples of oral and written transmission of messages, lyrics, and chansons. This interplay is not unique to Machaut's *dit*. Oral and written mediation are thematized in various and distinct ways across multiple genres in medieval French literature. Naturally, these modes of transmission did not hold the same connotations for the fourteenth-century audience as they do for modern readers. Further complicating the intertwined relationship between orality and literacy is the paradox that all accounts of oral transmission are mediated to us through writing.[93] In this section I will offer an overview of the interplay between oral and written communication in the *Voir Dit*, with two specific questions: 1) what does the

[91] Guillaume de Machaut, L5 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 86.

[92] Ardis Butterfield, *Poetry and Music in Medieval France* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13–15.

[93] The mutually defining and mediating relationship of orality and literacy in literature is not unlike the problem of musical notation representing sound.

Voir Dit tell us about how the mode of transmission affects reception?; and 2) what is the role of other agents in the processes of transmission in the *Voir Dit*?

In the narrative, Machaut recalls singing to his messenger that the latter might deliver a balade to Peronne ("*Ces .ij. balades nenvoiasse / Et que le chant ne li chantasse / Par quoy de par moy li diest / Pour dieu quelle les apreist*").[94] Here, no mention of writing is involved; the balade is delivered by word of mouth alone, like a game of telephone. Machaut sings his balade to the messenger who then shares what he has learned with Machaut's beloved, who receives it aurally.

In an inverse manner, the reader learns that after receiving a musical rondeau alongside a letter, Peronne is able to engage with the composition in its written format; "*jay veu le rondel que vous mavez envoie et lay apris*" ("I have looked over the rondel you sent and committed it to memory").[95] On the surface, this line suggests the musical notation was sufficient for her to comprehend the work after seeing it, without the need for an oral or aural model.[96] Anne Stone suggests that while Peronne may be the exception to the rule when it came to the capabilities of the contemporary reader, her experiences must be recognizable to the fourteenth-century audience, who is asked to trust this true account.[97] Beyond the surface, the phrase raises questions about the method and level of engagement Peronne sought with Machaut's music and poetry.

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[94] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 40, lines 603–606.

[95] Ibid., L7 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* L7, 104.

[96] Stone, "Music Writing and Poetic Voice in Machaut," 126–127.

[97] Ibid.," 126.

In the narrative, we learn that the lover's beloved is a skilled singer, respected and well-known for her musical abilities.[98] Perhaps her privileged position in the noble class and her recognized musical inclinations make this scenario plausible. However, it is not quite clear what exactly Machaut's beloved means when she writes that she has learned (*lay apris*) Machaut's polyphonic rondeau.[99] Did this learning involve both the poetry and the music? Was it active? Did she sing each of the three voice parts individually, one after another – or perhaps just the cantus – content with a dismembered rendering of the polyphonic composition? Or did she perhaps pass the notation along to others, who then furnished it with sound, before she then learned and understood its contrapuntal inner workings? Alternatively, the word *rondel* could just as easily refer to the poetry alone; might Peronne have studied his poem with little consideration for the accompanying musical notation? Surely, she is not entirely disinterested in Machaut's music; her persistent requests for musical settings makes this clear.[100] However, the foundation of their epistolary exchange rests on Machaut's mentorship of Peronne as a poet.[101] Might she have prioritized the internalization of the rondeau's rhyme, meter, form, and language over its music? There are a variety of possibilities left open by Peronne's word choice, and they raise two important points: first, a wide spectrum of engagement with the poetry and music is possible through its written transmission; second, unless we concede that Toute Belle was interested in the poetry alone, or a disassembled musical rendition of the

[98] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 11, lines 113–114.

[99] Guillaume de Machaut, L7 in *Le Livre dou Voir Di,* 104. This chanson is R13.

[100] For example: Guillaume de Machaut, L1 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 30–31.

[101] Ibid., L1 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 30–31.

polyphonic work, her learning of this work required the participation of other voices, and by extension, some form of aural comprehension.

In addition to the oral and written transmission of musical works, the narrative describes oral and written transmission of lyric poetry. The narration recounts Peronne's request for a written copy of a lyric balade in order for her to understand it better (emphasis is my own).[102]

> *Quant ieus ma balade fine / ma douce dame desiree / Dist cest bien fait se dieus me gart / Adont par son tresdous regart / Me commanda quelle leust / Par quoy sa bouche la leust /* ***Car en cas quelle la liroit / Assez mieus len entenderoit***
>
> (When I finished my ballad / The sweet lady of my desire / Said: "This is well done, so God preserve me." / And then her sweet look / Ordered me to let her have the work, / Which she might read, mouthing the words. / **For if she were to read it, / She would better understand it.**)[103]

Huot suggests that Peronne's request for a written copy of this lyric may suggest the primacy of the literate tradition.[104] I contend that this is not necessarily the case, since the aforementioned examples put both modes of transmission in play, if not at equal footing. Different methods and levels of learning and understanding are better served by different methods of communication. In these accounts Machaut sent his poetry and chansons to Peronne through both oral and written media; the poet considered both to be viable options. Orality and literacy are not mutually exclusive, one mode of transmission is not put before the other nor defined as a more or less sufficient method of deliver; rather, the

[102] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 166–167, lines 2464–2476.

[103] Ibid., 166, lines 2463–2470.

[104] Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 284.

two operate together. Different information is conveyed through the oral delivery of a chanson or lyric than is communicated in its notation.

ii. Modes of transmission and the agents involved

Across many genres of medieval French literature, the agent of transmission is an ever-present – yet seldom considered – character. The importance of a trusted messenger clearly emerges as Machaut and Toute Belle consider the quality of the courier in their exchanges. The figure of the messenger in medieval French literature emerged as an object of study among literary scholars in the 1990s, with a specific focus on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Most thoroughly, Jacques Merceron analyzes the variety of messenger types found within specific literary genres in relation to their narrative function.[105] Building from his work, Judith Rothschild examines Marie de France's *lais* for the role of the messenger and finds patterns that break from the conventional role of the messenger as outlined by Merceron.[106] The role of the messenger in the letters of the *Voir Dit* is complicated since the story apparently straddles the line between truth and fiction. Further examination of Machaut's use of the messenger in relation to the messenger's conventionalized role in earlier literary genres is still necessary. Here I will focus on what the depicted messenger may convey about the relationship between oral and written transmission of messages, lyrics, and songs.

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[105] Jacques Merceron, *Le message et sa fiction: La communication par messager dans la littérature française des XII^e^ et XIII^e^ siècles* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998)

[106] Judith Rice Rothschild, "Minor Characters in Marie de France's Lais: Messengers and Their Messages," in *Courtly Arts and the Art of Courtliness: Selected Papers from the Eleventh Triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 29 July–4 August 2004,* eds. Keith Busby, Christopher Kleinhenz (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2006), 601–610.

Machaut blames his infrequent correspondence on the lack of a trusted messenger (L4),[107] and Toute Belle censors what she sends on account of the messenger (L26).[108] More frequently, a point is made to announce the presence of a trusted messenger. The care taken to disclose this information points to both parties' awareness of the (more than passive) role of the messenger.

In L34, Toute Belle insists that she will take care of the *Voir Dit* when he sends a copy and insists that he may trust this messenger ("*Et aussi vous me povez securement escrire par ce message*").[109] After having received and returned the book to Machaut, again, in L43, she asks for him to return the opening for her to make a copy. In her request for the opening of the *Voir Dit,* she specifies that it should be returned by this messenger. ("*ie vous pri que vous me weilliez renvoier par ce message*").[110] Her request for specific personnel to deliver Machaut's precious book, in conjunction with her earlier censoring of her own lyrics, suggests that some messengers were sufficient for delivering certain types of materials (i.e., letters), but not others (i.e., lyrics or the opening of the *Voir Dit*).

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[107] "*Et ad ce que vous me mandez que ie vous escrise souvent / Plaise vous savoir que ie ne truis mie message a ma volente en qui ie mose bien fier.*" Guillaume de Machaut, L4 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 576.

[108] "*Je ne vous envoie pas ce que vous mavez mande pour ce quil mest avis quil ne seroit pas bon de lenvoier par ce message / mais ie le vous envoieray par vostre valet la premiere fois que vous le menvoierez*" Guillaume de Machaut, L26 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 326.

[109] "*Je vous pri que vous menvoiez vostre livre par ce message / Et ne doubtez car ie le garderay bien / Et aussi vous me povez securement escrire par ce message.*" Guillaume de Machaut, L34 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 432.

[110] "*Mon chier amy ie vous pri que vous me weilliez renvoier par ce message le commancement de vostre livre / celui que ie vous renvoiay piessa / car ie nen retins point de copie / et ie lay trop grant fain de veoir.*" Guillaume de Machaut, L43 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 586.

In L43, Peronne apologizes for the poorly written letter, blaming the state of the letter on the notary's poor work ("*Et se les letters sont mal escriptes / si le me pardonnes / car ie [v] ne trueve mie notaire tous iours a ma volente*").[111] Indeed, Merceron notes that the delivery of written messages requires more agents (a notary and often a reader), and therefore offers more places for a breakdown in communication.[112]

In addition to being trusted (or not) with specific physical materials, messengers are not necessarily neutral third parties. First, in L29, Peronne sends a friend to employ the messenger and hide her identity as the letter's author in order to avoid gossip that would emerge if it were to be revealed that she had sent a messenger only to deliver a letter to Machaut ("*Et lay einsi fair pour ce que ie ne weil mie quon sache que ie vous envoie message qui naille pour autre chose*").[113]

Here we return to the complementary characteristics of oral and written transmission. In two cases, Toute Belle sends a message to be delivered orally in addition to her letter (L40 and L44). The first case is L40, where Toute Belle mentions sending a verbal message via Machaut's secretary, who is portrayed as trusted figure throughout the book ("*si li dis pluseurs choses de bouch les queles il vous devoit dire*".)[114] In L44, she sends a "great lord and friend" ("*li quels est bien mes grans sires et amis // Et ie say bien*

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[111] Guillaume de Machaut, L43 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 586.

[112] Jacques Merceron, *Le message et sa fiction: La communication par messager dans la littérature française des XII^e^ et XIII^e^ siècles* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998), 133–135.

[113] Guillaume de Machaut, L29 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 392.

[114] Ibid., 22–23. "*Car ie ne oy nulls puis la chandelier / Et si vous ay depuis escript / et darreinnement par vostre secretaire / **Et si li dis pluseurs choses de bouch les queles il vous devoit dire** / Et si me promist quil feroit tant par devers vous que ien aroie briefment response / mais vous nen avez riens daingnie faire / dont il me samble pour certain que vous mavez de tous poins guerpie et mise en nonchaloir."* Guillaume de Machaut, L40 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 524.

que aussi est il li vostres") to deliver her message to Machaut rather than an employed messenger.[115] The examples of paired verbal and written transmission in L40 and L44 help to communicate emphatically the lady's message. These letters are written in a more urgent tone, as the lady seeks either to convince the lover to respond to her letters after a long period of silence, or to convince him of her faithfulness. The added oral communication amplifies the lady's message in order to move the lover to action (response) or belief (in her faithfulness).

This rhetorical strategy may recall the trustworthy quality of oral transmission in the early stages of increasing literacy, as described by both Butterfield and Gaunt. As the prominence of the written word increased in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, an "eye-witness was intrinsically more believable than documentary evidence."[116] The written message carried a new, distinct possibility for deception. Butterfield draws attention to its latent disingenuous capacity, and indeed, M.T. Clanchy's work exposes a correlation between a rise in written claims of authenticity and saw a rise in forgeries in the twelfth century.[117] From this perspective, Peronne's written words and their sincerity are amplified through spoken messages. In a book that self-professes authenticity, written descriptions of the spoken word help to secure veracity and to counteract a longstanding, underlying suspicion of the written word.

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[115] Ibid., L44 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 592–593.

[116] Simon Gaunt, *Retelling the Tale: An Introduction to Medieval French Literature* (London: Duckworth, 2001), 17.

[117] Butterfield, *Poetry and Music,* 15, 314.

Circulation of Machaut's Works

During his lifetime, Machaut's lyrical and musical works circulated widely. In the final letter of the book (L46), Toute Belle writes to Machaut that she has not yet received the two four-part balades he spoke of sending in L37, and she worries that they will be "shouted through the streets" ("*car iay grant doubte quelles ne soient truandees avant que ie les sache*") before she has the chance to learn them.[118] Earlier, in L43, Toute Belle describes a lyric balade that has reached her through circulation outside of the correspondence between the pair, further suggesting the life of both lyrical works and chansons beyond the composers' distribution. [119]

Despite the fact that Machaut's chansons circulated widely, Machaut was willing to make significant changes to already popular songs. In L31, Machaut sends Toute Belle a rondeau, which includes previously written text and music, fitted recently with two lines: a tenor and contratenor ("*Je vous envoie un rondel note dont ie fis piessa le chant et le dit / Si y ay fait nouvellement teneure et contrateneure / Si le weilliez savoir / car il me samble bon.*")[120] In her reply, Toute Belle expresses her disappointment in receiving a recycled composition, as the rondeau is already well known to her ("*Jay eu un rondel note que vous mavez envoie / mais ie lavoie autre fois veu et le say bien*").[121]

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[118] Guillaume de Machaut, L46 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 623. *"Je nay pas heut les .ij. balades que vous me mandez que vous mavez envoies / dont ie sui moult courrecie / car iay grant doubte quelles ne soient truandees avant que ie les sache*."Guillaume de Machaut, L46 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 622.

[119] Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 748. In the commentary Palmer and Leech-Wilkinson confirm that Toute Belle here quotes a line from a balade which she has not received directly from Machaut, and she must have gotten it from another source.

[120] Ibid., L31 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 400.

[121] Ibid., L32 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 416.

While the rondeau in question is not named in the *Voir Dit*, Leech-Wilkinson asserts that it must be R18, based on its placement in the manuscripts (following *Dix et Sept,* R17), and on stylistic analysis.[122] Leech-Wilkinson argues that the cantus of R18 appears to have been composed first, and the tenor and contratenor parts work together as a unit, suggesting they were a later addition. Palmer and Leech-Wilkinson suggest that although we do not have a surviving monophonic version of this rondeau, one was widely circulated and popular. Yet the language Machaut uses does not unequivocally secure the previous existence of a monophonic chanson – is it possible that the previously existing music was already polyphonic?

The commentators suggest that an early version of R17 may survive in **MS E**, after it was given to the Dukes of Bar in an early version; however, they make no mention of the alternate version of R18, with a slightly different tenor and contratenor, found in the same manuscript.[123] The difference in the contratenor appears to be primarily ornamental, and the difference in the tenor is minimal. While there is no manuscript evidence preserving a monophonic version of R18, there is a manuscript that preserves a version with an alternate tenor and contratenor. Is it possible to interpret Machaut's "*Si y ay fait nouvellement teneure et contrateneure*" as a reworking of two previously existing lines?

Ambiguities in Middle French wording also leave both possibilities open. The word "nouvellement" may mean either recently or newly. The English translation of the original French text translates "fait nouvellement" as "newly made," could also mean re-

[122] Ibid., "Commentary" in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 737.

[123] Guillaume de Machaut, "Commentary" in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 739–740.

doing previously existing lines.[124] This reading suggests that perhaps another polyphonic version, such as the version in **MS E**, may have circulated widely and been familiar to Peronne. On the other hand, if "nouvellement" is interpreted as "recently"-made lines (added to music and words written long ago), this translation suggests a first addition of these new lines and supports the assertion that a lost monophonic version of the rondeau was in wide circulation. However, neither possibility is confirmed by the language or the surviving manuscript evidence.

Machaut's new voice parts and Toute Belle's disappointed reaction provide insight into fourteenth-century cultural conceptions of *auctoritas* in relation to author and work. First, to state the obvious, Machaut freely makes changes to a previously written – and broadly circulating – chanson, and he is transparent about his later additions. Second, to both Machaut and Toute Belle, this song is not fixed in one version. The addition of two new voice parts does not sufficiently alter the popular circulating version of the rondeau (monophonic or otherwise) to the point of obscuring its identity as a particular chanson. Peronne's disappointment reveals the inclusive nature and flexibility of what defines or delineates a chanson. This flexible understanding of what defines a work must be balanced with modern understandings of *auctoritas* in relation to author/composer and work.

Further, in L10 Machaut insists that Toute Belle learn the balade he sent, *Nes quon porroit* (B33) just as it is, without adding or taking away any part ("*Si vous suppli que vous le daingniez oir / et savoir la chose einsi comme elle est faire sans mettre ne*

[124] Analyse et Traitement Informatique de la Langue Française, *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330–1500),* version 2015 (DMF 2015), ATILF - CNRS and Université de Lorraine. http://www.atilf.fr/dmf.

oster").[125] This insistence suggests the existence of a flexible performance practice or realization of a piece. Machaut's instruction against such alterations in L10 suggests that these liberties were in fact commonly made in the circulation of Machaut's chansons, just as Machaut later added a tenor and contratenor to his existing rondeau. A flexible performance practice that allowed for the adding (or subtracting) of lines would also account for Toute Belle's disappointment expressed in L32 upon receiving a previously written rondeau, now furnished with a new tenor and contratenor. If such arrangements were frequently made to adapt existing chansons, Machaut's alternative version could hardly boast as something novel.

One could argue that Machaut's insistence on the number of voices for *Nes quon porroit* in L10 should be viewed as his attempt to exert control over his works as they left his hands. In the larger context of the letter, however, this interpretation is less compelling. Machaut goes on to say that this balade is well suited to instruments, listing the organ and bagpipes specifically, for whomever could arrange it ("*Et qui la porroit mettre sus les orgues / sus cornemuses / ou autres instrumens / cest sa droite nature*").[126] This, again, suggests a flexible performance tradition in the circulation of Machaut's chansons. It also demonstrates Machaut's openness to outside influence or alterations. He claims that this chanson could be well suited to instruments, and yet he himself does not intend to set it. Machaut does, however, expressly welcome the possibility of instrumental settings for those who may be able and interested.

[125] Guillaume de Machaut, L10 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 124.

[126] Guillaume de Machaut, L10 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 124.

Rethinking Machaut's Requests

Machaut's unwillingness to part with his incomplete works has largely been understood as an indication of his perfectionism and desire for control over his oeuvre. For example, in L33, Machaut says that he has not sent his musical rondeau *Dix et Sept* to Peronne because he has not yet heard it; he writes that he does not like to share his chansons until he has heard them ("*iay fait le rondel ou vostres noms est / et le vous heusse envoie par ce message / mais par mame ie ne loy onques / et nay mie acoustume de baillier chose que ie ne face tant que ie laie oy*").[127] In a similar manner, when Machaut sends the incomplete *Voir Dit* to Toute Belle for her comments and suggestions, he requests that she guard the book and share it only sparingly ("*Je vous pri que vous gardez bien mon livre / et que vous le monstrez a meins de gens que vous porrez*").[128] A literal, straightforward reading of these passages is certainly possible; it would reinforce the commonly accepted image of Machaut as a poet-composer who is frantically grasping for control over his oeuvre. However, the surrounding context of the *dit* offers other possibilities, and in this section, I will offer alternate readings of such passages.

Machaut's discussion of *Dix et Sept* in L33 is a rich source of information about the working methods of the composer, but it is not necessarily straightforward. Duhamel uses this passage to highlight again the importance of literacy and notation in Machaut's compositional process. [129] If we read Machaut's words at face-value, they tell us two

[127] Ibid., L33 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 430.

[128] Ibid., L37 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 456.

[129] Pascale Duhamel, "Le *Livre dou Voir Dit* de Guillaume de Machaut et la transition de la tradition orale vers la tradition écrite en musique," *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes,* vol. 26 (December 2013): 144–145.

important things about the working methods and ideals of the composer: first, he fully realizes internal compositional ideas on parchment, without the aid of sound; and second, despite confidence in its merits, he is careful not to part with a work until he has heard it.

In the context of the letter, and the present exchange between Machaut and Toute Belle, there is another possible interpretation of Machaut's reluctance to send the musical setting of the rondeau. This letter comes after Machaut has already failed to meet Toute Belle's request for new music. In L29 the lady specifically requests chansons, and in L31 Machaut replies that he has composed *Dix et Sept* and will send it along shortly ("*Mon dous cuer iay fait le chant du rondel ou vostres noms est / et le vous enyoieray par le premier qui ira a vous*").[130] In the meantime, he sends the ever-disappointing, already familiar rondeau, now fitted with two new voice parts. After Toute Belle expresses the inadequacy of this arrangement to meet her request, she again asks, more insistently, for new music (L32).[131] It is at this time that Machaut acknowledges that he has not yet met her request, and now rationalizes the delay; he has composed *Dix et Sept*, but because he has not heard it, he cannot send it.[132] In any case, Machaut assures her that this rondeau is one of the best compositions he has composed in the previous seven years. He swiftly moves on to excuse another failed request for a lyric set to music; busy with the *Voir Dit* and work obligations (with the visit of the duke of Bar), he is unable to work on the requested chanson.[133] In the larger context of this exchange between Machaut and

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[130] Guillaume de Machaut, L31 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 400.
[131] Ibid., L29 and L31 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 388–393, 396–401.

[132] Ibid., L33 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 428–431.

[133] "*Vous me mandez que ie vous envoie note Lueil etc. / Plaise vous savoir que iay este si embesongniez de faire vostre livre / et sui encores / Et aussi des gens dou Roy / et de monsieur le duc de bar qui a geu en ma maison que ie nay peu entendre a autre chose*." Guillaume de Machaut, L33 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 430.

Peronne, is it possible to understand Machaut's reasoning as little more than an effort to buy more time? While I do not seek to diminish the worth of such information about the working methods and tendencies of the composer – and from his own pen, no less, within the larger context of the story and Machaut's present exchanges with Peronne, I am inclined to question his excuse, however true he may profess his story to be.

In addition to refusing to send *Dix et Sept* without first hearing it, Machaut asks Peronne to exercise discretion in her sharing of his incomplete book. Toward the end of L33, Machaut says that he will send the incomplete *Voir Dit* to Toute Belle soon, and this is the first time he asks Peronne to show it only to those close to her heart.[134] He repeats this sentiment after sending the book, when in L37, he asks her to guard the book and show it to as few people as possible.[135] Machaut's reasons for such secrecy may be less related to the incomplete nature of the *Voir Dit* and more related to the red thread of undulating anxiety he expresses throughout the narrative about the sensitive nature of their relationship, and of the material contained within the book. The familiar trope of the unattainable noble lady naturally complicates any relationship the poet may seek with her in the genre of the *fin'amor*. In the *Voir Dit*, both parties have transgressed the social contract; Toute Belle reciprocates the poet's love despite his low position, and the poet has accepted her returned love (albeit with anxiety over the truth of her faithfulness). Both parties are aware that they must delicately handle the details of their relationship. Toward the end of the work, when Machaut suspects Toute Belle of sharing their

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[134] "*Mais ie vous pri si chier que vous mavez que vous ne moustrez le livre que a gens qui soient trop bien de vostre cuer.*" Guillaume de Machaut, L33 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 430.

[135] "*Je vous pri que vous gardez bien mon livre / et que vous le monstrez a meins de gens que vous porrez.*" Guillaume de Machaut, L37 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 456.

correspondence with others, he is devastated and fears that he is being mocked.[136] In L33 and L37, Machaut's requests may be equally symptomatic of his anxiety over the sensitive nature of the contents in the book, rather than the book's incomplete state.

One final example in support of this argument is Machaut's request in L35 for Peronne to learn the rondeau *Dix et Sept* but to keep hidden his compositional puzzle. He asks her to keep secret the fact that her name is included in the lyric ("*Si vous pri si chier que vous mavez pour ce que vostres noms y est / car ie nen feroie plus de ceste*").[137] This secrecy is counterintuitive; as a poet, would not it be in Machaut's interest to champion his clever encoding of Peronne's name into this lyric? Instead, this request for privacy reflects Machaut's anxiety surrounding their intimate correspondence, and his fear of how he will be received if others were to discover the nature of their relationship. In addition to breaking widely accepted social contracts, this relationship also transgresses poetic tropes and reverses the role of stock characters of the *fin'amor.* From a literary perspective, reading the poet's censorship as a form of secrecy recognizes the rupture of the familiar character trope of the unattainable courtly lady.

Conclusion

The complex balance between history and literature found in this self-proclaiming true story requires careful examination from both literary and historical perspectives. In this chapter, I have examined the cultural implications in the letters between the poet and Toute Belle within their narrative context in order to offer another perspective on

[136] Guillaume de Machaut, L42 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 578–581.

[137] Ibid., L35 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 438.

Machaut's own relationship to *auctoritas*. The balance of oral and written modes of communication within the story draw attention to the role of orality in Machaut's life and works, despite his large surviving written corpus, and foreground the roles of other, minor agents who are constantly at play in both oral and written transmission. The *Voir Dit* testifies to the widespread nature of Machaut's works, and hints at the changes that they incurred after leaving his hands.[138] His writing further suggests that a modern understanding of the controlling poet-composer is conflated with an overwrought modernist identity of the authoritative genius creator. He made changes to his own work, and in one case noted where specific instrumental adaptations would be suitable.[139]

The intersection of literary genres – letters, *formes fixes* poetry and chansons, and lais – within a narrative *dit* requires a fuller understanding of the themes, tropes, and practices in literary genres preceding Machaut in order to be grounded. There is more work to be done here, specifically on the role messengers play in the narrative structure in Machaut's oeuvre in light of the work of Merceron and Rothschild on the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Pascale Duhamel uses evidence in the *Voir Dit* to re-contextualize the widely-accepted understanding of the oral Middle Ages.[140] While conceding that Machaut's case is unique in the fourteenth-century, she uses him as a figure to draw attention to the need for a more nuanced picture concurrence of both orality and literacy in the Middle Ages. While Duhamel fears the pendulum has swung too far towards the oral Middle Ages and

[138] Ibid., L10 in *Le Livre dou Voir Dit,* 124.

[139] Ibid. Leech-Wilkinson, "Le *Voir Dit* and La *Messe de Nostre Dame*," 52–53.

[140] Duhamel, "Le *Livre dou Voir Dit*."

uses Machaut as a corrective lens, I suggest that Machaut studies specifically could benefit from further consideration of the role of orality in Machaut's written works. A reconsideration of the function of orality in Machaut's works untethers him from the surviving parchment and re-contextualizes him within living traditions in the fourteenth century.

CHAPTER IV

'AUTHORIZED VERSIONS' AND LATER ADDITIONS: ADDITIONAL CONTRATENORS IN THE POSTHUMOUS **MS E**

Introduction

Guillaume de Machaut is known today by and for the massive complete-works manuscripts compiled under his watchful eye. Special weight is given to **MS A**, as scholars understand this manuscript to be the most authoritative preservation of the poet-composer's intent. In contrast, the posthumous **MS E,** dated 1390, is often viewed as an inferior source, in part for its late date, and in part for its significant departures from the other manuscripts. In Chapter II, I explored the problematics of this approach and foregrounded arguments made by Margaret Bent and Jennifer Bain, who have advocated for a reconsideration of the posthumous manuscript. As I will advance here, the very differences and departures of **MS E** from the main manuscript tradition give weight to its value as early witness to the common fifteenth-century practice of adding contratenor lines to existing chansons.

The emergence of the contratenor voice type in the early fourteenth century – first in motets, and then introduced into chanson textures by Machaut[141] – presents analytical challenges to scholars today due to the variable nature of the voice labeled "contratenor," and to the lack of clarity in the few contemporary theoretical sources that address it.[142]

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[141] Owen Jander, "Contratenor," in *Oxford Music Online.*

[142] The most frequently-cited theorist is Anonymous XI. Margaret Bent, "Naming of Parts: Notes on the Contratenor, c.1350–1450," in *Uno gentile et subtile ingenio: Studies in Renaissance Music in Honour of Bonnie J. Blackburn,* edited by Gioia Filocamo and Mary Jennifer Bloxam (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2009): 3; Signe Rotter-Broman, "Was There an *Ars Contratenoris* in the Music of the Late Trecento?" *Studi Musicali,* vol. 37, no. 2 (2008): 340–343; Pedro Memelsdorff, "Lizadra Donna," in *Johannes Ciconia: musicien de la transition,* edited by Philippe Vendrix (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2003), 248–249.

The widespread practice of adding contratenors to existing songs in the early fifteenth century further complicates our understanding of the contratenor voice, but these later additions also provide a window into stylistic change and continuity from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century. Furthermore, these later-added contratenors are a tangible witness to the quick evaporation of any imposed authority Machaut may have had over his works during his life. In fact, Uri Smilansky suggests that the new voice parts in **MS E** are likely derived from a flexible performance tradition based upon a set of standard formulae, or improvisatory devices found in a performer's toolkit.[143]

Here, I will examine four later-added contratenors in light of the improvisatory performance practice preserved in **MS E**. I will focus specifically on the addition of contratenors to Machaut's two-voice balades, as they are preserved in **MS E**.[144] I will first review previous literature on the contratenor voice in general, and then present a control group of six balades that are securely attributed to Machaut and are transmitted in three-voice versions only. I will introduce four two-voice balades that have been given a later-added contratenor in **MS E**; I will consider previous scholarship on contrapuntally problematic contratenors in Machaut's works and then provide a close reading of contratenor behavior in B3, B4, B20, and B27.[145] Finally, I will offer a comparison of

[143] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E." University of Exeter, last modified July 1, 2013. http://machaut.exeter.ac.uk/?q=node/2104.

[144] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français 9221 (known various as E; *F:Pn 9221*; Hoepffner: *E*; Chichmaref: *J*). Hereafter I will refer to as **MS E**.

[145] Machaut's chansons are typically not designated by title/incipit, but by genre (B for balade, R for rondeau, V for virelai) and number. There are multiple indices for Machaut's works, and in musicology there are two numbering systems with much overlap, one by Leo Schrade and the other by Lawrence Earp. Earp's system is more frequently used in musicology by Machaut scholars, and this is the numbering that I will use. The numbering system is not chronological (chronological dating of Machaut's chansons is complex and has not been agreed upon).

Machaut's treatment of the contratenor voice and the behavior of the additional contratenors in the four cases studied, and I will propose two possible systems of categorization beneficial in the analysis of additional contratenors.

Literature Review: Contratenor Grammar

Constructing a contratenor grammar today requires working backwards from the music itself and is necessarily speculative to some degree.[146] Scholars approach this task in different ways; some limit their focus to a particular manuscript, and others focus on a specific type of repertoire or genre. Andrew Hughes evaluates the contratenor voice within the context of the Old Hall Manuscript, and Andrew Westerhaus looks at the later-added motet contratenors by the French-influenced scribe of Bologna Q15.[147] Signe Rotter-Broman expands her analytical pool by studying contratenor behavior in sixty songs of the Italian Trecento repertory across multiple manuscripts. Pedro Memelsdorff narrows his focus to the contratenors (both initially composed and later added) by Matteo da Perugia in order to track his stylistic changes and contrapuntal priorities over time.[148] Uri Smilansky approaches select additional contratenors of **MS E** from his perspective as a performer, and suggests that they may preserve an improvisatory performance tradition based upon a set of standard formulae.[149] Most broadly, Margaret Bent provides a

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[146] Bent, "The Naming of Parts," 3; Rotter-Broman "Was There an *Ars Contratenoris*?," 356.

[147] Andrew Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behavior: Case Studies of Equal-Cantus Italian Motets from the MS Bologna Q.15," *Plainsong and Medieval Music*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2009): 115; Andrew Hughes, "Some Notes on the Early Fifteenth-Century Contratenor," *Music and Letters*, vol. 50, no. 3 (1969).

[148] Rotter-Broman, "Was There an *Ars Contratenoris,*" 345; Pedro Memelsdorff, "Lizadra Donna."

[149] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E,"

comprehensive overview of characteristics and functions of grammatically unproblematic contratenors in motets, masses, and songs ca. 1350–1450.[150]

Commonalities in these studies provide a foundation for approaching the contratenor voice. First, it is universally agreed upon that the contratenor is not identified by a specific voice range, but rather, by its function.[151] Second, the dyadic core is contrapuntally complete, and the contratenor offers one possible reading of, or "commentary on," the *c*+*t* core[152]; the contratenor may or may not be written by the same composer, and it may be a later addition.[153] Third, the contratenor may rhythmically and melodically be modeled after either the cantus or the tenor, and may shift stylistically between its models within the same work.[154] Fourth, the contratenor may contain unsingerly leaps. Finally, a contratenor may be grammatically essential or inessential, it may be integrated or formulaic, and it may be contrapuntally problematic.[155]

The underlying grammar of inessential and contrapuntally problematic contratenors cannot be explained by modern understandings of late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century counterpoint. Investigation into the grammar underpinning contrapuntally inessential and problematic contratenors therefore requires careful consideration of the stylistic elements of contratenor behavior. Memelsdorff and

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[150] Bent, "Naming of Parts."

[151] Ibid., 4, 6; Rotter-Broman, "Was there an *Ars Contratenoris,*" 347–349.

[152] Bent, "Naming of Parts," 6; Rotter-Broman, "Was there an *Ars Contratenoris,*" 349.

[153] Bent, "Naming of Parts,"11.

[154] Ibid., 6; Rotter-Broman, "Was there an *Ars Contratenoris,*" 347–350.

[155] Bent, "Naming of Parts," 11–12; Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behaviour," 118; Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E."

Westerhaus demonstrate how a later-added, grammatically problematic contratenor may show shifting tastes, as in the cases of Matteo da Perugia and the scribe for Bologna Q15.[156] Rotter-Broman and Uri Smilansky suggest that some additional contratenors also have the potential to shed light on an improvisatory tradition captured in notation in manuscripts containing both French and Italian songs, and in **MS E**.[157]

Scholarly attention has focused on what has been defined as the "essential" or "inessential" nature of the contratenor in relation to the complete dyadic counterpoint of the tenor and the cantus.[158] This quality is repeatedly discussed and debated, as it draws attention to questions left open by late-fourteenth- and early-fifteenth-century theoretical sources regarding compositional process in works with more than two parts. Margaret Bent casts doubt on the idea that a contratenor operating below the tenor takes on the function of the tenor; she proposes instead that a contratenor may amplify sonorities already present in the dyadic core by lying below the tenor without taking on the contrapuntally foundational function of the tenor. The sole qualifying characteristic of a contrapuntally essential contratenor is that it must support uncovered, dissonant fourths.[159]

The narrow definition of a grammatically essential contratenor leaves ample room for discussion of contrapuntally inessential contratenors that are arguably nonetheless

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[156] Memelsdorff, "Lizadra Donna;" Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behaviour."

[157] Rotter-Broman, "Was there an *Ars Contratenoris,*" 346; Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E."

[158] Bent, "Naming of Parts," 1–2.

[159] Bent argues that all essential contratenors meet the qualification for *solus tenor*, whether or not a *solus tenor* exists for that work. Bent, "Naming of Parts," 12. See also Margaret Bent, "Some Factors in the Consonance and Sonority: Successive Composition and the *Solus Tenor*," in *Counterpoint, Composition, and Musica Ficta* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 241–254.

essential. Bent and Westerhaus make a distinction between contrapuntally, grammatically essential and stylistically essential.[160] Westerhaus uses three types of evidence in his evaluation of contratenors: paleographic, contrapuntal, and stylistic. He proposes that while a contratenor may be contrapuntally inessential, its absence can leave textural holes in the polyphonic fabric that nonetheless make it stylistically essential to the work.[161] However, the evidence for defining a "stylistically essential" contratenor is not easily qualified and has therefore received considerably less scholarly attention.

For the purposes of this study, I will not consider further the grammatically or contrapuntally "essential" nature of the contratenor.[162] Instead, I will draw from the work of Rotter-Broman and Smilansky and focus on the stylistic impact of the "inessential" contratenor. Even when a contratenor is not contrapuntally essential and does not violate the accepted grammatical rules, what can its behavior communicate about stylistic preferences preserved in **MS A** and **MS E**? The contrapuntally superfluous and functionally flexible contratenor has the potential to illuminate stylistic preferences of a composer or later contributor through its ability to provide commentary on a contrapuntally complete two-voice framework.

The analyses and hypotheses of Smilansky on the practice of early-fifteenth-century contratenor additions offer a jumping-off point for examining one specific contratenor subgroup: contratenors added in **MS E** to Machaut's two-voice balades B3, B4, B20, and B27. But before considering these additional contratenors, I will first

[160] Bent, "Naming of Parts," 2; Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behaviour," 118.

[161] Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behaviour," 118.

[162] Bent establishes that contratenors are grammatically inessential in three-voice song textures between ca. 1350–1450.) Bent, "Naming of Parts," 7.

present a control group of six three-voice balades that appear in **MS A** and are transmitted stably in Machaut's complete-works manuscripts with a cantus, tenor, and contratenor: B25, B26, B28, B32, B33, and B35. For embedded musical examples, I am using Leo Schrade's editions of the three-voice balades from *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century.*[163] I have made my own editions of the two-voice balades from **MS A** in order to approach visually these versions as complete, two-voice works, as they are given in **MS A**.

Control Group: Consideration of Six Balades in Three Voices

These six three-voice balades (B25, B26, B28, B32, B33, and B35) first appear in **MS A**, and are stably transmitted in Machaut's complete-works manuscripts.[164] While these contratenors are contrapuntally inessential to the two-voice duets, it is entirely possible that Machaut initially conceived of these balades with a third voice. By considering Westerhaus's three types of evidence for the evaluation of contratenors — paleographic, contrapuntal, and stylistic — this possibility clearly emerges.[165] While the contratenor is not essential to the dyadic counterpoint in its cadential function or by the covering of dissonant fourths, surviving sources preserve only three-voice versions; no hypothetical earlier two-voice version of any of these balades survives. Therefore, the stylistic impact of these "inessential" contratenors composed by Machaut deserves further attention. The stylistic impact of the contratenor is discernible in: 1) its role in cadences,

[163] Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre): 1956.

[164] There are no stably transmitted balades with the voicing *c+t+ct* that first appear in **MS** C.

[165] Westerhaus, "A Lexicon of Contratenor Behavior," 118.

2) its overall range compared to the tenor and the amount of time it spends below the tenor, 3) its behavior in the three formal sections of the balade, and 4) its "commentary on" the grammatically complete counterpoint of the dyadic pair. The scores for these examples are available in **Appendix A**. Summaries of my analyses are given at the end of this section in **Tables 4.1** and **4.2**.

The contratenor of *Honte, paour doubtance* (B25) shares the same range with the tenor, B-flat3–D4. It supplies an imperfect sonority below the tenor in the *ouvert* cadence of the A section, and it amplifies perfect sonorities by adding the fifth to the perfect octaves of the cantus and tenor in the *clos* cadences. The rhythmic and melodic syntax of the contratenor mirrors the cantus, and it frequently engages with the melodic material of the cantus line, as first seen in m. 4. In the middle of the A section, from mm. 5–10, the contratenor models its rhythmic and melodic syntax on the tenor voice. While not grammatically essential, the contratenor in m. 9 inhabits a range below the tenor in held notes while the tenor provides a rhythmic bridge above both the contratenor and the cantus. The tenor contains many large leaps, such as those found in mm. 19–21, the contratenor contains relatively few. The contratenor resides below the tenor for the majority of the A section, but during the B section and the refrain, it only briefly appears below the tenor. Finally, when the *clos* material of the A Section returns in the refrain, all voices reprise previous material at the same time in m. 27.

Much less variable than the contratenor of B25, the contratenor of *Donnez, signeurs* (B26) is rhythmically and melodically situated around the tenor. In both the A section and the B section of the balade, the contratenor moves homophonically with the tenor (mm. 1–6, 17–22) and has brief moments of hocket-like syncopation (mm. 11, 24).

In the refrain, the contratenor again moves homophonically with the tenor (mm. 26–28), and then imitates the syncopated rhythm given by the tenor (mm. 29–30). This contratenor contains many large leaps, and its use of formulaic fifth leaps are more prominent in the B section (mm. 19–21). In the A section of the balade, the contratenor rarely goes below the tenor (m. 9), yet it resides below the tenor for most of the B section. The range of this contratenor extends one note above the octave-range tenor, and the contratenor supplies a fifth to octaves at *clos* cadences and an imperfect sonority in the *ouvert* cadence of the A section.

The contratenor of Machaut's *Je puis trop bien* (B28) adds syncopation to the dyadic core throughout the balade, as first seen in the chromatic inflection in the first measure, and again in mm. 7–8, 10, 17–20. The role of the contratenor is varied in this chanson. It sometimes fills in the texture with embellishment, especially while approaching directed progressions (mm. 8–9, 20–21) and formal cadences (*ouvert* and *clos* endings of the A section). It also contains many large leaps, such as the fifths from mm. 5–6, 24–25, and the seventh from mm. 25–26. The contratenor clearly interacts with the tenor, as seen in the chain of syncopated thirds in m. 27. While the tenor has a range of a tenth, the contratenor spans only an octave. The contratenor lies briefly below the tenor in the A section and for a longer stretch in the B section, but is never below the tenor in the refrain. At formal cadences, the contratenor amplifies the sonorities of the two-voice (hereafter *c*+*t*) core by adding a fifth to octaves, and by doubling the cantus at the octave in the *ouvert* cadence of the A section.

The contratenor of *Ploures, dames* (B32) is unique among the six balades in this control group: the contratenor frequently makes fifth leaps (mm. 1–2, 3–4, 16–17, 18–19,

33–34, 35) and emphasizes the interval in the repeated notes of mm. 11–13. Although the cantus and tenor bring back material from the *clos* of the A section in m. 41, the contratenor continues to provide new material until m. 44. In mm. 41–42, the contratenor reinterprets this material and moves homophonically with the tenor. This reinterpretation draws attention to the continuation of the melodic line in the cantus in m. 42 by holding with the tenor, rather than interjecting with syncopation as it had in m. 20. The contratenor behaves similarly to the others examined here at sectional cadences; it provides the fifth to the *c*+*t* octave at the end of the *clos* of the A section, the B section and the refrain. In the *ouvert* of the A section, the contratenor lies below the tenor, but supports the cantus at an octave. Its range is similar to that of the tenor, spanning a ninth while the tenor spans a tenth, and the contratenor provides syncopation and rhythmic activation throughout the balade.

The contratenors in Machaut's *Nes que on porroit* (B33) and *Gais et jolis* (B35) behave in the same way at cadences. In all sectional cadences, including the *ouvert* cadence of the A section, the contratenor provides a fifth to the octaves presented in the dyadic core. In both cases, the range of the contratenor slightly extends above the octave range of the tenor. In B33, the contratenor spans a ninth, and in B35 the contratenor spans a tenth. The contratenor of B33 is only below the tenor sporadically, and in B35, the contratenor has longer stretches below the tenor in both the A section and the B section. The rhythmic and melodic syntax of the contratenor in B33 is modeled after the tenor. When the tenor becomes more active, the contratenor does, too. In mm. 15–16 the contratenor imitates the rhythmic and melodic patterns presented by the tenor, and in the B section, the contratenor clearly moves in contrary motion with the tenor (mm. 27, 30).

A rhythmic bridge is supplied by the tenor in m. 36 linking the B section to the refrain. While B33 contains some fourth leaps and octave leaps, the contratenor of B35 contains an abundance of unsingerly leaps, often in minim values (mm. 4, 9 contain minim-value fifth leaps, m. 20 has the angular leap of a seventh). There are many opportunities for a rhythmic bridge in B35, but neither the tenor nor the contratenor provide one (mm. 7, 10, 13, 21, and in between formal sections).

Although these six balades are distinct from one another, some trends do emerge. First, there are consistencies in the treatment of the formal cadences. The contratenor voice always supplies the fifth in *clos* cadences that define the formal sections of the balade. In two cases, B33 and B35, the *ouvert* cadence at the end of the A Section remains a perfect sonority. In B28 and B32 the contratenor creates an octave with the cantus at the *ouvert* cadence while the tenor supplies the imperfect sonority, and in the remaining two balades, B25 and B26, the contratenor supplies the imperfect sonority for the *ouvert* cadence of the A Section. Second, the overall range of the contratenor encompasses an octave to a tenth; it may extend slightly above that of the tenor but never below the tenor. Third, when the refrain brings back material from the *clos* of the A Section, as in five of the six balades, the contratenor either returns with the cantus and tenor, or, reinterprets the *c*+*t* core. A reinterpretation of the dyadic core is seen clearly in B32, and to a lesser degree in B35. Finally, rhythmic bridges following cadences or occurring between the formal sections are rarely used; Machaut favors all voices coming to a point of rest together. When rhythmic bridges are used, as in B33, they are provided by the tenor. With these 'authorized' textures in mind, let us turn our attention to four later-added contratenors in **MS E**.

Table 4.1. Formal Summary of Control Group

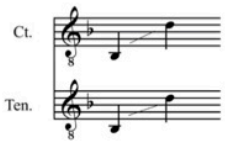
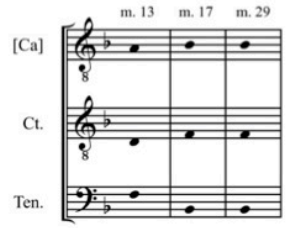
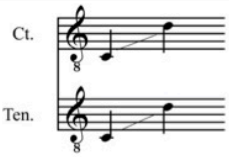
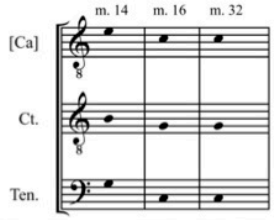
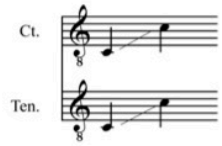
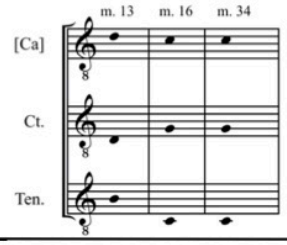
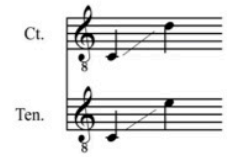
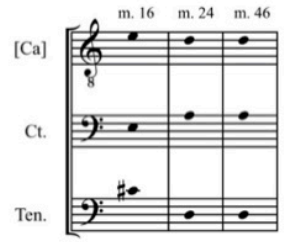
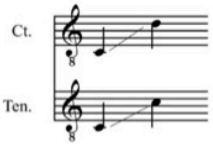
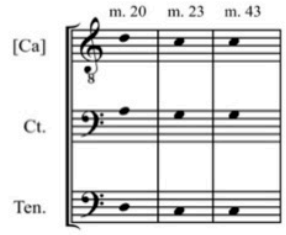
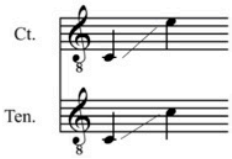
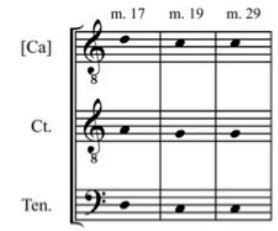
	Ten. and Ct. Ranges	Ouvert A // Clos A // Clos Refrain	Round-ed?	Ct. return
B25			m. 27	-
B26			m. 31	-
B28			-	-
B32			m. 41	ct. m. 43–end
B33			m. 37 (whole refrain)	-
B35			m. 24 (whole refrain)	ct. m. 26

Table 4.2. Stylistic Summary of Control Group

Balade	Hocket	Contratenor bridges	Tenor bridges	8ve/5th leaps	Other unsingerly leaps
B25	-	I m. 20	I m. 9	III mm. 2, 6–8	II mm. 21 (6th), 22–23 (9th)
B26	(II) mm. 11, 24	(I) m. 4	(I) m. 29	V mm. 8–9, 18–21	I m. 9–10 (7th)
B28	-	(III) mm. 9/14, 20	(I) m. 25	III mm. 2–5, 24–25	I mm. 25–26 (7th)
B32	-	I m.3	I m. 18	VIII mm. 1–4, 12–14, 26–29, 35, 39–40	I mm. 31–32 (7th)
B33	-	(I) m. 32	I mm. 9, 36	V mm. 8–11, 26–27, 29, 33–34	I mm. 24–25 (6th)
B35	-	-	-	VII mm. 3, 5, 9, 19–20, 22–23. 25	I m. 20 (7th)

Additional Contratenors of **MS E**:

Introduction to the Case Studies

The additional contratenors to Machaut's two-voice chansons have received less scholarly attention, while their contrapuntally problematic three-voice counterparts have been objects of much study. Because Elizabeth Eva Leach's analyses of Machaut's four-voice balades and Uri Smilansky's approach to the additional contratenors in **MS E** inform much of my study, a brief review of their findings is warranted. Leach addresses contratenors added to Machaut's three-voice *balades* in her article, "Machaut's Balades with Four Voices." She breaks down four-voice balades into three categories, two of which have direct bearing on this study, namely 1) those transmitted in three- or four-voice versions, but for which a three-voice version of (*tr*+*c*+*t*)[166] is problematic because the triplum is not always in a discant relationship with the tenor; and 2) those whose triplum and contratenor relationship make a four-voice performance impossible for a variety of reasons.[167] Her categorizations eliminate certain contrapuntally problematic voice combinations as viable performance options. Uri Smilansky offers an alternative hypothesis, suggesting that the practice of adding contratenors emerged initially from an improvisatory tradition based on "standard formulae" in relation to the tenor.

These standard formulae are a set of improvisatory tools, devised against the tenor, rather than a set of rigidly applied formulaic operations. Smilansky's proposed standard formulae include stepwise sequencing, repetition, rhythmic 'harmonic-filler'

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[166] Triplum = *tr*; cantus = *c*; tenor = *t*.

[167] Elizabeth Eva Leach, "Machaut's Balades with Four Voices," *Plainsong and Medieval Music,* vol. 10, no. 1 (2001): 47–49.

motifs based on repetitive fifth leaps over a static tenor, and more direct rhythmic and/or melodic paralleling of the tenor.[168]

In the case of *De fortune me doy pleindre* (B23) Smilansky's hypothesis mutes the issue of the relation of the contratenor to a two-part or three-part core that Leach seeks to address.[169] His hypothesis makes room for an abundance of possible performing realizations and allows for the possibility of all voice combinations. Specifically Smilansky is less bothered by the dissonances in the four-voice version of B23; he argues that a listener may have little problem getting used to these dissonances, especially between voices of lesser importance (contratenor and triplum), and may in fact find that, after repeated listenings, the three-voice version is empty or incomplete compared to the more dissonant, four-voice version.[170]

Smilansky is unconcerned with the "grammatically problematic" contratenor in this case. He does not dismiss contrapuntally problematic voice combinations as Leach does, nor does he suggest an alternative grammar for the "grammatically problematic" contratenor as Bent calls for and as Memelsdorff executes.[171] Instead, Smilansky emphasizes the importance of considering voice hierarchy in contrapuntal analysis.[172] His performance experience leads him to conclude that even if theoretically impermissible

[168] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E."

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid.

[171] Bent, "Naming of Parts," 12; Leach, "Machaut's Balades with Four Voices;" Memelsdorff, "Lizadra Donna."

[172] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E;" Bent, "Naming of Parts," 12.

dissonances are created by the contratenor, their effect would amount to little more than a coloristic change if played on plucked instruments with a quick decay.[173]

Building from Smilansky's hypothesis that the contratenors in **MS E** preserve a formulaic, improvisatory tradition, I will determine whether these contratenors can be classified by types or functions, and I will consider how they may relate to the contratenors of three-voice balades found in **MS A**. My analyses will consider:

1. The ways in which the contratenors alter the underlying counterpoint, change the harmonic language, and alter the overall range, as well as the ways in which contratenors impact cadences. [174]
2. The "commentary" the contratenor provides on the *c*+*t* core through its rhythmic and melodic syntax.
3. The ways in which additional contratenors highlight elements already introduced in the *c*+*t* core, such as rhythmic tension or primary and secondary tonal goals.
4. The contratenor's role in each of the three formal sections of the balade.
5. The frequency of "formulaic" devices, as suggested by Smilansky, employed by the contratenors.

A possible system for evaluating contratenors is one that considers them on a spectrum within two broad categories: 1) level of competition with the *c*+*t* core, specifically with the tenor, and 2) level of integration with the syntax of the *c*+*t* core. Here, I use the word "competitive" to describe a contratenor that supplants the role of the

[173] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E."

[174] Elizabeth Eva Leach, "Machaut's Balades with Four Voices," 77. Leach has already noted a general shift in preference towards the end of the fourteenth century for lower three-voice textures (*c*+*t*+*ct* preferred to *tr*+*c*+*t*).

tenor in range, or sufficiently alters the *c+t* core, rather than complementing it.[175] This measurement allows one to consider how the contratenor works with and against the tenor while setting aside issues of "essentiality," or arguing that the contratenor assumes the functional role of the tenor.

I will define an "integrated" contratenor as one whose syntax (rhythmic, melodic, and formal) engages with the *c+t* core. I will also consider a contratenor's use of "formulaic elements," as described by Smilansky, such as octave leaps and rhythmic bridges.[176] Rotter-Broman cautions against evaluating the success of a contratenor based upon its level of rhythmic and melodic engagement with the *c+t* core.[177] However, I argue that this measurement is still quite useful and can reveal both stylistic preferences as well as possible performance practices. Does the contratenor tend to model the cantus or the tenor, and does that shift within the chanson? Where in the formal sections of the chanson does the contratenor engage with the *c+t* core in an integrated way? How frequently are formulaic elements used by contratenors in different genres, or by specific known composers, or within a specific manuscript, or within the formal sections of a specific chanson? Does the contratenor suggest a specific performance force through its melodic writing or formulaic elements?

The two categories I am suggesting share potential for overlap, and the placement of any given contratenor on the spectrum of highly/minimally competitive or

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[175] The term "competitive," and my analytical approach are influenced both by language used by Smilansky, and ideas of imitation and interaction with models presented in G.W. Pigman III, "Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance," *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 33, no. 1 (1980): 1–32.

[176] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E."

[177] Rotter-Broman, "Was there an *Ars Contratenoris,*" 349.

highly/minimally integrative is necessarily subjective to a point. However, by suggesting these broad categories and offering these case studies, I hope to gain insight into the variety of behavior additional contratenors exhibit. At the end of each case study I have included annotated scores to help the reader track my analyses.

The Case of *Biauté qui toutes autres pere* (B4)

In his survey of the newly-added contratenors found in **MS E,** Smilansky has analyzed the contratenor added to B4. In what follows, I will briefly summarize his analysis before offering my own conclusions. This balade is exceptional among Machaut's chansons for its use of red coloration to indicate imperfection, as seen in **MS A** in **Figure 4.1**. The extent of the imperfection creates a metrical shift in the tenor, which is not implied by rhythms of the cantus.[178]

Figure 4.1. Coloration in **MS A**

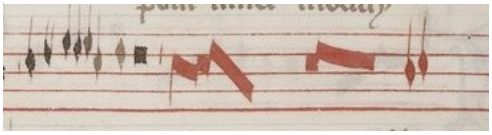


***Figure 4.1. MS A**, fol. 455*

An annotated score is provided at the end of this section in **Musical Example 4.1** to guide the reader through my analyses. In the three-voice version, the contratenor exploits the rhythmic tension already present in the *c*+*t* core.[179] The contratenor strongly enforces the hemiola between the two voices and treats the imperfection of the tenor differently upon its return. In the A section, the contratenor's rhythms can enforce the imperfection of the tenor, and can be easily grouped by two semibreves (mm. 9–12). In the second repetition of material from the A section in the refrain, the contratenor matches the rhythmic groupings of the

[178] My transcription of the two-voice version of B4 from **MS A** can be found in **Appendix B.**

[179] Smilansky, "The Contratenors of MS E."

cantus, by groupings of three semibreves (mm. 31–34). Smilansky argues that the contratenor brings out the rhythmic tension already present in the *c*+*t* core, and he ties the rhythmic unbalance of the hemiola to the setting of the word "estrange."[180]

While noting that the addition of a third voice to a two-voice structure will always create significant harmonic changes to the *c*+*t* core, Smilansky asserts that the impact of this contratenor is significant because of its sustained linear stretches below the tenor. He cites the stepwise descent of a ninth at the opening of the B section as particularly important, because in addition to competing with the tenor in its long descent, the contratenor takes the tenor's place in the cadence on B-flat in m. 24.[181]

Smilansky finds that B4's additional contratenor makes use of octave leaps (mm. 6–7, 13–15, 35–37), and decorates sectional cadences through melodic note minim figures of four to six notes (mm. 16, 37).[182] Smilansky's analysis of B4 sheds light on the behavior of its additional contratenor, specifically, the ways in which it competes with the tenor in range and cadential role, and the way in which it highlights the rhythmic tension latent in the *c*+*t* core.

Smilansky shows that this contratenor treats the return of the material from the A section (initially in mm. 10–16) in the cantus and tenor quite differently from its presentation in the refrain (mm. 31–34).[183] The mensural shift, clearly and uniquely indicated by coloration in the manuscripts, not only helps to define the formal sections

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Ibid.

[183] Ibid.

between the A section and the refrain, but suggests that the supplier of this additional contratenor was acutely aware of the intricacies of the *c*+*t* core.

I suggest that this is not the only formal distinction made by the contratenor. In fact, the contratenor interacts in each of the three formal sections quite differently. Smilansky notes that the contratenor resides underneath the tenor for long, linear stretches. I suggest that the contratenor's long linear stretches below the tenor also serve to accentuate the formal divisions of this balade; the contratenor does not behave this way in the A section. Additionally, the formulaic octaves leaps described by Smilansky are only in the A section (mm. 6–7, 13–15) and the refrain (mm. 35–37), they are not present in the B section. The octave leaps only occur on D, the primary tonal goal of this balade. In the B section, the contratenor does not reinforce this primary tonal goal to the same degree, instead, it emphasizes B-flat by adding a new lowest-sounding note to the chanson at the cadence to B-flat in m. 24. This one-note extension below the range of the tenor is exceptional; in the ten balades examined in this study, the contratenor of B4 is the only one to extend its range *below* the tenor. In addition to capitalizing on formulaic elements to highlight different tonalities within the formal sections of the balade, the contratenor distinguishes these formal sections in other ways as well.

In the A section, the contratenor rarely dips below the tenor, and when it does, it remains there only briefly in a succession of one to three notes (for example, m. 5, 8, 11–12). The rhythmic language of the contratenor more closely mirrors the cantus, with its frequent use of minim-based rhythms, which becomes clear by m. 7. While modeling the cantus, it reinforces the imperfection of the tenor. This process is reversed in the refrain, when the contratenor models the rhythmic syntax of the tenor by presenting in longer

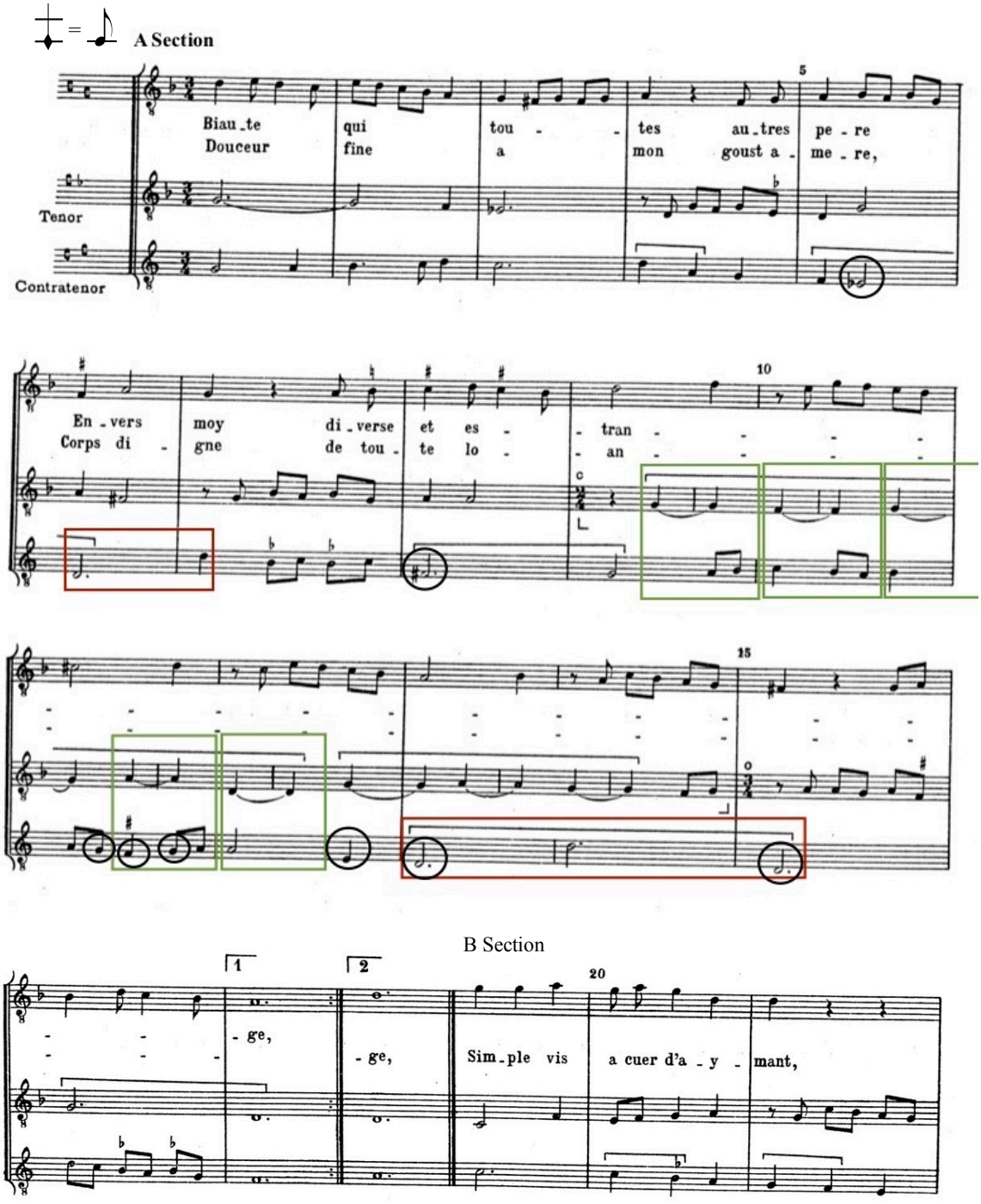
rhythmic values, while it reinforces the perfection of the cantus. The alteration of rhythmic modeling (first on the cantus while reinforcing the tenor, and then on the tenor while reinforcing the cantus) is not isolated to the A section and refrain.

The rhythmic modeling of the contratenor helps to define the formal sections of the chanson. The long, linear stretches below the tenor begin in the B section, in m. 21, as the contratenor continues its stepwise descent of a ninth. The rhythmic syntax of the contratenor in the B section is built of primarily longer note-values, and the melodic structure is primarily linear. An exception would be the two notable ascending leaps of a seventh found in mm. 24–27. In both cases, the notes leap to continue linear motion in the tenor, which has otherwise forgone. This is especially suggested in m. 25, when the contratenor fills in the rest between an ascending third in the tenor. The contratenor's shift in rhythmic and melodic syntax during the B section changes its function in the chanson. It is only upon reaching the B section that the contratenor significantly alters the harmonic color of the *c*+*t* core by its long stretches below the tenor.

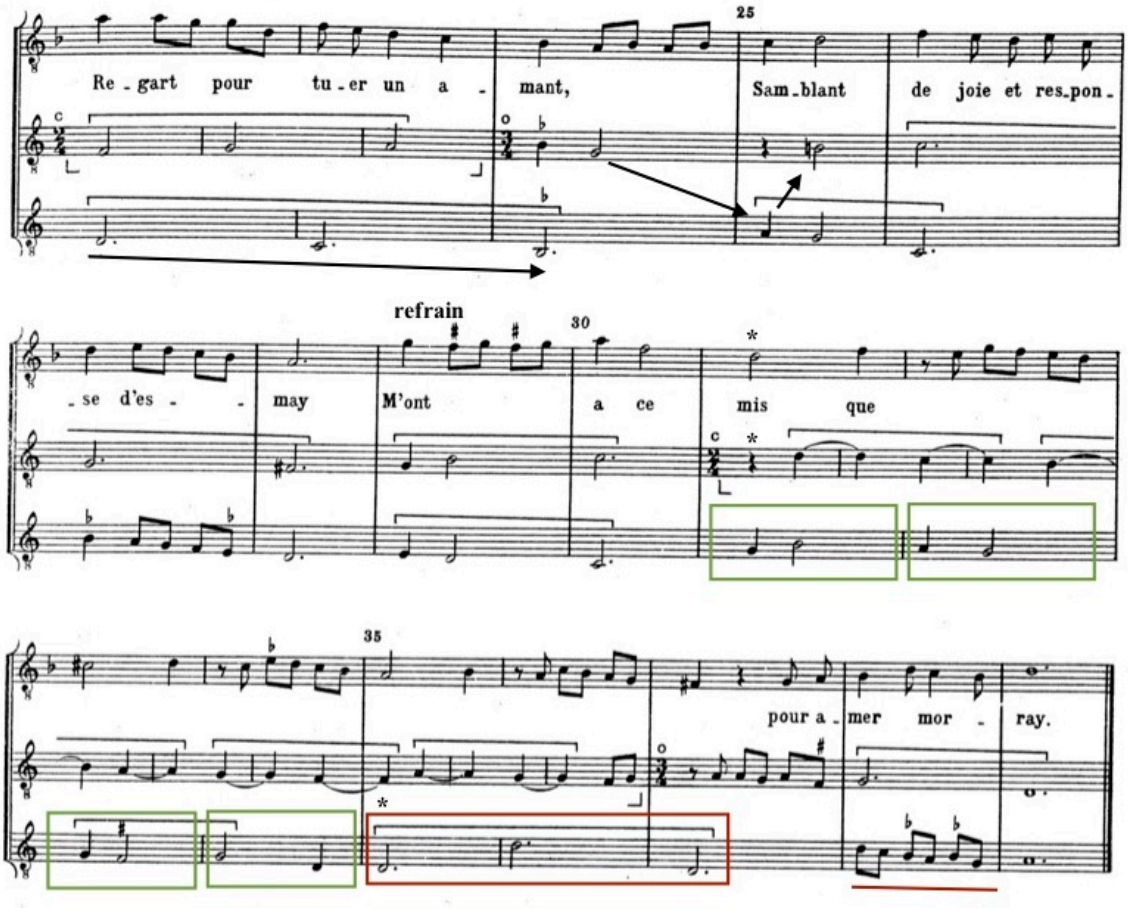
The additional contratenor alters the refrain significantly, making it a synthesis of the A and B sections rather than a return of the A material. The refrain brings back material from the A section in the cantus and tenor quite early (in its second measure, m. 31); however, the contratenor's reprise of material from the A section does not occur until m. 35. From mm. 29–34, the contratenor continues from the B section without changing course; it contains primarily linear motion, in long values, below the tenor. Additionally, the shift in metrical reinforcement (from the imperfection in the A section, to the perfection in the refrain) was introduced briefly in m. 22 of the B section during the contratenor's long descent. The addition of the contratenor has therefore allowed the

refrain to capture elements from both the A section and the B section, ultimately recasting the material from the A section in a new light.

Musical Example 4.1. *Biauté qui toutes autres pere* (B4)



Musical Example 4.1. *(continued)*



Musical Example 4.1. *Leo Schrade,* Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III, *(Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 74–75.*

As Smilansky points out, the contratenor added to B4 is competitive with the tenor in its extended linear motion below the tenor, and most notably, when it takes on the role of the tenor in the cadence. The contratenor displays minimal use of the standard formulae designated by Smilansky and is integrated within the *c+t* core; it highlights the rhythmic tension already present between the tenor and cantus.[184] It outlines the formal features of the balade through its functional, melodic, and rhythmic shift during the B

[184] Ibid.

section and synthesizes elements of both the A section and the B section within the refrain.

The Case of *Une vipere en cuer ma dame maint* (B27)

The *c+t* core of *Une vipere* has a C *finalis,* and, as is often common for the tonal structure of a balade, it presents a secondary tonal goal of D. While the *clos* of the A section and the final cadence of the song both move toward, and achieve, a C-octave, the *ouvert* of the A section moves to an imperfect sonority, with a D in the cantus. Additionally, the B section both begins and ends with octaves on D. The tension between the whole-step primary and secondary tonal goals is further found as the first strong cadence of the B section reaches a C-octave (m. 37).

The two-voice core is driven by the cantus line, which pushes forward in a descending quasi-sentence, as highlighted in **Musical Example 4.2a**, at the end of this section. This quasi-sentence is built upon a varied minim motive, and is found four times in the balade, stated in three different ways. The effect of the syncopated entries within the quasi-sentences is that of an improvisatory, run-on sentence. This is most clearly seen in the second statement of the quasi-sentence, in the conclusion of the A section (mm. 22–29), as the cantus continues the longer line following a semi-conclusive semibreve, by entering on the second in a group of three minims. This forward motion is more acutely punctuated by the tenor's syncopation, first in m. 25, and then twice in the *clos* of the A section, in mm. 30. The tenor moves steadily below the cantus, in primarily breves and semibreves, however it continues to propel the energy of the song forward through rhythmic bridges while the cantus holds (m. 8) or rests (m. 38).

In many ways, the additional contratenor in B27 displays similarities to the one found in B4. It is highly competitive yet highly integrated. I will first discuss the integrative qualities of the contratenor, including its rhythmic syntax, and its reinforcement of the formal properties of the balade. Then, I will consider the competitive elements of the contratenor.

The contratenor's rhythmic syntax is clearly derived from the *c*+*t* core. Rhythmically, it is thoroughly integrated as it models and interacts with both voices. Turning to Schrade's transcription in **Musical Example 4.2b**, the contratenor's rhythmic fabric shifts from the A section (mm. 1–29) to the B section (mm. 32–48). First, it mirrors the rhythmic triplet figures found in the cantus throughout the balade, and then, the rhythmic language of the contratenor shifts to match that of the tenor, presenting primarily long notes, until the refrain (mm. 49–59). Therefore, through its rhythmic syntax, the contratenor highlights the formal divisions of the *c*+*t* core.

The contratenor also reinforces formal tensions found within the tonal structure of the *c*+*t* core. The primary (C) and secondary (D) tonal goals, are further highlighted by the addition of this contratenor. First, in the opening three measures, C and D are both emphasized. While opening on C, the contratenor quickly descends a seventh to reach D. Then, D is further outlined through an octave leap. The introduction of the low D in the second measure of the song asserts its importance. Similarly, in mm. 21–22, the contratenor highlights C by outlining it in both the higher and lower octave. However, this is quickly followed by an emphasis on the low D, in mm. 23–27. Next, in the B section, the contratenor alters the perfect G sonority in m. 39 to a perfect C sonority.

In two other cases, the addition of the contratenor makes perfect sonorities dissonant and dissonant sonorities perfect. First in m. 12, the low C makes the previously dissonant C in the cantus perfect, and the previously perfect D in the cantus dissonant. Similarly, in m. 26, the low D in the contratenor makes the previously perfect E in the cantus dissonant, and the previously dissonant D in the cantus perfect. While fleeting, this alternation of the D in the cantus to a perfect sonority aligns with the shift from an emphasis on C (mm. 21–22) in the contratenor, to an emphasis on D (mm. 26–27). Moving forward, the opening of the refrain outlines both C and D, as the contratenor leaps up an octave from the low C, only to quickly descend a seventh to reach D. Proximity of C/D in the contratenor, the outlining of the higher and lower octave, and octave leaps, all help to reinforce the tension between to primary and secondary tonal goals already present in the *c*+*t* core.

The high degree of rhythmic integration with the *c*+*t* core does not exclude the possibility of competitive rhythmic elements. One of the most striking features of the *c*+*t* core is the syncopation in the tenor, as described in the earlier overview of the two-voice balade. This minim-rest followed by a semibreve brings out the syncopation in the cantus and pushes both lines forward. When this syncopation occurs in the tenor, it is only used to approach cadences (once towards the *ouvert* of A, and twice towards the *clos* of A and its return, at the end of the refrain). The contratenor introduces this syncopation immediately in the third measure. In the A section especially, it continues to add syncopation and rhythmic bridges, as its rhythmic syntax mirrors that of the cantus. The contratenor preempts the tenor's rhythmic bridge in m. 8, by stating the same material in m. 7, and has two brief hocket-like sections in mm. 14–15 and mm. 18–19. These hocket-

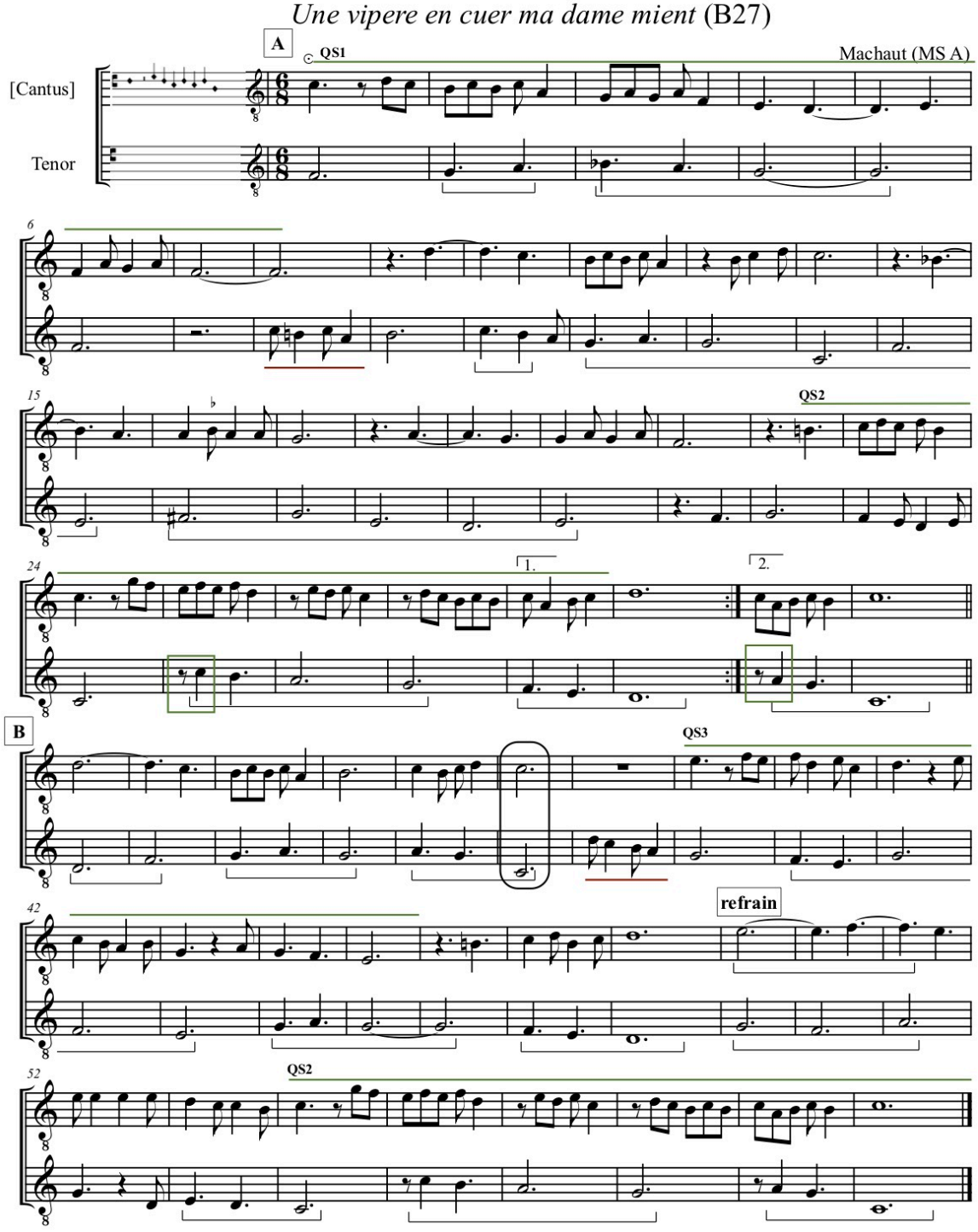
like measures enliven the static motion present in both the cantus and the tenor, and they demand the attention of the listener.

The contratenor again draws attention to itself through its interaction with the cantus' quasi-sentences. As mentioned above, variations of this quasi-sentence appear four times in the balade. Since the fourth is a reprise of the second, as is typical with the construction of balade refrains, I will designate the first three as follows: QS1 (mm.1–8), QS2 (mm.23–29/23–31 and 54–59), and QS3 (mm. 39–45). In m. 22, the contratenor presents motivic material derived from QS1, introducing the intensified statement of the material in QS2 by the cantus in m. 23. Additionally, in the statement of QS3, the contratenor rises above both the tenor and the cantus in range, and in doing so it draws the ear away from the motivically familiar quasi-sentence, and the *c*+*t* core, demanding to be heard.

The harmonic fabric of the *c*+*t* core is dramatically altered by this new addition. The contratenor frequently lies below the tenor in important places, such as formal beginnings and endings, and generally remains underneath the tenor for a succession of three or more notes. The underlying contrapuntal structure is altered by the addition of the contratenor as many sonorities are added to the background structure; the contratenor frequently alters dissonant fourths into permissible, imperfect sixths.

When formulaic elements are employed by this contratenor, they are integrated or competitive. First, rhythmic bridges (m. 7) and quick upbeat figures (mm. 8, 10, for example) appear frequently in the A section. They help to distinguish the formal units of the piece through their prominence in the A section and the refrain, and their near absence in the B section.

Musical Example 4.2a. *Une vipere en cuer ma dame mient* (B27)



Ligatures are indicated by brackets below the notes.
I have removed text from this transcription in order to focus on the counterpoint.

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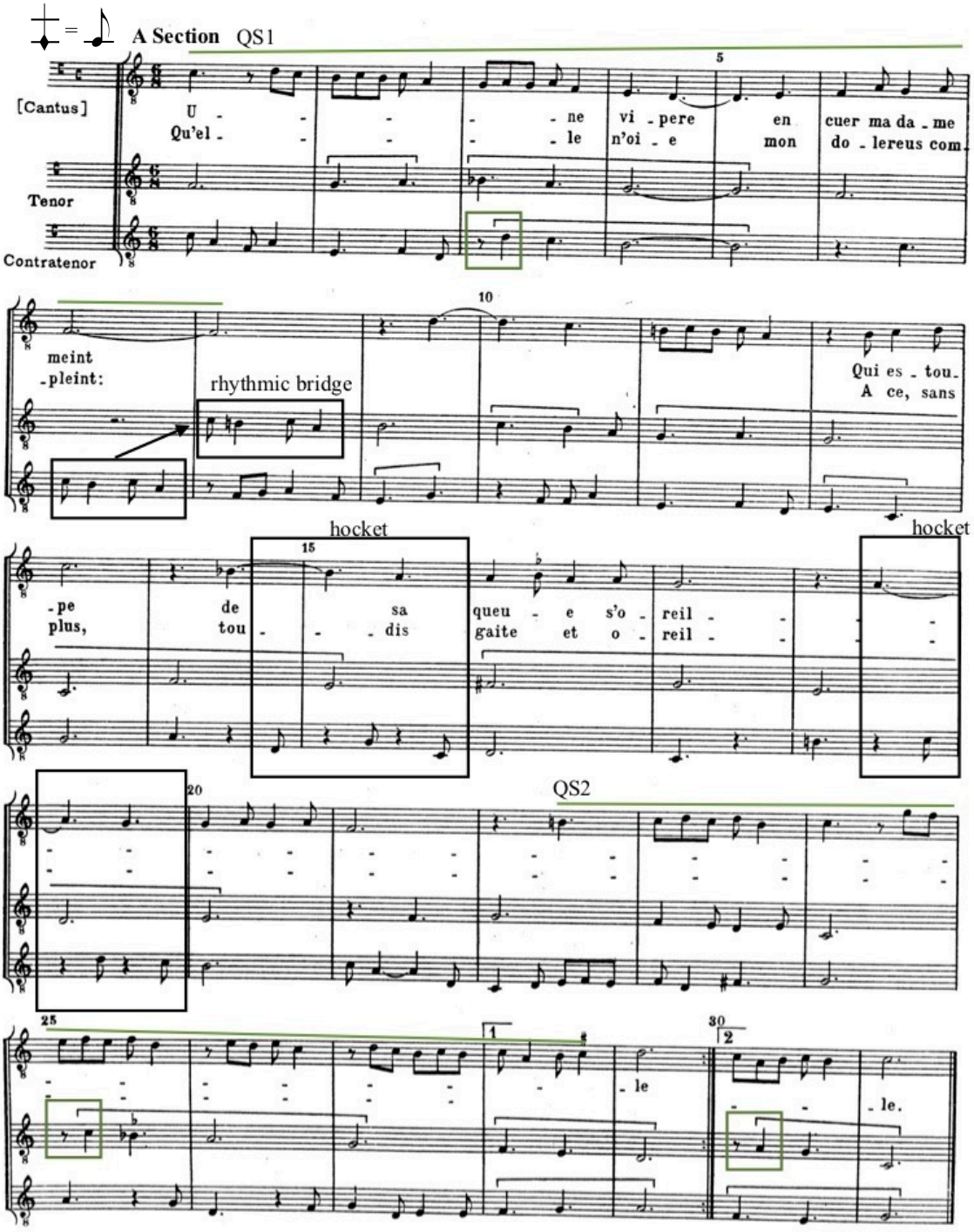
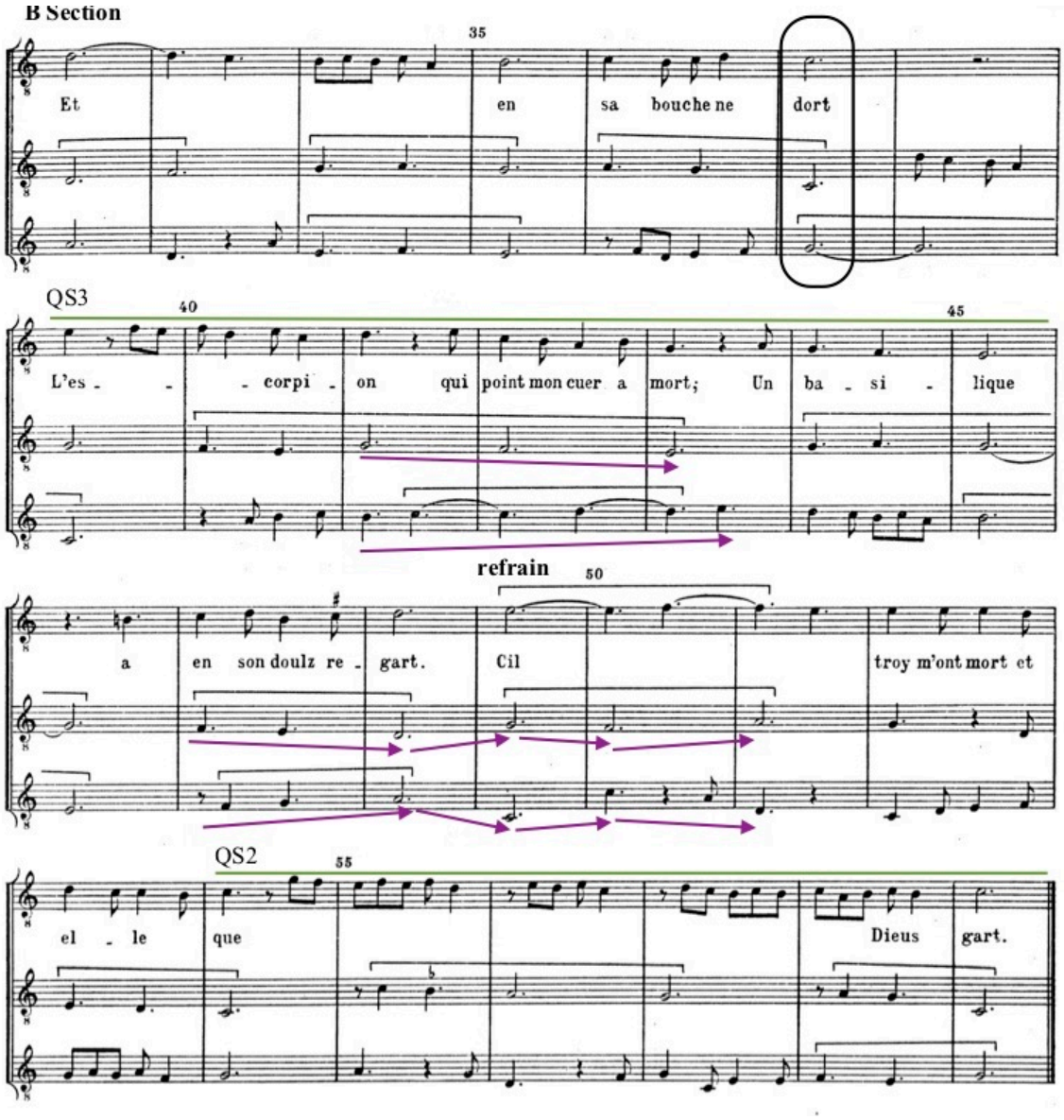
Musical Example 4.2b. Une vipere en cuer ma dame mient *(B27)*



Musical Example 4.2b. *(continued)*



Musical Example 4.2b. *Leo Schrade,* Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III, *(Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 110–111.*

This is tied, again, to the rhythmic modeling of the cantus in the A section, and the tenor in the B section. Another formal element, infrequently employed by this contratenor, is the use of octave leaps. Found in m. 3 on D and in mm. 49–50, on C, both of these octave leaps help to reinforce the aforementioned tension between the primary and secondary tonal goals. Finally, another standard contratenor formula outlined by Smilansky is the

direct mirroring of the tenor. This is found in mm. 41–43 and continues in mm. 47–51. Also described above, this possibly formulaic mirroring of the tenor becomes a competitive element, as it reaches above both the tenor and cantus in range and obscures the cantus' statement of QS3. An example of voice exchange between the tenor and the contratenor is found leading into the refrain, as the contratenor leaps to continue the tenor's descent to C and the tenor leaps to continue the contratenor's ascent to the G.

Similar to the balade in the first case study (B4), the additional contratenor in B27 is both highly integrated and competitive. It highlights the formal divisions of the balade by modeling its rhythmic syntax after the cantus' minim-rich texture in the A section and modeling the tenor's semi-breve and breve syntax in the B section. It further exposes the tension found in the structure of the *c*+*t* core between the primary and secondary tonal goals. Proportionately, there are few standard formulae employed by the contratenor, but when formulaic elements are used, they are either highly integrated, such as the contratenor's use of the octave leap in mm. 49–50, and added syncopation throughout the A section and refrain, or clearly competitive, such as the contratenor's mirroring of the tenor in the B section, and its use of syncopation, already notable in m. 3.

The Case of *On ne porroit penser ne souhaidier* (B3)

The *c*+*t* core of B3 has a proportionately large A section, of twenty-five measures, with a significantly shorter B section, of thirteen measures. The refrain more closely matches the length of the B section at eleven measures. The refrain is built of primarily new material, and only reprises the *clos* of the A section in its final three measures. The tonality of this two-voice balade is highly varied. Sectional cadences and

openings rarely duplicate sonorities, with the exception of the *clos* cadence to the primary tonal goal, B-flat, which is duplicated at the end of the refrain. The rhythm of the tenor is more flexible than the case of B27; while it sometimes provides harmonic support with a long-held note, it interacts with the rhythmic figures found in the cantus, such as the minim-semibreve-minim syncopation of the contratenor in m. 13, as seen in **Musical Example 4.3a**. Formally, the *c*+*t* core makes a rhythmic distinction between the sections. While the above-mentioned syncopation pervades the cantus and tenor during the A section (mm. 3–4, 9, 14, 20 in the cantus; mm. 16, 21, 23 in the tenor), there is a shift away from this syncopation and towards a dotted rhythm in found the B section (mm. 34–39).

In my evaluation of the contratenor added to B3, I will first consider the formulaic elements employed by the tenor and its level of integration with the *c*+*t c*ore through its use of rhythm. Then, I will consider the aspects of the contratenor which compete with the *c*+*t* core, including its impact on the underlying harmonic structure.

The rhythmic syntax of the contratenor is integrated with the rhythmic syntax of the cantus and tenor. But, the shift in rhythmic syntax between the A section and the B section found in the cantus and tenor is not reflected by the contratenor. While it makes rich use of minim-semibreve-minim syncopation, this syncopation continues throughout all sections (**Musical Example 4.3b** mm. 13, 35, 38, 42, 51–52). In fact, the B section contains three occurrences of this rhythm in its thirteen measures while the longer A section employs this syncopation only once.[185] Further, while it employs dotted rhythms,

[185] At most, the A section employs this rhythm twice, if one were to consider the minim-semibreve+rest+minim in m. 15. Whether this is considered or not, the occurrences of this rhythm in the A section are still proportionately much shorter than its use in the brief B section.

the contratenor first introduces these in m. 19 of the A section, rather than reserving this for the B section. It makes use of this same dotted rhythm again at the start of the B section (m. 32), stated in a melodic contour similar to the cantus in mm. 36–37. However, in m. 36, the contratenor reverses the dotted figure, in the only statement of this type of rhythm, which is more closely related to the syncopation found in the A section. In sum, while the contratenor borrows rhythmic elements found in the *c*+*t* core, its use of these elements does not clarify sectional divisions in the same way — an aspect distinct from the first example, B4. Additional rhythmic attention is drawn to the contratenor in its use of a hocket-like passage in mm. 15–16, of which a similar instance has been noted above in two passages of B27.

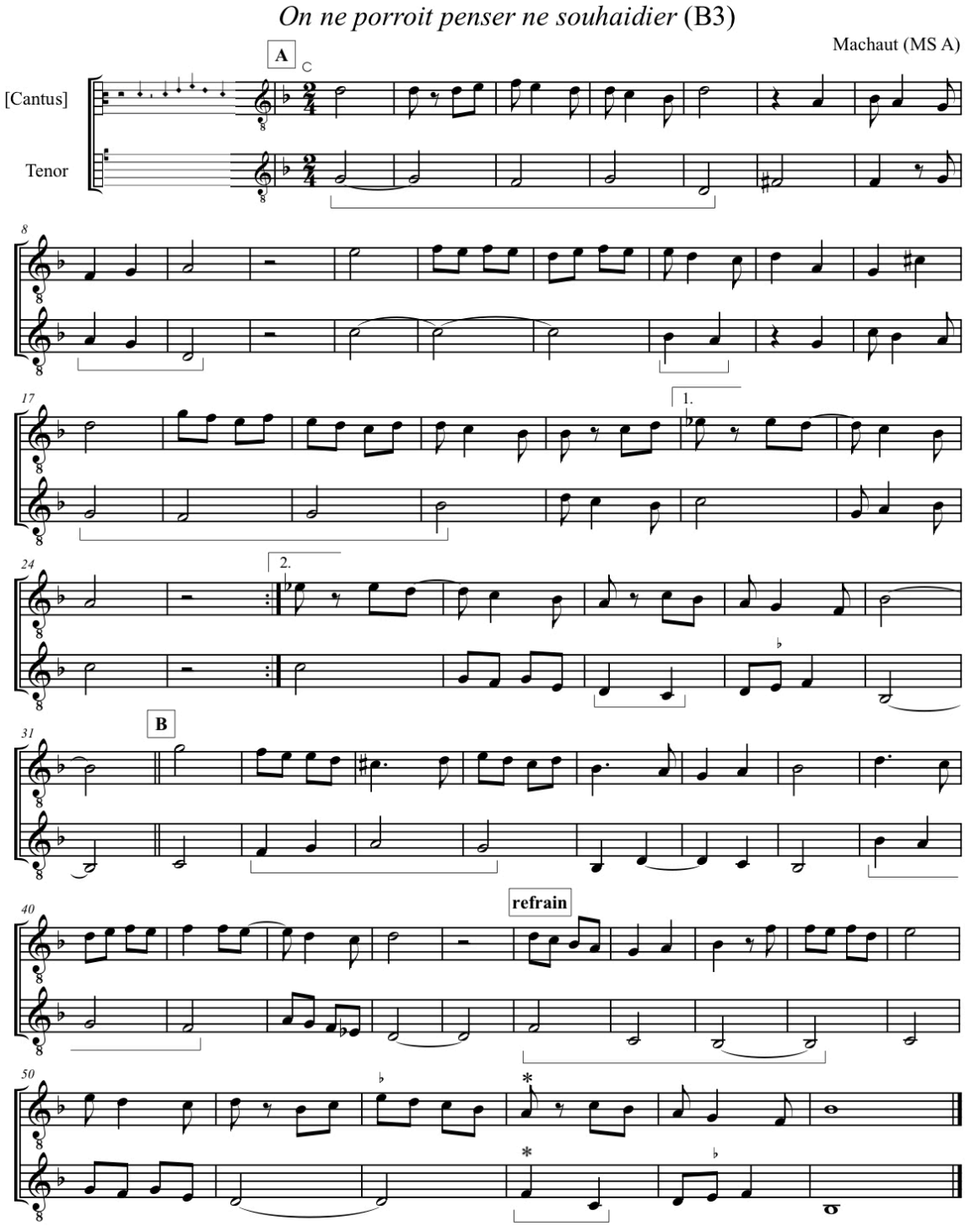
This contratenor presents multiple large leaps more frequently than the contratenors of B4 and B27, and these leaps appear in notes of shorter values. Examples of this can be seen in m. 15, where G leads to the hocket-like material starting on E in pick-up to the next measure. Leaps in quick succession are found in m. 35, as the B-flat leaps down an octave and then quickly up a fifth. In m. 47 the contratenor leaps up a minor sixth and continues upward rather than resolving down. This same ascending leap appears again, leading to the final cadence, and in this case ascends one note to the C before descending a fifth into the cadence. This disjunct motion towards the cadence is extremely uncommon, even if one were to compare the same contratenor's behavior in earlier cadences, which are all approached by step. Additionally, the only material the contratenor brings back from the *clos* of the A section is its cadential note, B-flat.

Whereas the additional contratenors in B20, to be discussed below, and B27 add a number of sonorities to the underlying contrapuntal structure through the alteration of

dissonant fourths to imperfect sixths, B3 does not. Additionally, the contratenor does not reside underneath the tenor for long linear stretches as in B4; it dips below the tenor only briefly, and in isolated occurrences of 1–3 notes. These low notes appear innocuous at first glance. They occur while in close proximity to those same notes in the tenor (mm. 26, 35, 46, 53), or, in m. 12, amplify the held C in the tenor. While the underlying contrapuntal structure keeps the majority of perfect sonorities perfect, significant changes are made to sonorities at formal cadences. First, the *ouvert* cadence of the A section in the two-voice balade reaches a unison on Cs, but the contratenor alters this sonority by adding an F below the unison Cs (m. 25). More significantly, the *clos* cadence of the A section is altered from a perfect sonority (expected) to an imperfect sonority (unexpected), by the addition of a third, D, to the cadence on B-flat octaves in the cantus and tenor (m. 30). The octave cadences at the end of the B section and refrain are merely amplified by the addition of a fifth, but the opening sonority of the refrain is altered significantly by the addition of a low B-flat in the contratenor (mm. 44). In this way, the contratenor builds upon the already varied tonal mapping of the *c*+*t* core by altering structural sonorities further, sometimes in unconventional ways.

The standard formulae employed by this tenor are limited. It makes clear use of octave leaps over a static tenor in m. 13, and the octave leap in m. 35 has been addressed above. The contratenor also provides a rhythmic bridge while the cantus and tenor are resting in m. 10 of the A section. While the contratenor provides a rhythmic bridge connecting these two phrases within the A section, it does not supply a rhythmic bridge following the final cadence of the B section in m. 44, despite its early entrance on the B-flat, as discussed above.

Musical Example 4.3a. *On ne porroit penser ne souhaidier* (B3)



Ligatures are indicated by brackets below the notes.
I have removed text from this transcription in order to focus on the counterpoint.

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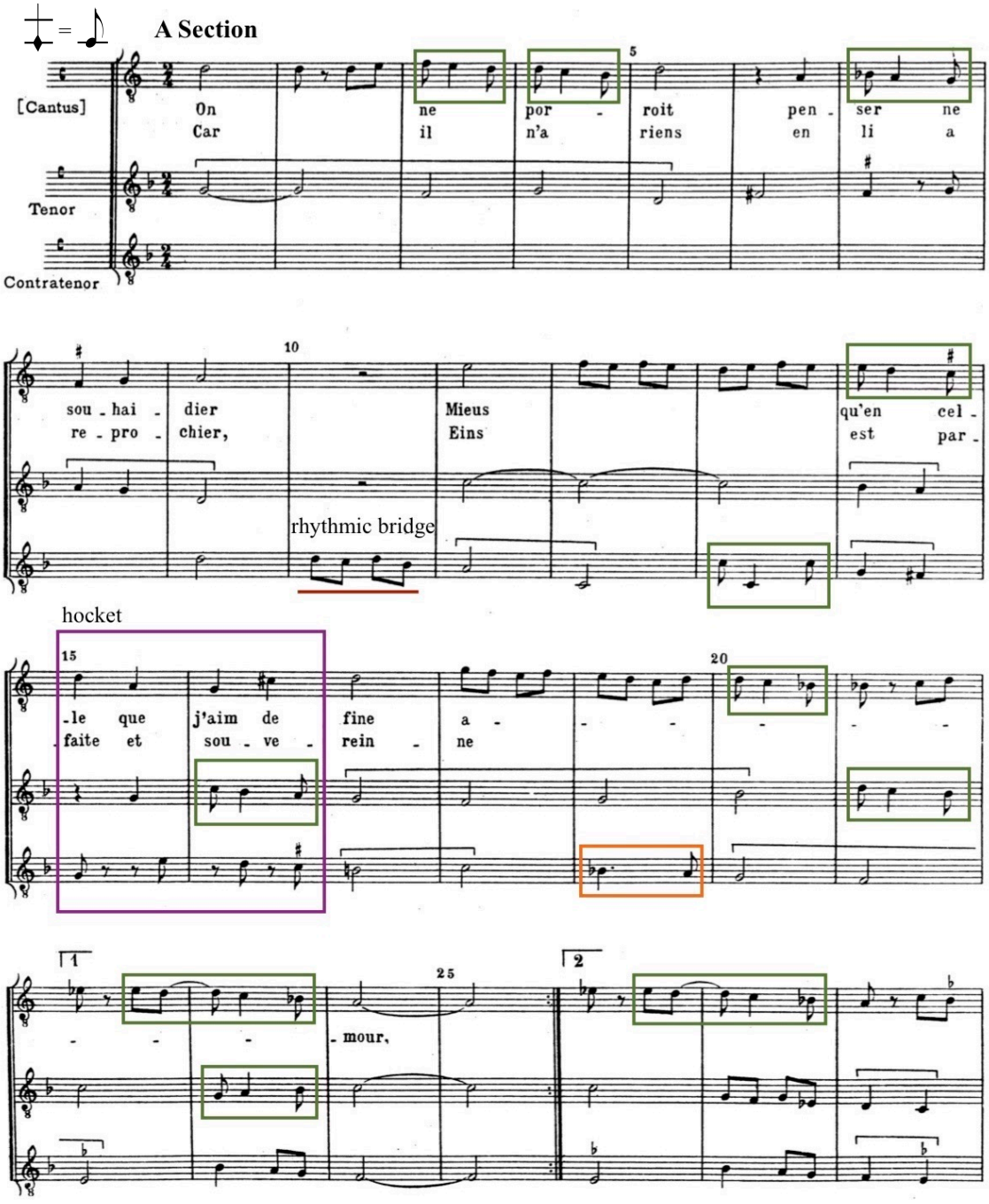
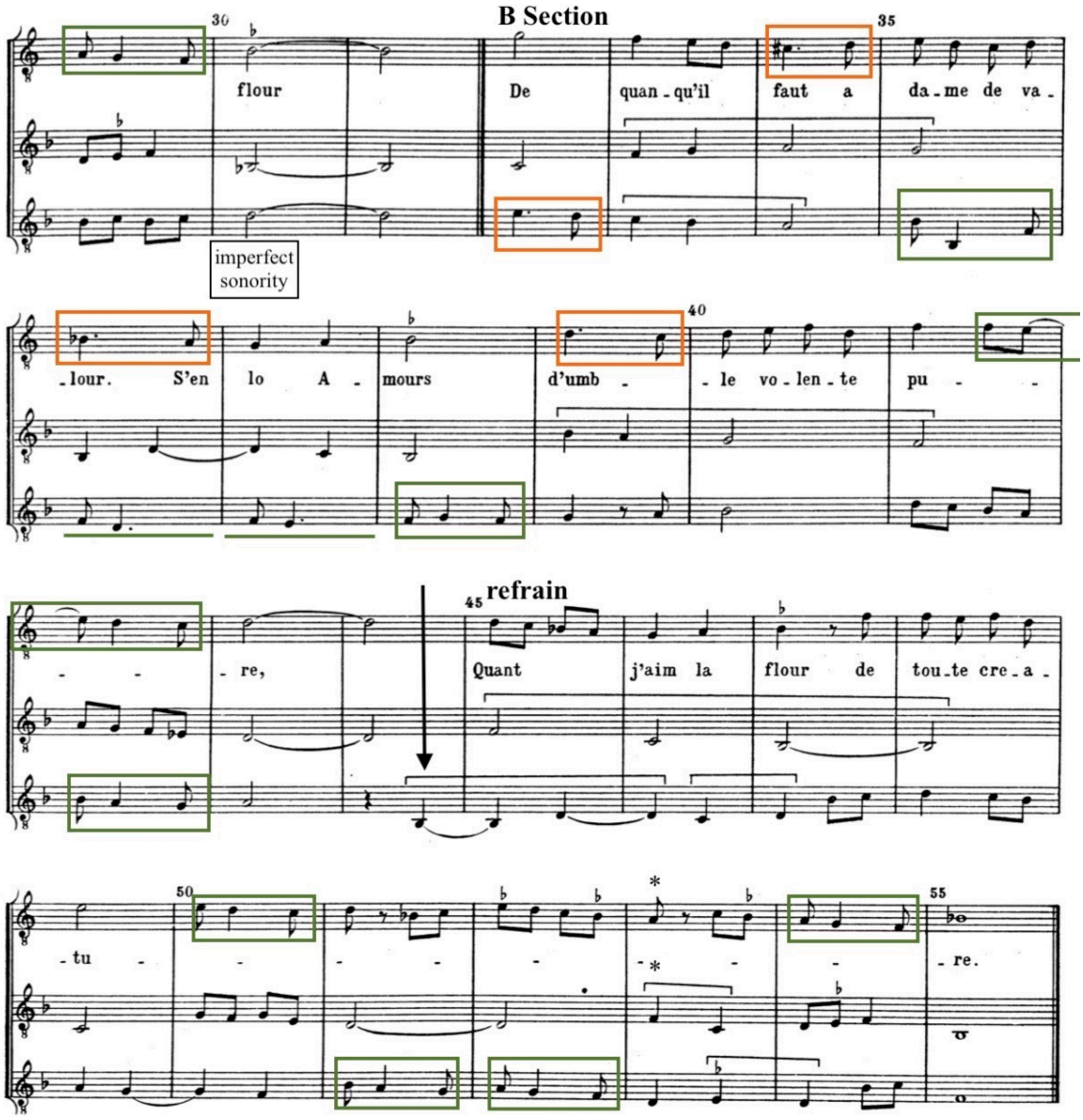
Musical Example 4.3b. *On ne porroit penser ne souhaidier* (B3)



Musical Example 4.3b. *(continued)*



Musical Example 4.3b. *Leo Schrade,* Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III, *(Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 72–73.*

The contratenor of B3 is not easily classified on the spectrum of integration or competition. In its use of formulaic elements, the contratenor attempts to be integrated by amplifying an existing sonority in its octave leaps. Its rhythmic syntax is derived from the *c+t* core, and in that way is integrated, however, it does not strengthen the formal

divisions of rhythm found in the *c*+*t* core. Its use of a rhythmic bridge to connect two phrases within the A section and the absence of a rhythmic bridge at the conclusion of the B section show integration in the way the contratenor has recognized the formal divisions of the balade. Additionally, the level of competition with the *c*+*t* core is not easily identified. While the contratenor neither adds to nor subtracts from the underlying contrapuntal structure to the same degree as the contratenors of B20 and B27, the strategic changes in B3 significantly alter sonorities which are important to the formal structure of the balade.

The Case of *Je suis aussi com cils qui est ravis* (B20)

The proportions of this balade are as follows: a slightly longer A section, with a medium-length B section. The refrain is much shorter and contains seven measures of new material before it brings back the *clos* of the A section. The rhythmic exchange between the cantus and the tenor is free; the both parts continually interact with one another, as seen in the exchange of syncopation and motivic figures between the cantus and tenor in **Musical Example 4.4a**, mm. 16–17, 22–23, 27–28, 41–42, 47–48, 56–57, and 62–63. The subtle complexity of the rhythmic interaction between these two parts provides a challenge for the additional contratenor.

In my analysis of the additional contratenor, I will first consider the competitive elements of the contratenor by evaluating the harmonic changes this contratenor imposes on the underlying structure. I will then consider the contratenor's integration with the *c*+*t* core by considering its treatment of unisons and formulaic elements. Finally, I will observe how the contratenor behaves in each of the formal sections.

Turning to Schrade's transcription in **Musical Example 4.4b**, the contratenor interprets cadential unisons and dyads in multiple ways. First, dyads between F/F# and A are supplied with a low D (mm. 8, 10, 13, 29, 35, 36, and 44). In two of these cases, the altered sonority is the end of a section: the *ouvert* of the A section, and the final cadence of the B section. Not insignificantly, it also alters the opening sonority of the refrain in the same way. Similarly, the *clos* of the A section, formerly a cadence on G in unison, becomes a perfect fifth on C. This alteration is quite significant because it has implications for the primary tonal goal of the chanson. Unfortunately, the last three and a half measures of the song are obscured in **MS E**, so we are unable to see how the contratenor would have concluded the refrain. However, since it is typical to bring back material from the *clos* of the A section, it would not be a stretch to imagine the contratenor altering the final sonority in the same way. In this way, the harmonic changes made to B20 by its additional contratenor are reminiscent of those made by the contratenor in B3. While the contratenor in B3 made the *clos* cadence of the A section an imperfect sonority, it did not repeat this change in the final cadence. The contratenor did not bring back any of its material from the A section like the cantus and tenor but chose to amplify the perfect sonority at the final cadence by providing a perfect fifth. Without having the concluding measures of B20, it is difficult to conclude whether or not the contratenor would have restated the cadence at the *clos* of the A section. Unlike B3, the altered sonority at the *clos* of A is still a perfect sonority, and therefore could reasonably be repeated in the conclusion of the refrain. Continually, in key cadential points, the contratenor reinterprets sonorities in significant ways: it alters imperfect thirds built on F/F# to read as imperfect three-chord sonorities built on D, and a perfect unison on G to

read as a perfect fifth on C. In addition to these changes, the additional contratenor changes the underlying structure significantly by appearing underneath the tenor for stretches of three or more notes and regularly appear throughout all formal sections.

This contratenor makes extensive use of formulaic elements and presents them in a way unique among the cases studied in this paper. First, rhythmic bridges are used extensively in the A section, as seen in mm. 3, 7, 10, and 11. However, this treatment differs in the B Section. Measure 23, for example, is a point of repose for both the cantus and tenor. Whereas in similar places in the A section, mm. 5 and 7, most comparably, the contratenor provided a rhythmic fill, in m. 23 it is content to rest with the cantus and tenor. Other rhythmic interest provided by the contratenor is found in its brief use of hocket in mm. 26–27 and 31–32, as was seen in B3 and B27.

This contratenor makes the most use of standard formulae in the cases of the balades studied here. Leaps of a fifth above a static tenor are found in abundance in the contratenor of B20. These are exemplified in m. 7–8, and appear again in mm. 29, 42, and 44–45. In its use of these standard formulae, such as the fifth leaps above a static tenor, this contratenor appears to be significantly less integrated into the syntax of the *c*+*t* core in comparison to B4, B27, and B3.

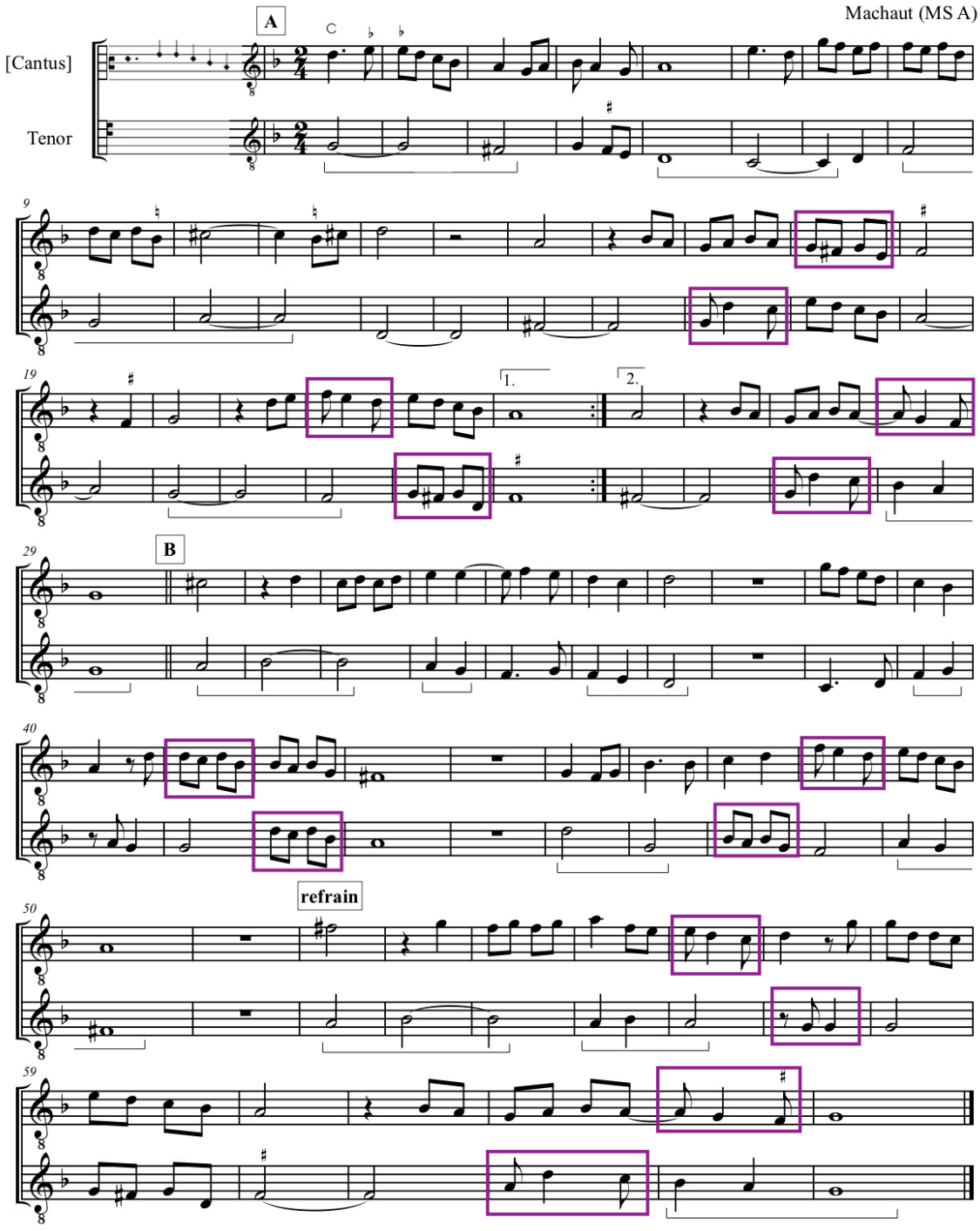
The abundance of unison doublings, often of minim-value notes, additionally raises questions about the level of integration with the *c*+*t* core. While this contratenor is not the first to provide unison doublings, other examples of contratenor doublings are more easily explained; in such cases, they provide syncopation without altering an existing sonority, or fall within the continuation of a line. The unisons in the contratenor of B20 appear to step directly upon the subtle rhythmic interaction between the cantus

and tenor. A clear example of this is seen in m. 9, where the cantus and contratenor converge into unisons within a series of minims. This continues to happen throughout the chanson. In addition to these unisons, the contratenor rhythmically doubles the minims in the cantus at the end of m. 19, and again in mm. 30 and 38. This rhythmic doubling, which enforces perfect fifths in m. 19, unisons in m. 19, and octaves in m. 30, dampens the rhythmic dialogue between the cantus and the tenor. The excessive unison doublings, the rhythmic mirroring of the cantus, and the frequent use of formulaic elements makes this contratenor unique among the additional contratenors in this study.

The contratenor added to B20 makes use of formulaic elements frequently and appears less integrated with the *c*+*t* core. It does not clearly or regularly engage with motivic (rhythmic or melodic) elements of the core, when it does, such as in mm. 19 and 38, unisons and octaves dampen its effectiveness. The contratenor competes with the tenor, perhaps unsuccessfully, in both rhythm (as it dilutes the rhythmic interplay the tenor has with the cantus*)* and in register. Similar to additional contratenor of B3, the additional contratenor of B20 alters structurally important sonorities.

The unique properties of this contratenor among those in this study raise additional questions related to performance practice and aesthetics. If the additional contratenors did indeed arise out of an improvisatory performance tradition based on standard formulae, as Smilansky suggests, how much flexibility was given to the performance forces? In comparison to the melodic, linear contratenors found in B4 or B27, for example, the contratenor of B20 is not singerly at all.

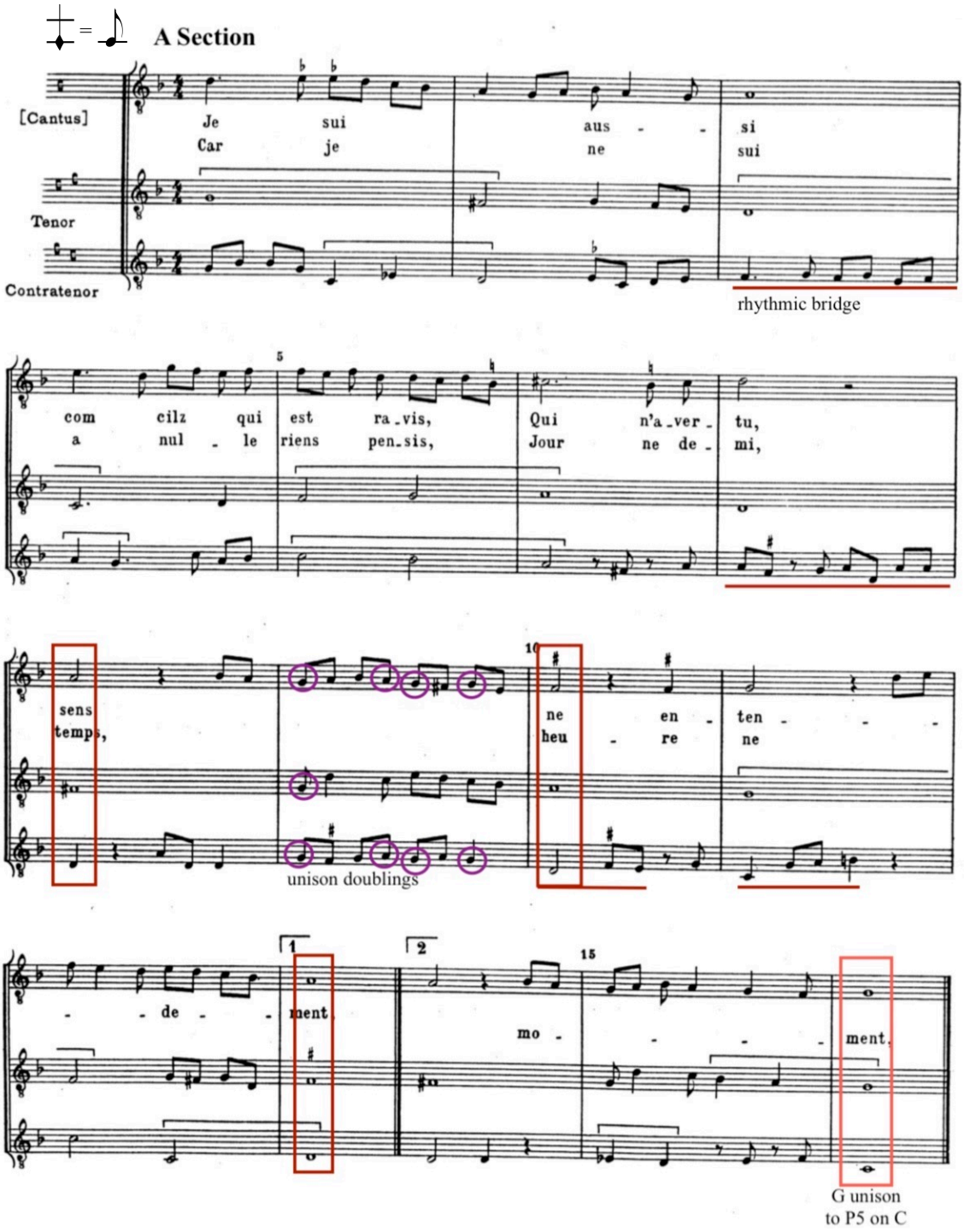
Musical Example 4.4a. *Je suis aussi com cils qui est ravis* (B20)



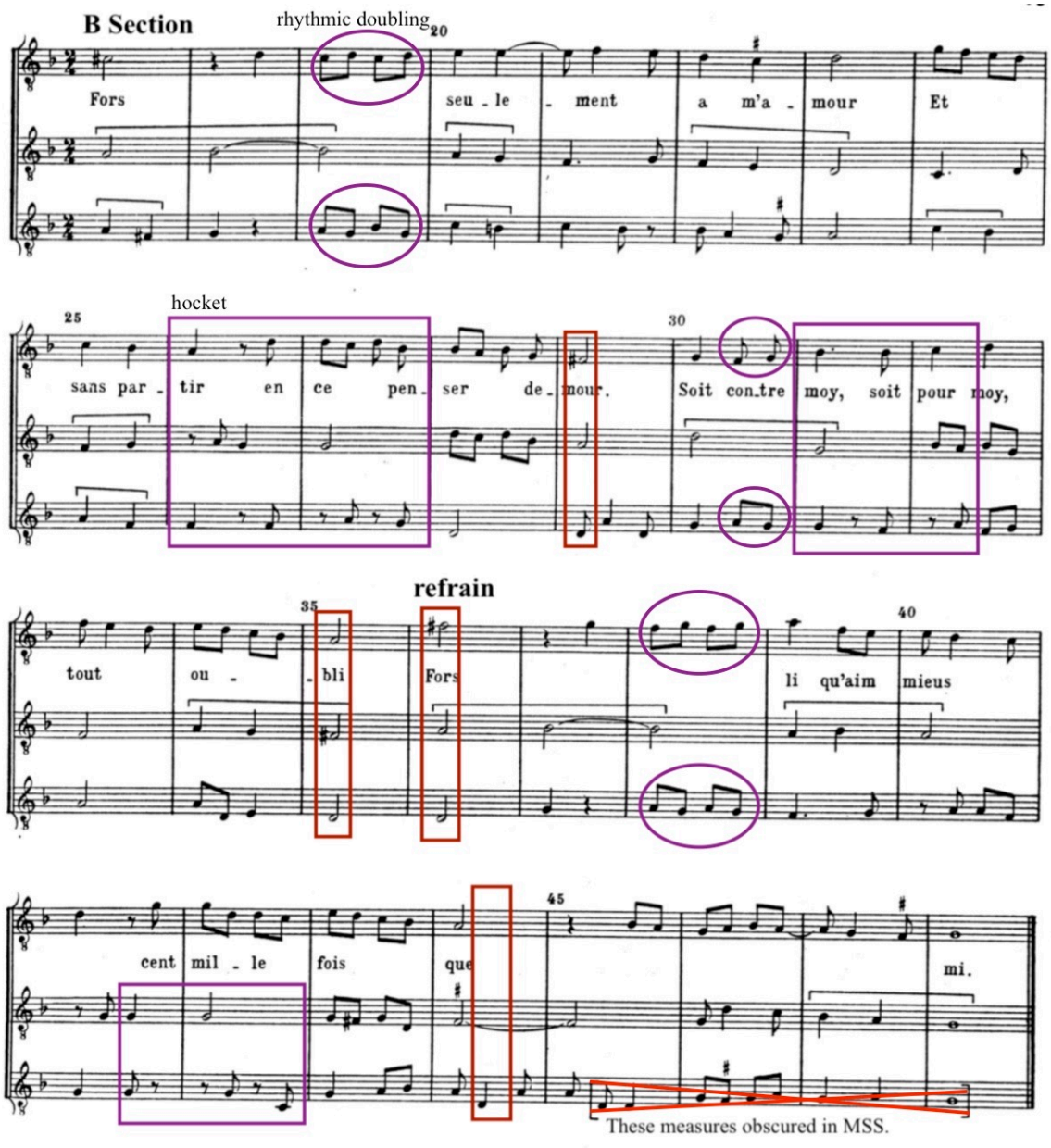
Ligatures are indicated by brackets below the notes.
I have removed text from this transcription in order to focus on the counterpoint.

1

Musical Example 4.4b. *Je suis aussi com cils qui est ravis* (B20)



Musical Example 4.4b. *(continued)*



Musical Example 4.4b. *Leo Schrade,* Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III, *(Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 94–95.*

In the case of B23, Smilansky's experience as a performer leads him to suggest performing forces, which would make certain dissonances in the four-voice version more tolerable and coloristic.[186] The sharp contrast between the contratenor found in B20,

[186] Smilanksy, "The Contratenors of MS E."

which contains more of the formulaic elements described by Smilansky, such as abundance of fifth leaps, also suggests the possibility that this line was played on a string instrument. The frequent unison doublings suggest the possibility that this contratenor was to be played on a plucked string instrument with quick decay, because if it were to be executed on an instrument with a long sustain, the contratenor would obscure the rhythmic interplay between the cantus and tenor. Additionally, because of the numerous unisons provided by this contratenor, it is worth considering the possibility that this was an aesthetic the contratenor supplier was hoping to achieve.

Conclusion

Notable differences emerge in the comparison of the four later-added contratenors to two-voice balades found in **MS E** and the stably-transmitted three-voice works securely attributed to Machaut. The range of the contratenor in the six balades provided as a control group never extend below the tenor, but the additional contratenor of B4 extends the lower range of the chanson by one whole step. Further, the contratenors of the control group never alter perfect sonorities at formal cadences, except in the case of the *ouvert* cadence of the A section. The additional of B3 is the only example to significantly alter the *clos* cadence of A section by adding an imperfect sonority to the octave in the cantus-tenor pair. Therefore, it is also the only balade of the ten offering a final cadence that differs from the *clos* of the A section. The additional contratenor of B20 also interprets the harmonic structure of the dyadic core in unexpected ways. The final measures of this balade are illegible in the manuscript, but the contratenor reinterprets the tonal centers set up by the dyadic core at all sectional cadences, shifting

the primary tonal center from G to C. While the opening fifth (G3–D4) of the dyadic core strongly suggests a tonal center on G – making an added fifth of D in *clos* cadences the expected contribution – the contratenor provides a C to the *c*+*t* G unison. At every formal cadence in B20, the contratenor lies below the tenor and significantly reinterprets the harmonic structure of the dyadic core in a way that is not done by any of the six contratenors in the control group. Finally, while only one of the six balades in the control group reinterprets the return of the A section in the refrain (B32), three of the four additional contratenors of **MS E** reinterpret the dyadic core when it returns in the refrain (B3, B4, B20).

Based on the analyses of B3, B4, B20, and B27, the additional contratenors of **MS E** can be evaluated on a spectrum within two large categories: 1) level of competition with the *c*+*t* core, specifically with the tenor, and 2) level of integration with the syntax of the *c*+*t* core. A more competitive contratenor may usurp the tenor's role by dominating a lower range and altering the underlying contrapuntal structure, while a less competitive contratenor may at times lie below the tenor, but in shorter bursts, and with less impact on the underlying contrapuntal structure. A more integrated contratenor may amplify elements already embodied in the *c*+*t* core, such as rhythmic tension and formal design, while a less integrated contratenor may exhibit a larger proportion of the formulaic elements outlined by Smilanksy with less direct reference to the *c*+*t* core.

In my analyses, I found that the contratenor additions to B4 and B27 contained many similarities. In both cases, the contratenors were integrated with the syntax of the *c*+*t* core and provided commentary on the dyadic structure in specific ways. In B4, the contratenor brought out the rhythmic tension of the *c*+*t* core, and in B27, the contratenor

brought out the tension between the primary and secondary tonal goals. Both contratenors also behaved quite differently in each of the three formal sections of the balade, enforcing the structure of the chanson. The additional contratenors in both B3 and B20 presented additional complexities; in both cases the contratenors altered significant structural sonorities, and in the case of B20, the obscured final measures leave more questions unanswered.

Based on Smilansky's hypothesis, I expected to see more evidence of a preserved improvisatory tradition in the additional contratenors' use of standard formulae, yet the only genuinely extensive use of these formulae occurs in B20. The case studies examined here each present a contratenor that behaves quite differently, though each contains more standard formulae than the six balades written in by Machaut in three parts in **MS A**. To me, this suggests that these improvised additions had been integrated into the balades, having become codified to some degree, at least in the social circles surrounding the scribe of **MS E**. In three of the four additional contratenors, B4, B27, and B3, the contratenors were fit to their *c*+*t* core, and when standard formulae were applied, they tended to strengthen the relationship of the contratenor with the *c*+*t* core, by bringing out elements already present within it. Even in the case of B20, the contratenor made clear attempts to integrate with the *c*+*t* core, and its frequent use of unison doublings and fifth leaps raise questions about possible performing forces. In comparison to the control group, the additional contratenors of **MS E** are more likely to present rhythmic bridges following cadences. In the control group fewer rhythmic bridges are employed, and when they occur they are more frequently supplied by the tenor.

In my analyses, I was surprised to find a regular use of brief (no more than 1.5 measures at a time) hocket-like passages in three of the four contratenors (B27, B3 and B20). In each case, the hocket-like passages demand the attention of the listener and are not motivically related to the material in the *c+t* core. This rhythmic idea was not a common feature of the six balades presented in the control group, and the presence of this rhythmic idea in three of the four additional contratenors in this study raises further questions. Could the use of hocket-like rhythms in the later contratenors of **MS E** indicate an aesthetic trend, whether it is enlivening the two-part core with additional syncopation, or harkening back to the older use of hocket?

Moving forward, I hope to open up my sample pool in order to include the later-added contratenors to Machaut's rondeaux, and his four-voice chansons. This will be important to explore how genre and number of voices might have impacted contratenor behavior in the late medieval song, and to give a fuller picture of the unique voice parts in **MS E**. Further, there is more work to be done regarding possible performing forces in Machaut's chansons; in the absence of clear historical documentation, what can the counterpoint and nature of the voice lines themselves tell us about performing forces?[187]

In my analyses of the additional contratenors in **MS E**, I have built upon arguments made by Bent and Bain that draw attention to the value of **MS E**, despite its late dating and supposed disconnect from the poet-composer. Machaut's works, as preserved in **MS A**, has garnered a nearly untouchable and anachronistically authoritative quality, despite the documentation of a flexible performance tradition shortly after his

[187] This is something that Daniel Leech-Wilkinson does in the following article: Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, "Le *Voir Dit* and La *Messe de Nostre Dame*: Aspects of Genre and Style in Late Works of Machaut." *Plainsong & Medieval Music,* vol. 2, no. 1 (1993): 43–73.

death. Simon Gaunt's account of the cultural divide modern readers face when approaching medieval French literature resonates here;

> whereas adapting, expanding, [and] rewriting texts is characteristic of medieval culture, today we tend to regard what the 'original' author wrote as sacred, inviolable, [and] inherently more worthy than a text that has undergone reworking at the hands of others.[188]

I hope to encourage the practice of adding or improvising contratenors to Machaut's chansons, in the manner preserved in **MS E**. I suggest that we set aside the name, although we have it, and make room to explore the value of adapting and expanding, based upon the contrapuntal evidence found in **MS E**.

[188] Simon Gaunt, *Retelling the Tale: An Introduction to Medieval French Literature* (London: Duckworth, 2001), 25–26.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have sought to challenge the relationship between Machaut and modern understanding of *auctoritas* from three perspectives. I first approached my question through the lens of the scholarly literature, then through selections of Machaut's own writing in the *Livre dou Voir Dit*, and finally, through comparative musical analysis.

In the second chapter, I highlighted places in the literature that expose some of the other agents involved in Machaut's works. Despite the presence of these agents in the scholarly literature, scholars do not often question the notion of Machaut's inviolable authority and the nature of his controlling authorial presence over his works. One aim of this chapter was to critique the understood *auctoritas* attached to to **MS A** and to re-present the wealth of information gathered in the posthumous **MS E**. In the future, I hope to work more closely with **MS E**. In particular, I would like to explore more deeply Deborah McGrady's argument about the layout choices in **MS E,** namely that they allow for multiple readings of the *Voir Dit* — readings that are not possible in any of the earlier manuscripts.[189] I am interested in contrasting such considerations with the iconographic interpretations that Sylvia Huot incorporates in her consideration of the narrative *dits* in **MSS C** and **A**.[190]

Further, there are some puzzling, even paradoxical representations of Machaut in the conventional scholarly view. On the one hand, it is acknowledged that Machaut's

[189] Deborah McGrady, *Controlling Readers: Guillaume de Machaut and His Late Medieval Audience* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

[190] Sylvia Huot, *From Song to Book: The Poetics of Writing in Old French Lyric and Lyrical Narrative Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

works were widely circulated during his lifetime, including outside of his purview; on the other hand, there is an insistence that Machaut was very controlling with the authorized versions of his works. While these two possibilities are not mutually exclusive, they have not been fully reconciled within the literature. Another complication I would like to introduce into the discussion is the attenuation of Machaut's importance as named or recognized composer in the years immediately following his death. While his musical influence, especially in his codification of the *formes fixes*, certainly continued to resound in the successive generations of secular song, it does not compare to his influence on literary figures of the next generation. Thus, while Machaut's posthumous impact on later poets such as Eustache Deschamps and Christine de Pizan can be traced, Machaut is rather minimally represented in fifteenth-century musical anthologies. I would like to examine how Machaut's name and works appear in later anthologies – including alterations, voice additions, and false attributions. How do these threads complicate our modern understanding of *auctoritas*? Beyond Machaut, I am interested in the ways in which naming and anonymity in the Early Modern Era influence modern editions of chansons and their scholarly reception. In a future project, I hope to pursue the role of anonymity in the fifteenth-century chansons by building from arguments made by literary scholars such as Marcy North.[191]

My third chapter questioned Machaut's relation to *auctoritas* through the lens of his own writing – specifically the narrative and letters embedded within the *Voir Dit*. In my select examples, I focused on passages that demonstrate the wide circulation of Machaut's works and that occurred during his lifetime yet outside of his purview. I also

[191] Marcy L. North, *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

reframed select passages that contribute to a modern understanding of Machaut as a controlling author figure.

Since much of what we know about Machaut comes to us from his own writings, a future project will consider carefully and systematically the entire body of his works, or at the very least a much larger sample. My approach here is based on a small sample of Machaut's writing; it will be necessary for me to see how Machaut's other narrative and lyric works may or may not fit into the arguments I have made here. Further, in the absence of much historical documentation, engaging with a wider variety of medieval French literary genres in general, including commonly used tropes, will facilitate deeper understanding of the late medieval literary-musical context.

One such area for further study is the role of the messenger in the *Voir Dit*. While literary scholars have examined the role of the messenger in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it will be fruitful to see if Machaut works with or against these established literary devices. Specifically, I hope to question how Machaut's mixed use of spoken and written messages compares to that of earlier traditions. I am also interested in Machaut's treatment of the secretary, both as a messenger, and as an impetus for driving the narrative forward.

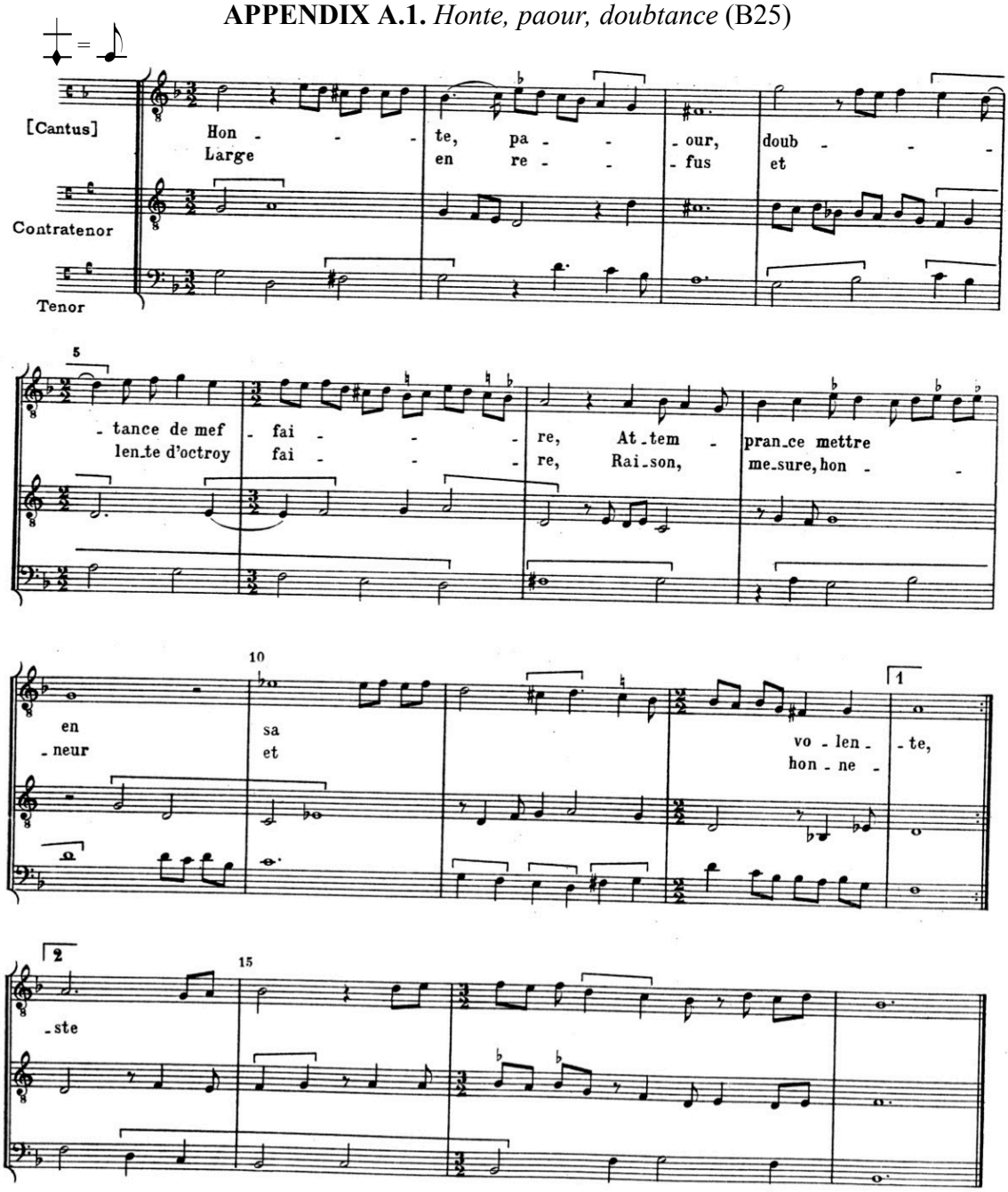
In Chapter IV I looked in depth at four case studies of later-added contratenors in **MS E**, and compare how the contratenor voice behaves in each of these four examples to Machaut's treatment of this voice in six, stably transmitted three-voice balades. In the *Voir Dit*, Machaut himself affirms the existence of such later additions and instrumental adaptations. While **MS E** preserves a likely later performance practice, these adaptations were likely known to the composer. This has implications for historically-informed

performances of Machaut's music today; the improvisation of lines has a historical basis, which is described in the *Voir Dit* and exemplified in **MS E**. The posthumous manuscript is an invaluable preservation of these later additions, as it is not far removed from Machaut's lifetime. Further, there is more work to be done regarding possible performing forces for Machaut's chansons. Lacking labels or any otherwise clear documentation, a consideration of voice hierarchy, and an analysis of melodic intervals and contrapuntal dissonances may provide clues. In order to encourage this practice, it would be invaluable to have Machaut's chansons that survive in multiple versions represented that way in modern editions, and in recordings. Finally, in the future, I hope to investigate how the later-added contratenors in **MS E** fit into the landscape of other additional contratenors in the later, fifteenth-century anthology sources.

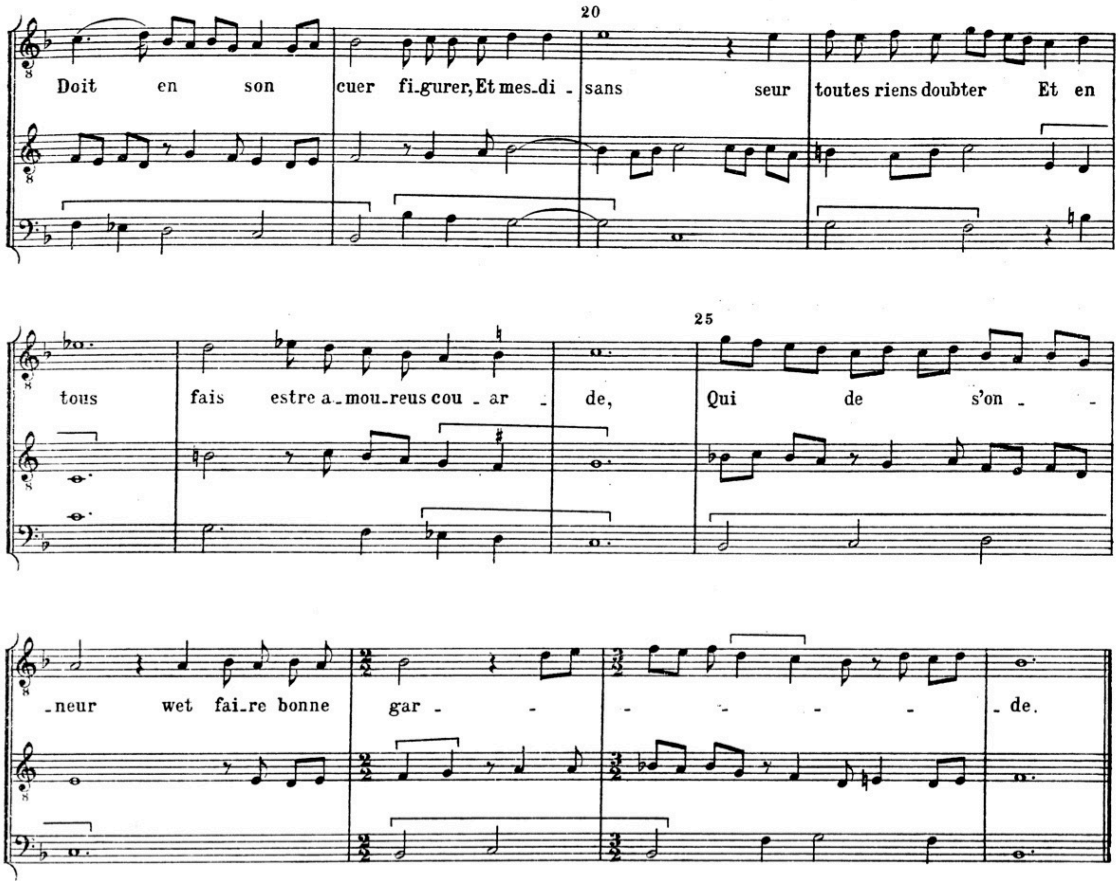
In the meantime, this preliminary study offers a challenge to the established, potentially anachronistic understanding of the fourteenth-century poet-composer's relation to *auctoritas* through a questioning of his achieved, or even attempted, exertion of control over his works. I have aimed to understand Machaut, his works, and his environment through a closer inspection of the role of hidden, missing agents in select works and through reconsideration and reevaluation of the 'unauthorized' additions against the authorized versions.

APPENDIX A: MUSICAL EXAMPLES IN THE CONTROL GROUP

APPENDIX A.1. *Honte, paour, doubtance* (B25)

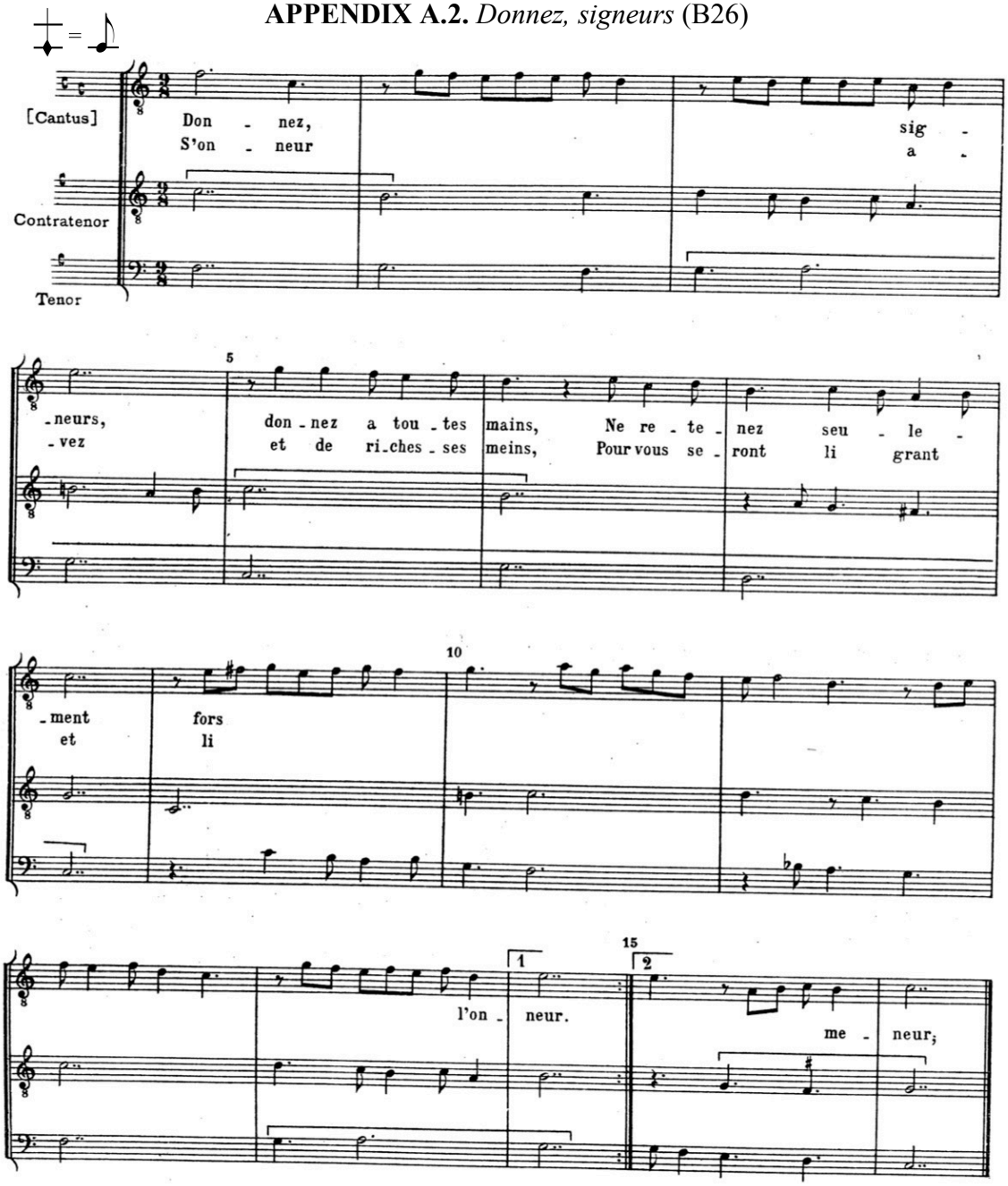


APPENDIX A.1. *(continued)*



Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III,* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 106–107.

APPENDIX A.2. *Donnez, signeurs* (B26)



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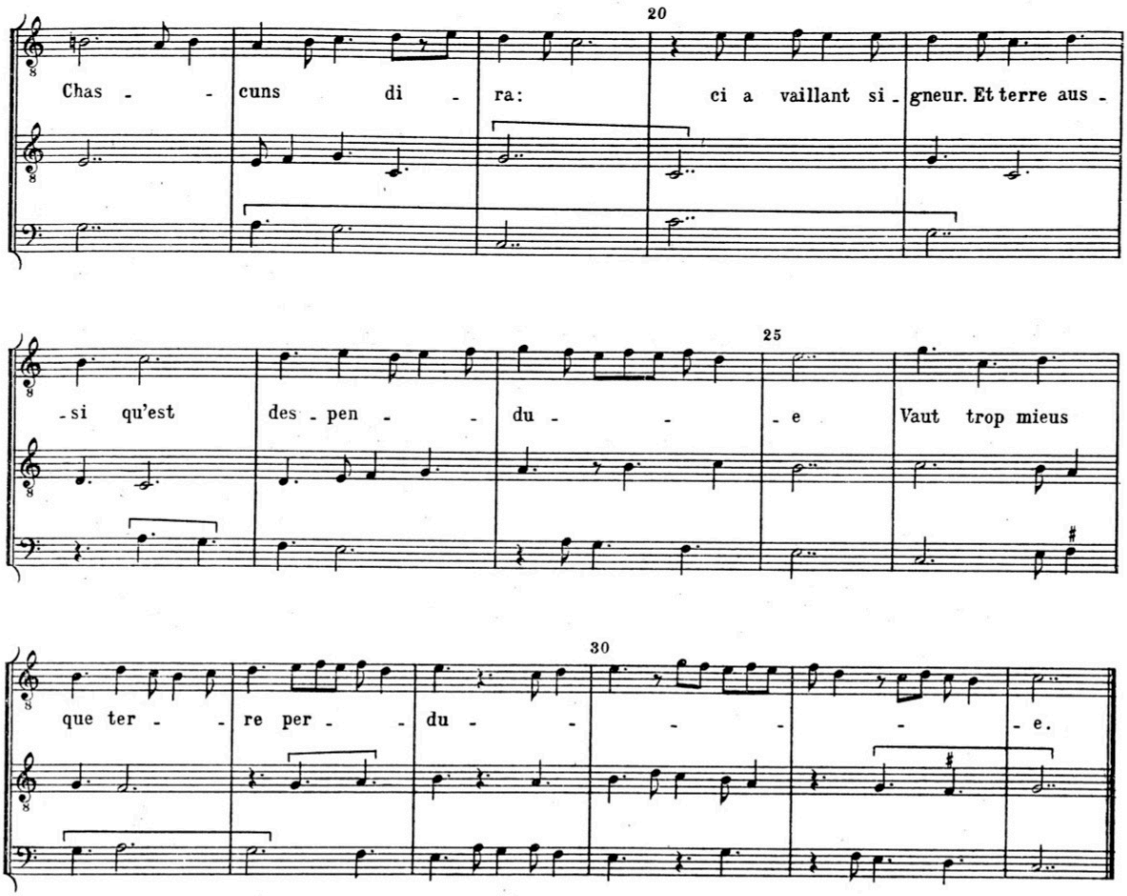
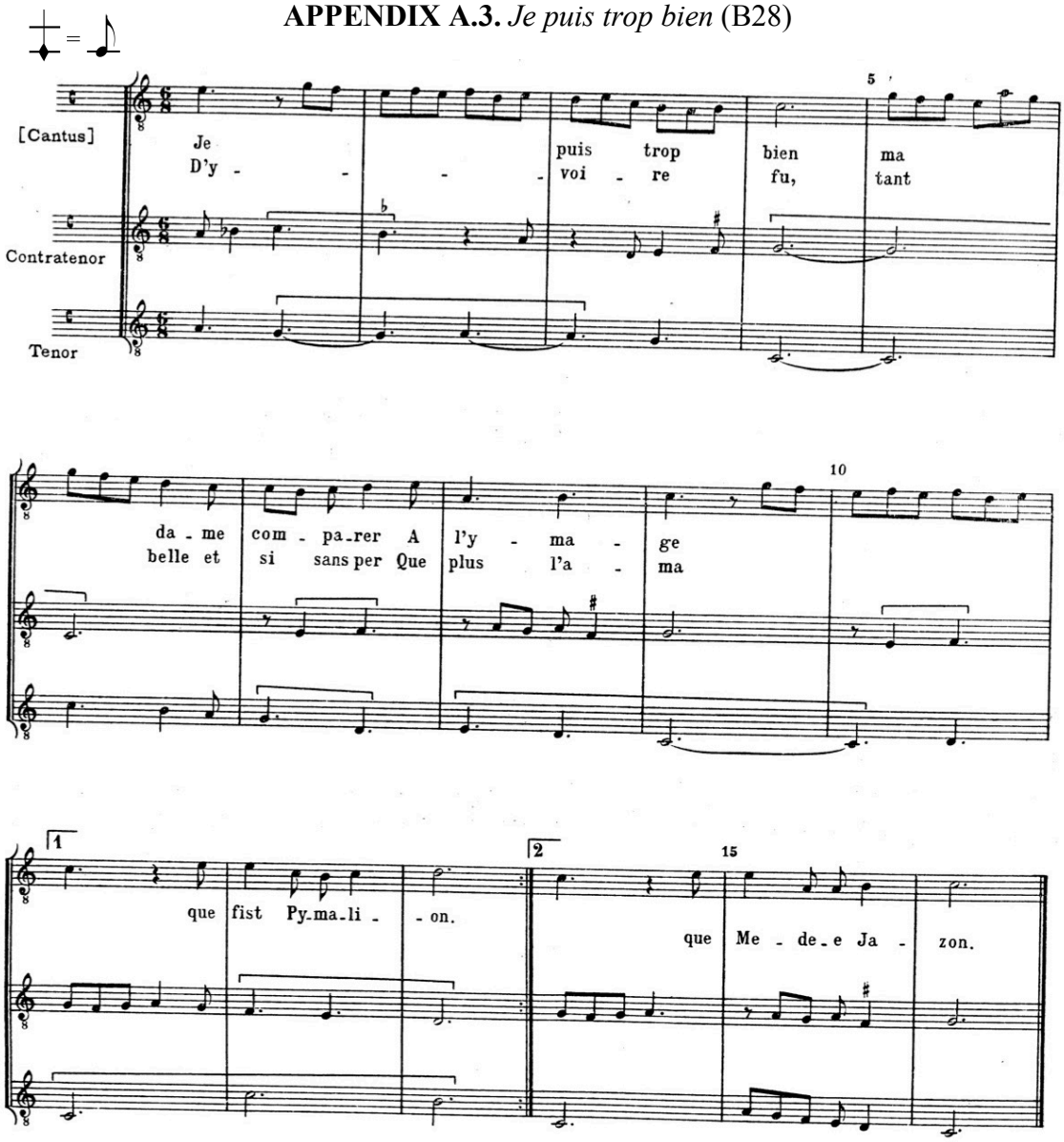


Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III,* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 108–109.

APPENDIX A.3. *Je puis trop bien* (B28)



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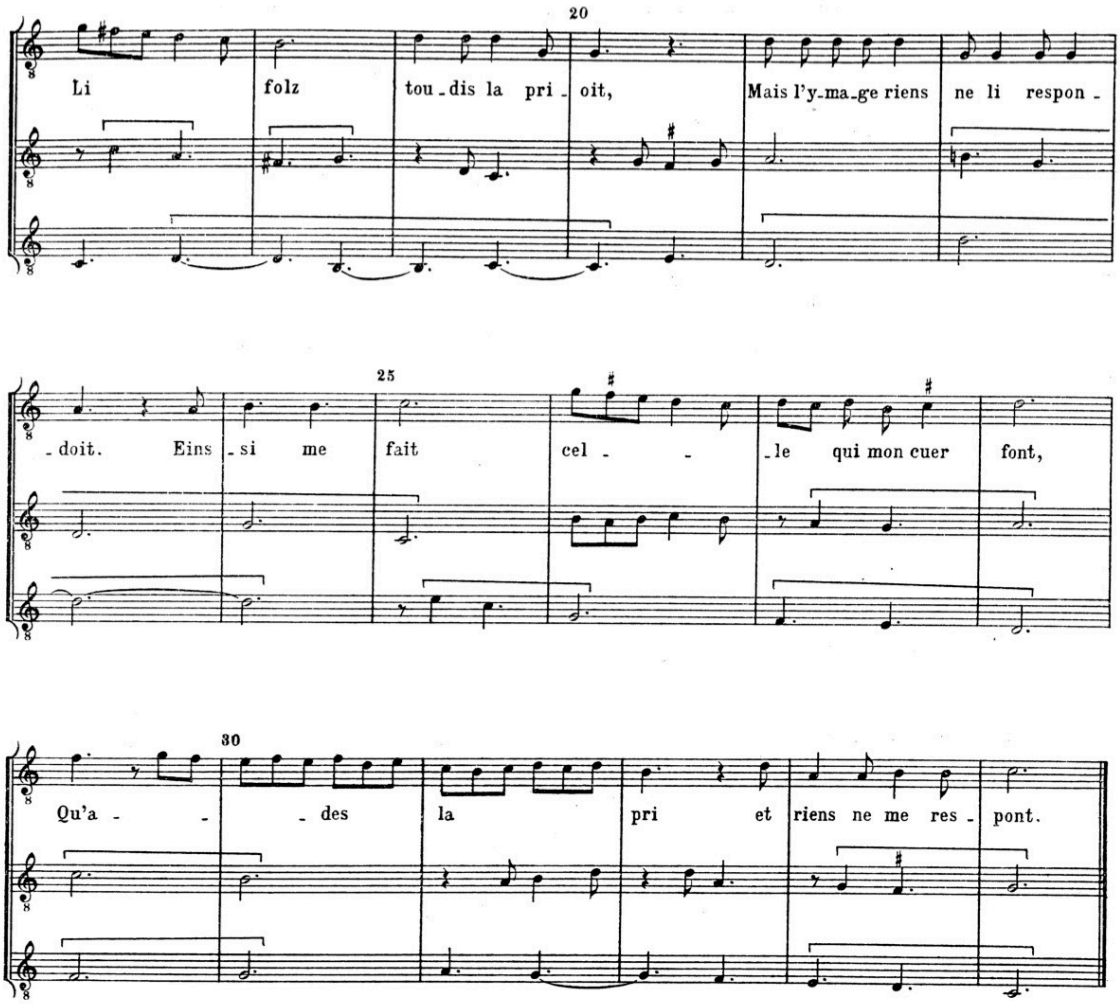
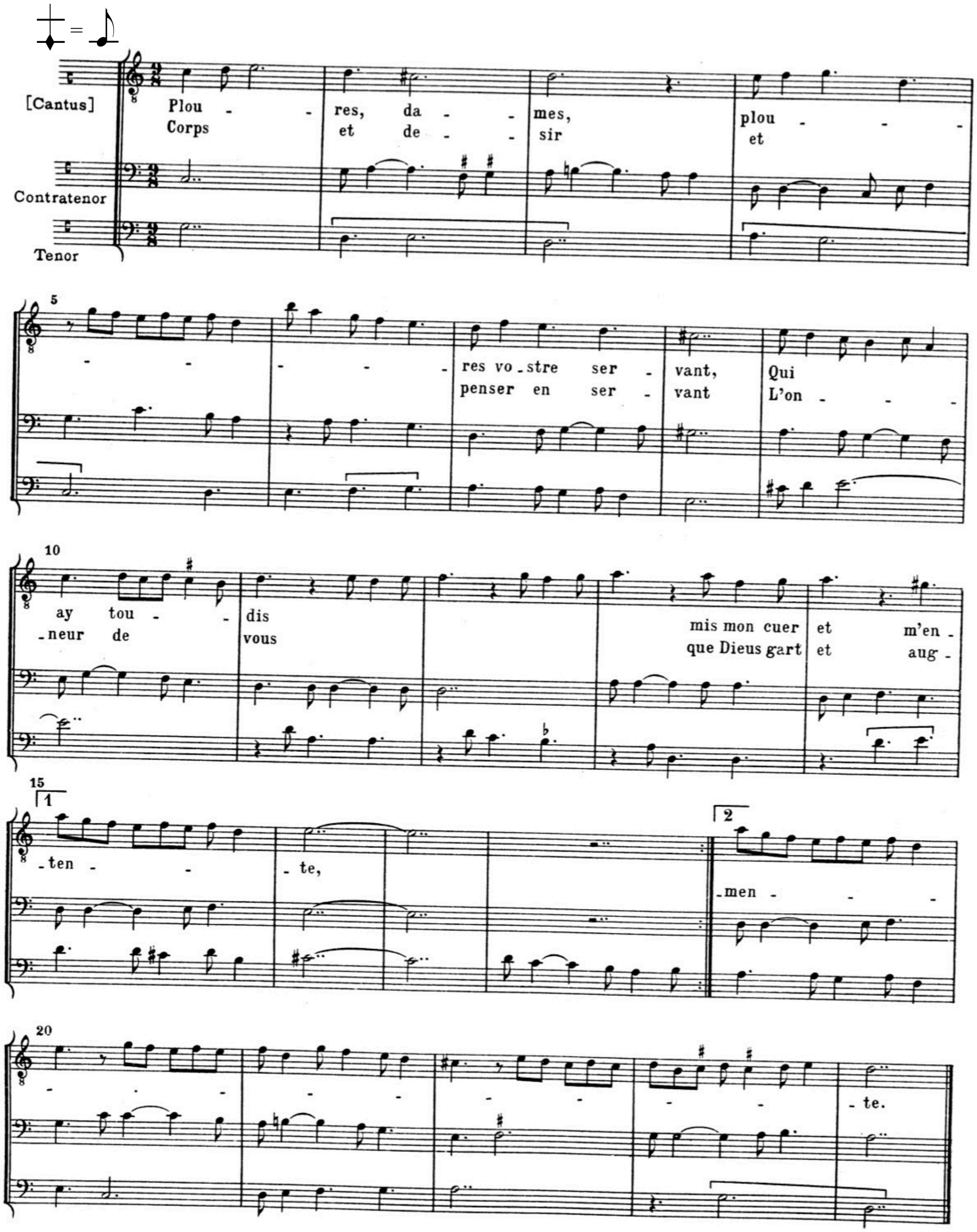


Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III,* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 112–113.

APPENDIX A.4. *Ploures, dames* (B32)



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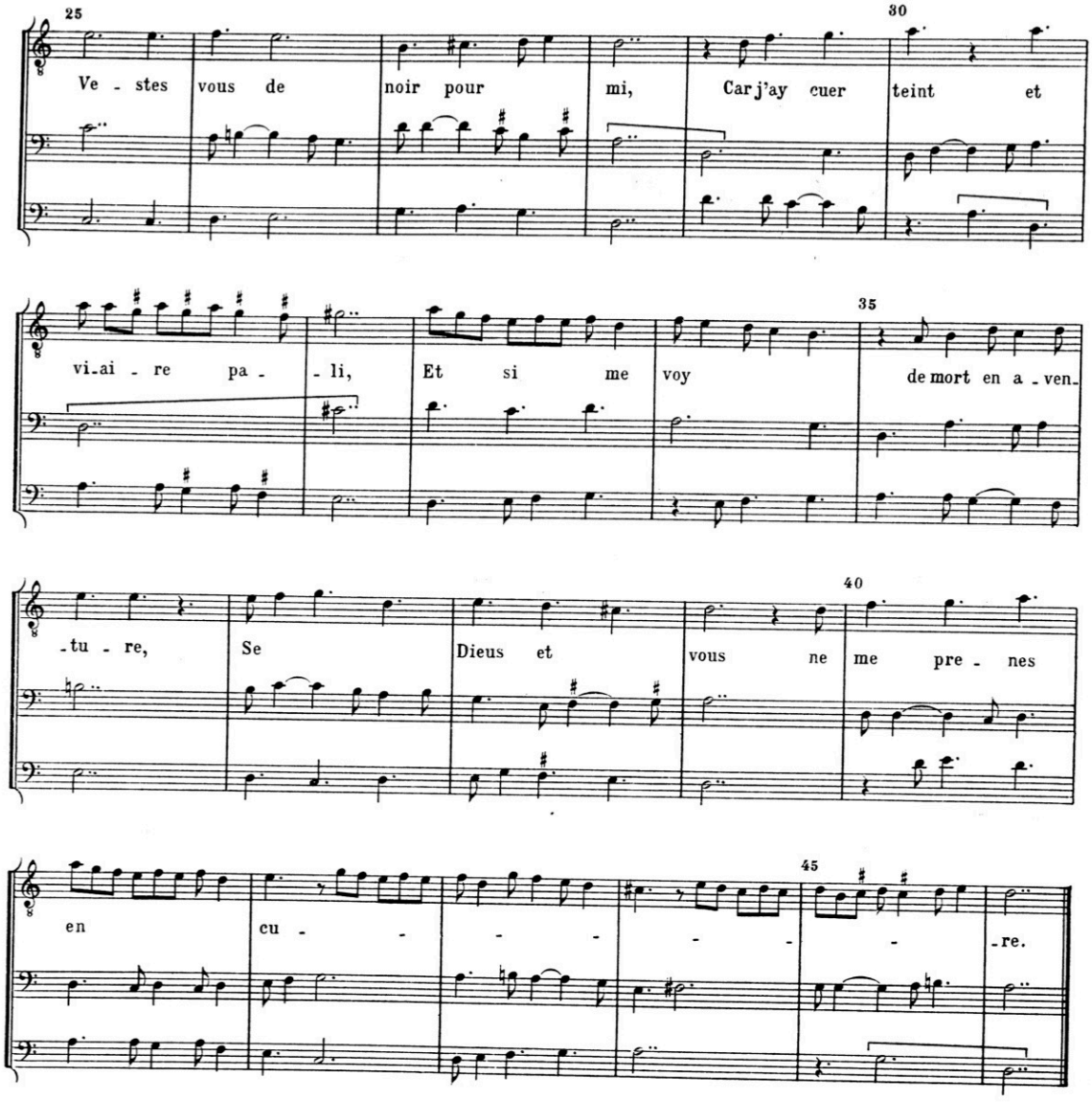
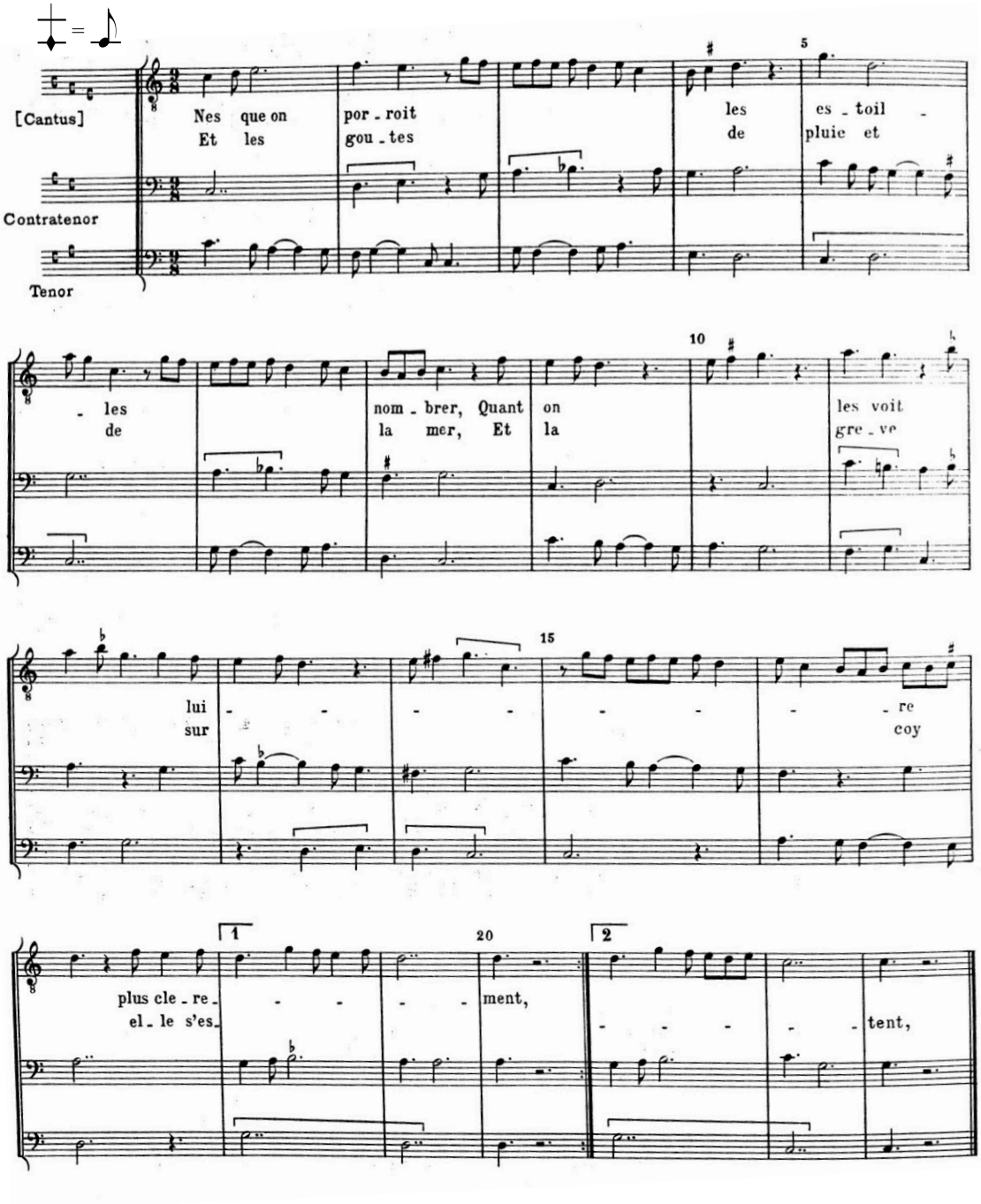


Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III,* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 120–121.

APPENDIX A.5. *Nes que on porroit* (B33)



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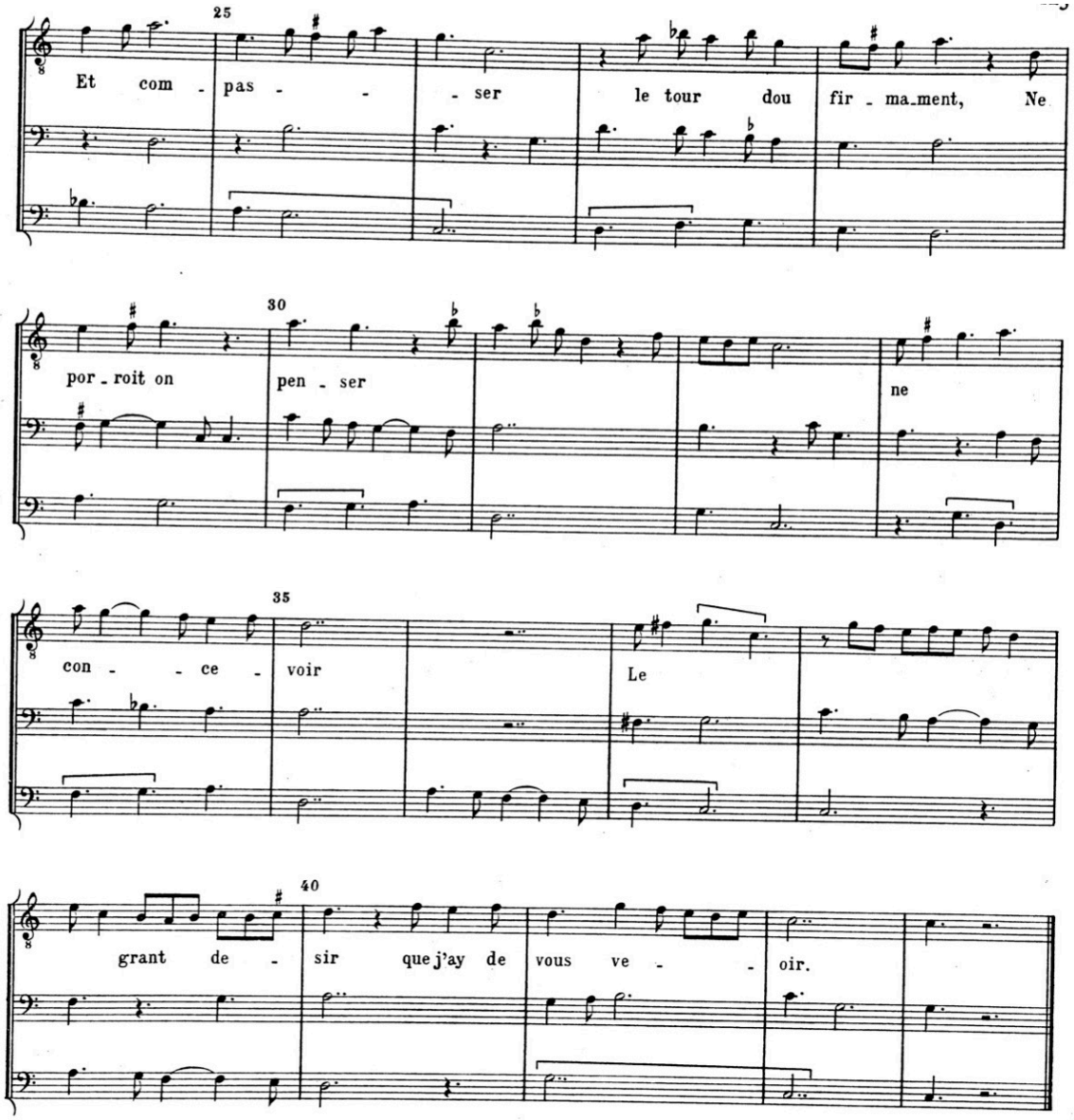
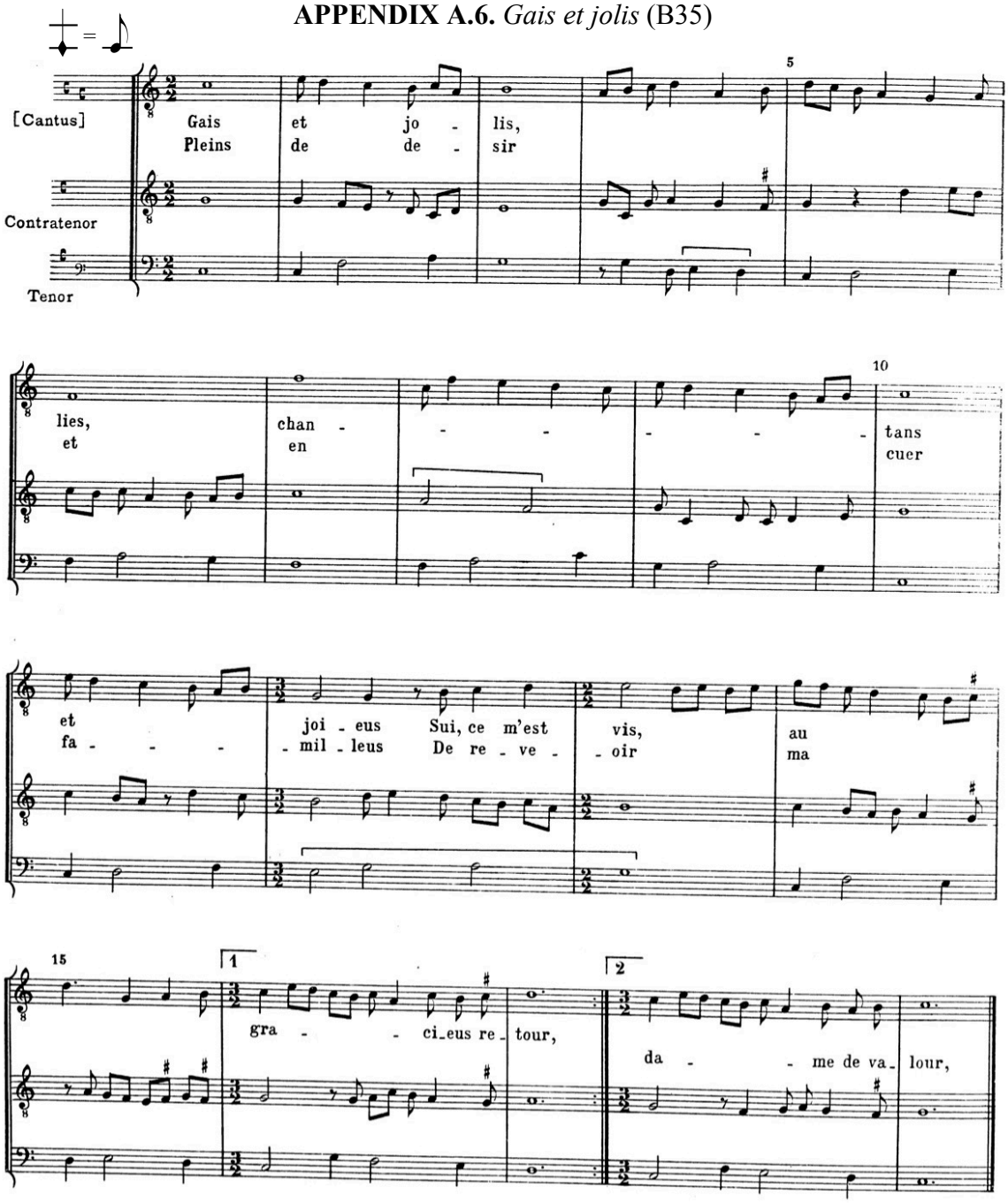
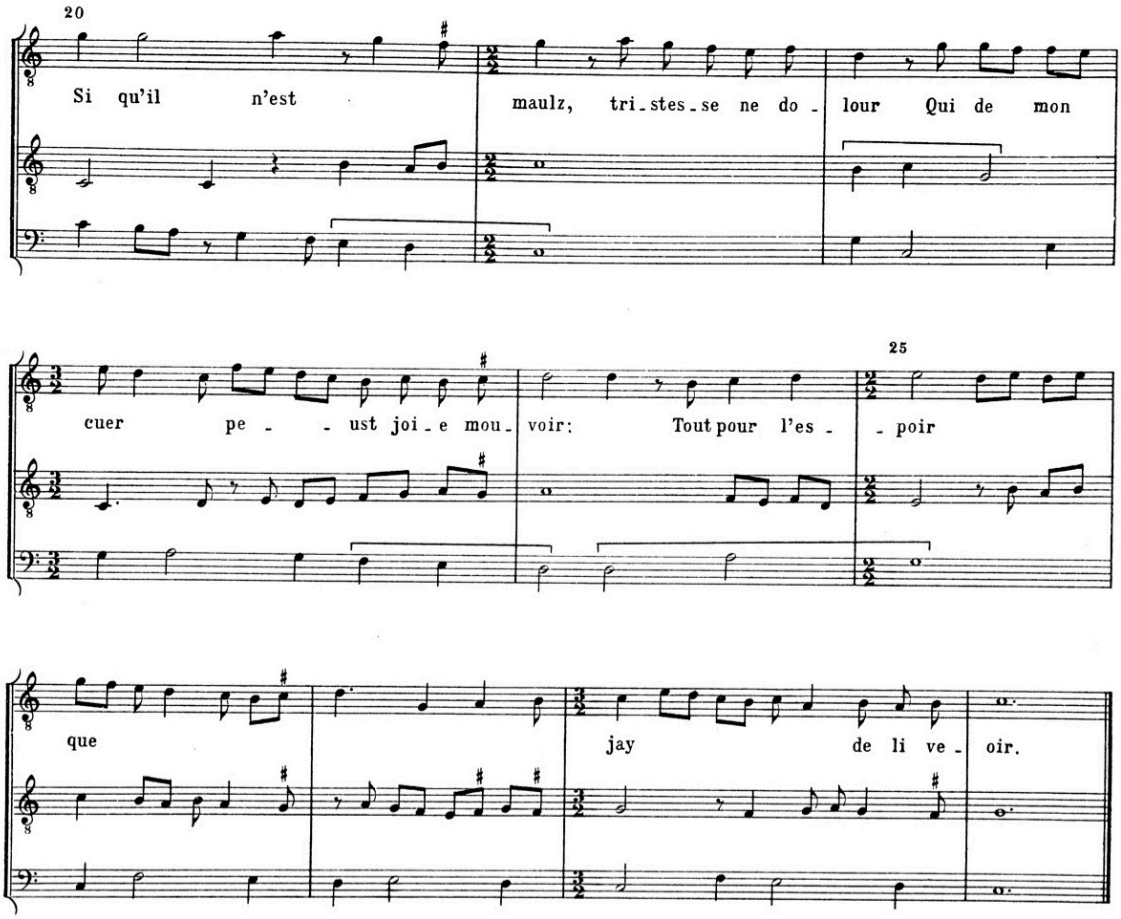


Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III,* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 122–123.

APPENDIX A.6. *Gais et jolis* (B35)



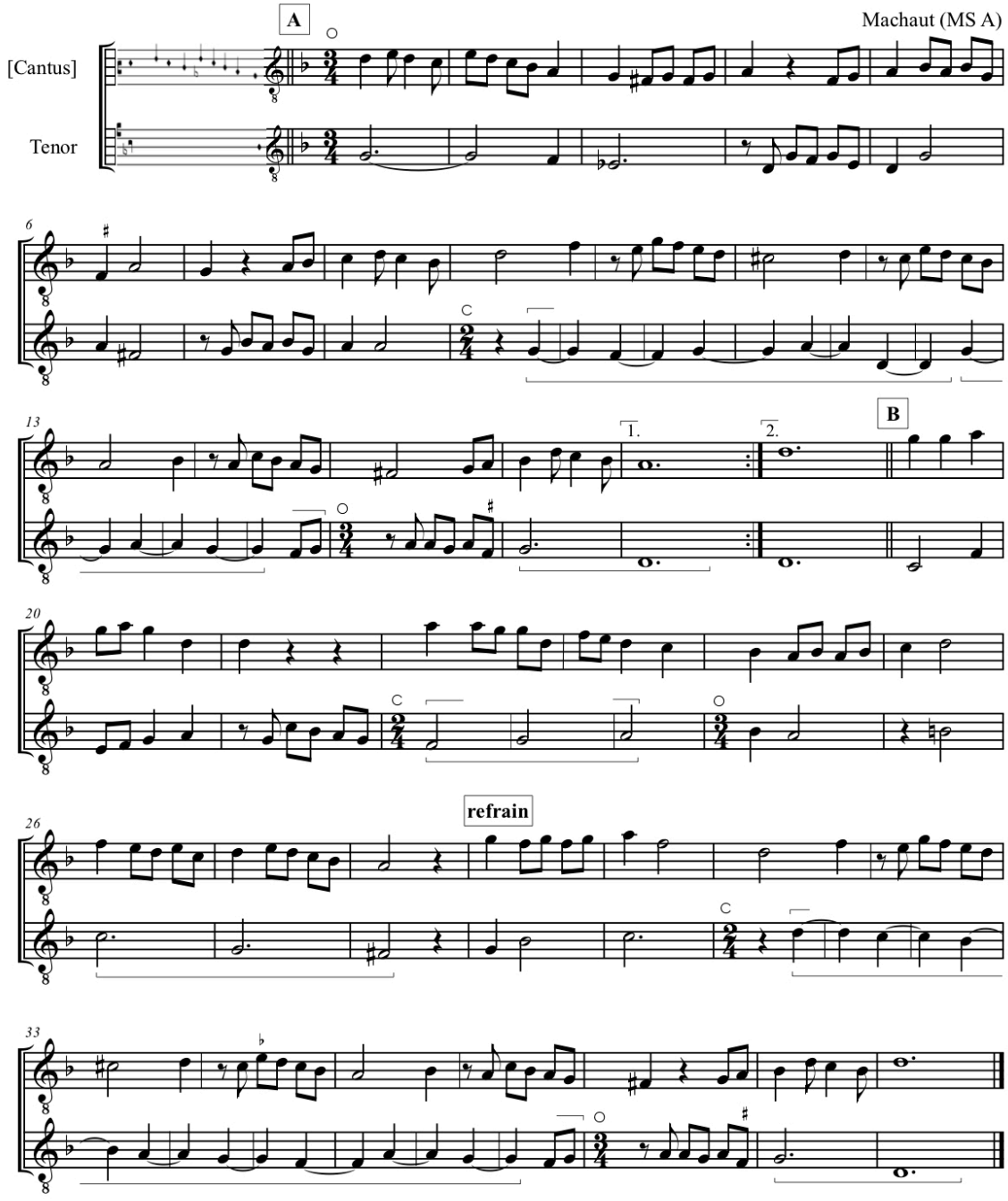
APPENDIX A.6. *(continued)*



Leo Schrade, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century III,* (Monaco: Editions De L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956), 128–129.

APPENDIX B: TWO-VOICE VERSION OF *BEAUTÉ QUI TOUTES AUTRES PERE* (B4)

APPENDIX B *Biauté qui toutes autres pere*



Coloration is indication by open brackets above notes.
Ligatures are indicated by brackets below the notes.
I have removed text from this transcription in order to focus on the counterpoint.

1

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