

WORDS AND MUSIC IN COMMUNION:
AN ANALYSIS OF GUILLAUME DE MACHAUT'S
"LE LAY DE LA FONTEINNE"
IN CULTURAL CONTEXT

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An Abstract of the Thesis Presented
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Fourteenth-century France exhibits the effects of an era grappling for an identity through its language, poetry and music. Amidst intellectual rigidity and diurnal despair, this transitional period enfeebled by medieval traditions yet aspired to humanist artistry. Guillaume de Machaut, illustrious poet-composer in the medieval myth, offered a means of embellishing life through a variety of secular songs. In particular, the lay, a twelve-stanza traditional form and predecessor to the "virelai," "ballade," and "rondeau," permitted this versatile artist to musically integrate divergent but equally imposing strains in fourteenth-century French culture. By means of rhythmic and poetic juxtaposition,

traditional and innovative compositions expose the struggle between courtly convention and humanist yearnings.

“Ars Antigua” and “Ars Nova” intermingle in “Le Lay de la fonteinne.” The result is the inimitable Machauvian art, an expression of secular and sacred devotion. The context and methods by which this sensitive composer sought to merge traditional rhythmic modes, monophonic song and experimental hocket in a three-voice “chace” attest to Machaut’s and medieval music’s potential for speaking two truths: the secular and the sacred in love, united in One ... God. Poetic images and notational technique retain independence on a syllabic plane, only to meet in a phrase, to join hands in spiritual reverence ... the aesthetic sphere. Duple meter combines with triple patterns to assert the near equal standing of imperfect humanity and perfect divinity, “tempus imperfectus” and “perfectus” in harmony.

In this thesis, I shall attempt to define and then analyze the multiple elements present in Guillaume de Machaut’s “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” especially those elements that encapsulate the medieval myth of secular divinity. The method explored to elucidate a host of musical, semantic, syntactical and grammatical meanings in the lai is multifaceted and progressive. A cultural overview of the period initiates the evolutionary process of peering into an obscure past. A theoretical discussion of the relationship between music and language prefaces tentative conclusions on the import of the lai at a metaphysical level.

Diverse comments on Machaut as a poet-composer along with an interpretive analysis of the verse in “Le Lay de la fonteinne” provide a necessary perspective on the artististic motivations behind the interdisciplinary product.

The findings of this inquiry remain pertinent to medieval and contemporary scholars alike. While the conclusions sought can only be deemed non-definitive, the journey to their end undoubtedly permits the inquirer to assimilate the sensual qualities of a time, a place and a composition. A sole recommendation of open-mindedness coupled with an individual and evolving interpretation is in order for the person who seeks to grasp the essence of this thesis, symbolic of one artist and one lai’s influence.

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Chapter 1

MUSIC IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

La musique est une science
Qui vuet qu'on rie, et chante, et dence ...

Par tout ou elle est, joie y porte
Les desconfortez reconforte
Et nes seulement de l'oir
Fait elle la gens resjoir

* * * * *

Music is a science
That incites us to laughter,
Song and dance ...

Wherever she may be, joy follows
The disconsolate receive consolation
Not only in joyful harmonies
But in gladness of heart¹

Guillaume de Machaut, noted poet-composer of fourteenth-century Europe, served as a pivotal figure in the cultural and artistic transition from a medieval age of Classical philosophies refashioned in Christian myths ... the rediscovery of ancient beauty through human artistry. Perfect proportion, the center of medieval aesthetics, defines the Machauvian art. St. Thomas Aquinas's attempt during the thirteenth century to synthesize perfect proportion with metaphysical beauty provided a philosophical base for composers like Machaut who retained numerical symbols from the Classical Age in their compositions, embellished them and ultimately forged a new musical identity.² The Platonic One, the essence of the beginning, middle and end, reemerges as

the Holy Trinity, a three-in-one God.³ Past and present, the secular and the sacred meet in abstract and concrete forms.

“Ars Antigua” and “Ars Nova” define the musical journey from strict modality to rhythmic freedom.⁴ As medieval musicians strove to meet the humanist ideal, they initiated the offsetting of the triple “perfectus” by the duple “imperfectus.”⁵ Concurrently, rudimentary stages of three-voice polyphony intruded upon a prevailing monophony⁶ and irregular rhythmic interactions among vocal lines, referred to as “hocketing,” redefined an ideal of perfection associated with the number “3.”⁷

Prior to the acceptance of Machaut’s new musical style among courtly circles, Thomas Aquinas had initiated queries as to whether music expressed through ethereal song respected divine authority.⁸ The Catholic Church, battling with crisis prior to the Great Schism,⁹ joined moral forces with Saint Thomas and issued a papal bull in 1324: “[It was the] strongest blast against the new style of composition ..., the ‘Ars nova,’ of which Machaut was [the main] ingenious exponent”¹⁰ Thus, theological disapproval remained one of many barriers to artistic creation in the Middle Ages, one that Machaut and fourteenth-century artists in general continually sought to overcome.¹¹

In an effort to understand and appreciate Machaut’s musical art in song, one is first obligated to analyze the technical aspects of the composer’s music and poetry and then to relate any conclusions to the cultural climate that propelled the work’s production. Only an integrated

study of a musical composition permits the musician--listener, performer or analyst--to transcend historical bounds with the goal of entering into the metaphysical reality that the artist vied to communicate.¹²

This thesis aims to bridge the gap between concrete forms and abstract notions by disclosing the combined aesthetic and metaphysical impact of music and language in Guillaume de Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne," a culturally integrated while artistically independent musical entity. A brief overview of the historical context that surrounded Machaut's production is appropriate prior to a realistic assessment of the composer's oeuvre. It is essential as well to a comprehensive analysis of Machaut's finely crafted "Le Lay de la fonteinne."¹³

Chapter 2

CULTURAL OVERVIEW

The passage from Greek and Roman paganism to European Christianity discovered its voice in St. Augustine. This man alone, a disciple of Christ, dominated Christian theology from 430 to 1500.¹⁴ As Platonic philosophies and metaphysics concomitantly derived new meaning under the auspices of Christianity, the arts developed surrounded by a sacred culture permeated with intellectualism. And while the religious revival of the eleventh and twelfth centuries glorified God in recently erected Romanesque and gothic churches, tenth-century monastic schools, far-reaching in cultural and educational influence, were transformed into universities. After this fundamental changeover had been effected, so too the higher “quadrivium” disciplines of the Carolingian monasteries conceded to the lower “trivium” studies of the universities.¹⁵ Thus, the road to religious, political and social secularism had been duly paved.

The theologian versus logician or ecclesiastic versus intellectual battle that arose between Church and institution propagated the ongoing power struggle between the sacred and secular worlds. This conflict that was initiated by Pope Gelasius’s “Doctrine of Two Swords”¹⁶ encountered an opposing ideal of political harmony in the systems proposed by John Salisbury, John Wyclif and Christine de Pisan.¹⁷ Marie de France, a

twelfth-century French poet at the court of Henri II, had already expressed the necessity for the various segments of society to interact harmoniously.¹⁸ France's "The Fable of a Man, his Belly and his Limbs" depicts the interdependence among the King, the Church and the people, a relationship vital to the full functioning of the developing State.¹⁹

Amidst twelfth-century religious revivals, university expansion, and hierarchical polemics, William IX, the Count of Poitiers, searched for noble love in song and initiated a wave of courtly poet-composers known as the troubadours and the trouveres.²⁰ These languishing love poets espoused passionate ardor steeped in spiritual devotion to a virtuous but often reticent lady. Under the umbrella of the European "fin amors," these impetuous lovers attempted to elevate physical passion by infusing sexual impulse with moral and spiritual qualities analogous to Christian love.²¹ The courtly myth associated with these outwardly controlled but frequently illicit liaisons spread across the continent in song and soon discovered support in literary verse as well. For example, Guillaume de Lorris's Roman de la Rose depicts a "locus amoenus," a medieval garden that recalls Classical splendor and juxtaposes human-crafted beauty with universal nature--God's world.²² Hence, both the musical and literary arts displayed the antagonism and fluent interaction ever-apparent between the secular and sacred domains.²³

Medieval women of the privileged class, who assimilated or, on occasion, fought rampant misogyny, also lived an imaginary ideal, one

that fused the cult of the Virgin with the desired secular lady.²⁴ These blurred distinctions between women's sacred and secular roles provided artists with variant avenues to explore in the literature of praise. While Petrarch deified Laura in Italian verse and established his own humanist version of courtly "amour" allied with Classical mythology, Machaut in "Le Lay de la fonteinne" disclosed the faltering of "fine amour," a tradition of refined sexual union that resurrected women's role as the earthly guide of men's devotion toward the blessed Virgin.²⁵ Although Machaut's poetry in "La fonteinne" discloses ambivalent impressions and attitudes of a courtly convention increasingly crippled by debauchery and hypocrisy, the Virgin Mother reigns supreme and reaffirms the potential for devoted "amants" to discover bliss in Christian unity.²⁶

Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne" provides one example of the ambivalence that impregnates much of fourteenth-century poetry. Although the verse of "La fonteinne" focuses predominantly on the supplicant's sincere devotion to the Virgin, an element of irony opens the poem and remains in the reader's memory throughout the twelve stanzas of the lai. The suitor, spurned by his idyllic lady, turns immediately for solace to the "perfect" substitute, the Mother of God. In spite of Machaut's genuine Christian spirit evidenced by the language, the suitor's attitude raises questions with respect to the medieval man's view toward the secular lady, the idolized woman, the model of perfection in an objectified ideal ... the surrogate Virgin Mother.

While hierarchical disintegration and eventual chaos perpetuated by the Hundred Years' War²⁷ and the Black Death²⁸ impacted artists' perceptions with negative images, these same events, in confrontation and unavoidable communion with artistic vision, paved the way to individuality and secular freedom.²⁹ Similar to all accomplished personages, Machaut was obligated to reconcile inspirational, hierarchical and societal demands to achieve excellence in his discipline. The Church, patrons, and creative impulse provided the composer with a sense of security but at the same time, fostered unavoidable frustration in an artist who sought to integrate tradition with originality.

Guillaume de Machaut, poet and composer, the product of a volatile fourteenth century, garnered external and internal resources to reinvent aging forms via experimentation. Parading among courtly, moral and religious images, Machaut, the conservative innovator, retained the logic and balance of Classical culture and imbued it with medieval finesse. In scholarly writings, he is repeatedly referred to as the "last of the trouvères" and indeed represents the sole figure who brought to a close three centuries of poet-composers renowned for expressing cultural and emotional concerns through secular poetry and music. Musicians after Machaut set poetry to music conceived by authors other than themselves and thereby inadvertently rendered their predecessor emblematic.

As one peruses the narrative “dits,” the musical “lais” and the “formes fixes,” Machaut’s representation of a transitional century, in love with an ideal, speaks enveloped by consonant, reassuring tones.³⁰ In spite of this legacy, a negative attitude persists with respect to the Dark Ages. The fourteenth century, in particular, is often deemed a time of impenetrable misery, one devoid of intellectual and artistic merit. Both Machaut’s poetry and his music confront such stereotypes and refute the facile disregard of this century overwhelmed by social dilemma, subsequently misrepresented by historical generalities.

Whether literary verse, secular song or one composer’s “Lay de la fonteinne,” Machaut reveals the unique beauty of a diminished era, a beauty that this thesis seeks to unveil. Contemporary critics may peer among the words and the ligatures to extract a glimmer of what it meant to be a creative soul imbedded in a distressed world. Guillaume de Machaut, the premiere composer of fourteenth-century France, succeeded in juggling social, artistic and personal constraints. He boasts a prolific legacy of secular composition, his optimistic attestation to the complexity of a darkened age.

Chapter 3
LANGUAGE, MUSIC AND MYTH:
A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Language and Myth

Medieval music, a composite of technical and textual elements, continues to perplex scholars. Surrounded by a world dependent on symbols and allegories to express daily concerns and spiritual values, the medieval composer was obligated to reconcile the gap between abstract music and referential language. To what extent did these two compatible but independent modes of expression intersect in fourteenth-century French song? The historical polemic persists. Dual factions arise. The first maintains that the words and notes interrelate in a mutual effort to reveal meaning; the second upholds the language-to-music relationship as **two** independent systems that meet on an undefinable, metaphysical plane.³¹ I contend that Guillaume de Machaut's fourteenth-century "Lay de la fontaine" demonstrates a potential to draw upon subtle symbolism to revel in an ineffable aesthetic union of language and **sound**.³²

The primary question remains: How may the analyst discern the unique import of an experience in "concrete" words and abstract music? Nicolas Ruwet in Langage, musique, poesie proposes theories on the integration and disentangling of a semantic-based relationship of a code structured by sound and time. "La musique est langage." Music is

language,” according to Ruwet.³³ In order to evaluate such a statement, one must consider the technical and metaphysical implications of both communicative modes.

In order to initiate the process of meaningful verbalization, language relies upon phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases and sentences in a prescribed while flexible syntactic arrangement. Semantic value is denoted through the relationship of the word to its external referent. This association fulfills the basic requirements of intelligible expression. However, sound or tone, melodious contour or intonation, intuitive rhythm, or precision in timing and accent often alter significance. In poetic verse, especially, rhyme and regulated meter both enhance and restrict expressive semantic potential.

Music, of course, integrates numerous elements encountered in language. Sound, melody, harmony and rhythm interact to evoke impressions, emotional responses and, in a symbolic or metaphysical sense, meaning. This combination of units develops a musical syntax, phrases in prescribed motion, certainly analogous to poetic verse. In an attempt to identify where the two codes--the poetic and the musical--meet to transmit a unique message, the analyst must recognize and define the individual, while compatible, “grammatical” rules that regulate each system. Only then, is she able to interpret the musical and poetical symbolism as separate entities, as partners in song, related facets of a transforming culture.³⁴

To ascertain the cultural import of a complex technical language ... music ... the historian addresses style, genre and the musical or literary period in relation to the external forces present at the time of composition. “Why?” one asks. Because these forces unavoidably alter artistic goals. The composite art form—music, language and culture—tells the story of a time, a place and its people. Historical analysis leaps over rigid boundaries in an attempt to evaluate events in context. The historian considers the truthful assessment of a particular moment and lieu a virtual impossibility, yet she grapples with uncertainty and attempts to define social strains, trends and lifestyles at a fleeting instant in the past.

The music historian functions in a similar manner, although as a general rule amidst a lesser degree of historical ambiguity. Music of prior centuries often appears obvious to the contemporary analyst. It is not. The entire story, the complex discourse, lies in the expression, the composite performance of a composer who internally harbored multiple language systems communicated through his unique artistry. To bring his idealistic concept to fruition, he calls upon diverse problem-solving skills; he confronts personal and cultural values in a continual state of **flux**; and he lives a multi-dimensional existence, simultaneously active in the past, present and future.

The myth of humanity retold in a new style, “Ars Nova,” with reference to the old style, “Ars Antiqua,” discloses the link between an

ancient past and a transforming present. The Classical and the medieval, the mythical and the religious, remain inextricably intertwined.³⁵ If, as Classicists Morford and Lenardon claim, a “[m]yth is a many-faceted personal and cultural phenomenon created to provide a reality and a unity to what is transitory and fragmented in the world we experience,” Guillaume de Machaut’s “Le Lay de la fonteinne” represents a medieval myth that bridges the mathematical reasoning of Plato’s philosophical One with medieval regulated rhythms representative of courtly aspirations guided by a three-in-One God.³⁶ The myth of perfect love evolves as it recounts an ancient tale in novel forms.

The artistic ideal, that merges human passion and Christianity in a ritual truth of conventions and traditions, responds subliminally to the day-to-day environment while it seeks to enoble dire circumstances. According to Morford and Lenardon, “[m]yth provides us with absolutes in the place of ephemeral values and a comforting perception of the world that is necessary to make the insecurity and terror of existence bearable.”³⁷ Machaut’s “Le Lay de la fonteinne” fulfills such a task: first, by virtue of a poetic text that reassures a suppliant of divine love in a woman’s image--the Virgin, intermediary to God, offers salvation from misery to a downtrodden humanity through her Son, Jesus Christ; second, via repeated rhythmic patterns, Machaut establishes unity-- language and music in concert on an aural and a metaphysical plane. If, as Levi-Strauss asserts, “aucune société n’est jamais pleinement ni

integralement symbolique,” the numerical and allegorical symbols that pervade Machaut’s lai constitute only half of the myth.³⁸ The integrated message, music and language, sound with meaning, reaches the human psyche and discloses the mystery unique to one composer, one composition, one era, and one listener’s experience. “Art is eternal, for it reveals the inner landscape, which is the soul of man [and woman].”³⁹

Music and Myth

In searching for the line of demarcation, the ultimate meeting ground between the secular and the religious in medieval music, the music historian must first identify the influences that permeated each pore of the artist. In effect, she must recognize the myriad of environmental reflections in his creation. At moments, the divergence between past and present, sacred and profane, emerge with crystalline clarity. Often, however, the lines of distinction blur and propose a two-fold task for the interpreter of a complex art form. Initially, the analyst identifies the techniques appropriate to each age; and then, the sensitive, culturally astute interpreter attempts to apprehend the philosophical metamorphosis that incrementally and dramatically altered the surface image from one period to the next and concomitantly defined the subsequent era, style, or myth. A journey through the musical and mythical origins that prefaced the volatile fourteenth century serves to establish the historical thread that links art and humanity in a continuing story of multiple mirrors.

Courtly lovers, knights and ladies, these devoted “amants” focused their religious adoration on one sublime lady--the Virgin Mary. Marian devotion, which appeared in the first century, persisted throughout the Middle Ages and gradually evolved into the cult of the Virgin.⁴⁰ The Madonna, the chaste, virtuous woman who breathes life into the world, became the ideal model, the perfect lady of the twelfth-century love poets. While the troubadours and trouveres merged the image of the sacred Virgin with the aristocratic lady in song, the medieval populace attempted to survive in a world that distinguished between the sacred and the profane, as that world consistently transgressed those boundaries of distinction. Jeremy Yudkin asserts, “[l]ife and religion were one [in the Middle Ages], and music reflected them both.”⁴¹ One music historian’s words encapsulate the inherent difficulty in dissecting cultural and artistic trends and then isolating them in specific categories. The Virgin Mary in the courtly ideal represented both earth and heaven meshed into one divine woman’s image. The artist attempted to reconcile human and deific contrasts of the medieval period in a god-like figure that served as intermediary between diurnal misery and salvation.

According to Irving Singer: “[I]n the philosophy of love ... every discussion must start with Plato. Courtly love, romantic love, and major emphases in religious love all take root in him.”⁴² If Platonic philosophies permeated the myth of love throughout the Middle Ages, Platonic theories on the “music of the spheres,” the relationship between the cosmos and

art, reemerged in medieval song as a combined metaphysical and aesthetic relationship to God expressed via the human-crafted medium of sound.⁴³ As the Pythagorean theory of numbers, the means to understanding the universe, became the foundation of Platonic conceptions of the art that ennobles soul, Saint Augustine reenvisioned music as a “profound expression and inspiration to spiritual devotion.”⁴⁴ Augustine’s redirectioning of this abstract expression from an assemblage of ratios, calculations and precise proportions to a divine medium that elevated the spirit, afforded medieval musicians increased flexibility in the interweaving of technical, aesthetic and metaphysical details.

The co-presence of regulated proportions, diffuse numerics and language in the poetic “chansons” of the troubadours and trouveres prompted the theoretical query as to whether music represents a language-based mode of expression.⁴⁵ According to Balzer, Cable and Wimsatt, “medieval music is tied to the human voice and mind, rather than simply to mathematical proportions and abstractions.”⁴⁶ The debate among scholars whether this medieval art form vies toward precision or aesthetic and metaphysical expression is partially resolved by scholar Henry Derrick who claims that the medieval composer attempted to extract “the maximum from the minimum.”⁴⁷ Problem-solving, the common denominator by which to achieve harmony in semantics and sound, directed the medieval composer toward intellectual

expression, one that encompasses both calculated detail and aesthetic metaphysics. Machaut's verse, "La Musique est une science / Qui vuet qu'on rie et chante et dence" communicates poetically the compatible integration of these distinctive identities.⁴⁸

"The greatest of all instruments — the human voice"—carries rhythms and tones in Aquinian perfected proportions to an influential aristocratic milieu.⁴⁹ The ineffable quality of medieval harmonies and poetry in communion diffuses religious symbolism in delicate overtones. Seven modal tones reflect the seven virtues; the predominant "3," "tempus perfectus," and the rhythmic modes reiterate the omnipresence of the Trinity. If Levarie's assessment that "the underlying philosophical attitude [in medieval music] is not indifference to sound but subordination of sound to spirit," Jan Aertsen's integrated sensibility of the medieval aesthetic experience quietly disseminates a "universal beauty ... founded on a metaphysical certainty, not on mere poetic sentiment."⁵⁰ One composer captured the essence of Christian and secular metaphysics in fourteenth-century France ... Guillaume de Machaut.

Chapter 4

GUILLAUME DE MACHAUT AND THE MEDIEVAL LAI

“The Last of the Trouveres”

Guillaume de Machaut (1300-77), creative musician, celebrated poet-composer and master craftsman, infused a century degenerated by chaos with a refined, intense artistry set in a traditional and innovative musical style. As a prolific representative of the fourteenth-century art world and a prime proponent of the “Ars nova,” Machaut supported experimentation, freedom in composition and performance, and thereby produced a novel form of expression that presupposed the relinquishing of past restrictions.⁵¹ Even as Machaut developed polyphony, an “Ars nova” advance, “Ars antiqua” techniques continued to pervade his music.⁵² Thus, Guillaume de Machaut embodies a century torn between worn conventions and idealistic aspirations ever climbing toward a humanist future.⁵³

Although this modest young man was raised in a rural French town in Champagne by a family beneath noble status, his innate intelligence, formal training and subsequent entrance into the ecclesiastic realm as canon offered the burgeoning poet-composer the possibility to acquire a status beyond his family heritage.⁵⁴ Without a doubt, the composer’s affiliation with the Church greatly influenced both his personal and musical lives.⁵⁵ Equally important was his prior service

to an international nobility, as these early posts assisted the aspiring literary musician in establishing a line of royal patrons, namely Bonne of Luxembourg, Charles de Navarre, the Duke of Berry and King Charles V. The cleric's daily responsibilities to God, the Church and the aristocracy clearly determined the scope and essence of his work. In particular, Machaut's association with John of Luxembourg, King of Bohemia (1323-1346), played a decisive role in the poet-composer's artistic evolution. Thus, the unavoidable duality of the religious and secular worlds inherent in day-to-day medieval life pervaded this composer's immediate means to survival--the musical and poetic composition.

While the "last of the trouveres" explored all the predominant forms of the period—the motet, lai, and "formes fixes"—the majority of the composer's oeuvre lay in secular song, "a traditional genre of love poetry set to music [that] gained new life in his hands"⁵⁶ While Machaut grappled with the rudiments of polyphony, he too experimented with motivic variety, mensuration and syncopation. As the first composer to introduce contrapuntal elements to traditional forms, "[Machaut] perfected the polyphonic song from its "simple origins to subtle craftsmanship." He achieved this admirable goal primarily through enhanced interplay of duple and triple meters and an increasingly nuanced examination of syncopation--a dynamic touch woven into otherwise austere musical means.⁵⁷ The recognizable traits of the Machauvian style are a freer counterpoint, softer, less angular melodies,

a vibrant use of melodic and motivic repetition, milder harmonies, and discordant modalities tempered by frequent consonances.

Indeed, “the last of the trouveres” relied upon standard secular forms—the ballade, virelai and rondeau—to communicate one man’s impressions of a world assimilated during his daily trials, courtly interactions, and associations with the Church. The formal characteristics of these genres, frequently determined by textual and poetic schemes, propose a challenge to the contemporary analyst. Succinct intertwining of verse and pitched rhythmic patterns defies disentangling in the analytical process. Instead, this interweaving of voice and word unavoidably urges the interpreter to evaluate independent mediums--poetry and music—as mutually dependent entities. The task of the music critic remains to comprehend and then appreciate the meshed effect of the poetic and musical qualities that in concert exude a fine beauty characteristic of the Middle Ages, epitomized in the music of Guillaume de Machaut.

The Lai in the Hands of a Master

The lyrical lai, a descendent of the narrative Breton lai, persisted as a viable musical form until the late fourteenth century. Although retained as one of the oldest poetic forms with a fixed scheme, the lai in fact evolved from Marie de France’s twelfth-century love narratives in irregular verse to the regular, symmetrical compositions conceived by Machaut. The fourteenth-century lai is a conservative form that uses

syllabic text settings and variable stanzaic structures in a through-composed, twelve-stanza scheme. Cultivated by the *trouveres* during the thirteenth century, the lyrical *lai* reached a pinnacle of development in the hands of Guillaume de Machaut. His nineteen *lais*, traditional and experimental, represent the finest artistic achievement of a composer who boasts countless successes. Concise in motivic construction, the Machauvian composition depicts “a small world of poetic, melodic and rhythmic subtleties.”⁵⁸

In contrast to the thirteenth-century narrative and lyrical compositions that emphasize diverse schemes and music for each stanza, the Machauvian concept prefers strict organization in spite of the varied rhyme schemes and the irregular number and length of lines inherited from its predecessor. The Machauvian *lai* is recognized by its twelve-stanza structure, which achieves unity through repetition of the first and last stanzas. Internal distinction is derived from a breakdown of the entire composition into two, three or four sections, all of which are repeated in a variety of patterns throughout the form. Also, frequent divisions of stanzas into parallel halves, the second half of which exhibits new verse set to the same music as the first, assist in establishing compositional unity within the scope of identifiable variety. The overall effect is one of unshakable equilibrium. In line with Machaut’s usual compositional techniques, his *lais* expose abundant examples of

repetition, expansion and reformulation of concise melodic motives, the core of this composer's art.

The advent of "Ars nova" duple time afforded the fourteenth-century composer metric diversity. The lai, typically composed in 6/8 rhythms, now displayed 2/4 and 4/4 prolation intermingled with thirteenth-century triplet rhythms--6/8, 9/8 and 3/4 time. This form, therefore, allowed for a palatable expanse of metric expression, one that often counterbalanced rhythmic regularity with ornamental melismas. The embellishing melismas, however, served a dual function in the composing process. They not only alleviated metric boredom but also provided a facile and effective means of structuring the entire rhythmic scheme in spite of "Ars nova" metric alterations. Asymmetrical rhythms, coupled with frequent syncopation and rests, i.e., hocketing, speak the deceptively intricate language of Machaut, nonetheless apparent in "Le Lay de la fonteinne."

Intervallically, the lai, in tune with other medieval forms, relies upon the three accepted degrees of consonance: perfect, imperfect, dissonant. Perfect consonances--the octave, unison, or fifth--provide the "harmonic" groundwork that diffuses an aura of serene stability. Cadences are either open or closed, terminating on octaves and unisons in the former case or on the fifth in the latter. Imperfect consonances--thirds and sixths--complement and interface easily with the immutable perfect consonances. Only the true dissonances--the seconds, fourths

and sevenths--intercede to cause welcomed disruption, generally encountered in passing tones that are quickly resolved.

Despite the apparent “harmonies” derived from the complex intervallic schemes observed in “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” the modal tonalities are in fact constructed two tones at a time and thereby avoid the concept of triadic harmony. Thus, the rise of polyphony offered Machaut the possibility to express intense harmonic-like sounds within an ever-moving, interactive melodic and rhythmic frame.

Four of Machaut’s nineteen lais introduce polyphony, while the remaining fifteen adhere to the monophonic tradition of this conservative form. Lais 11, 12 and 16 explore the parameters of canonic performance as they alternate single, double and triple-voice textures. “Le Lay de la fonteinne (# 16), termed a “chace,” demonstrates well the viability of combining prior and present vocal techniques.

Although the lai proved the versatility, originality and craft of Machaut’s artistry, this compositional form died with its master. Not one of his Burgundian successors further developed the form’s Breton roots. Subsequent composers favored instead the “formes fixes” in their composing endeavors. In the end, this compositional decision merely highlighted the technical supremacy of Machaut’s accomplishments.

Chapter 5
POETIC AMBIGUITIES

An Interpretation of Machaut's Courtly Art

Siegmund Levarie asserts: "Machaut's Lai XVI is dedicated to the Virgin."⁵⁹ Indeed, the majority of the verse in "Le Lay de la fonteinne" remains directed toward the Virgin, in adoration and praise of the divine woman's virtue and power. Stanzas three to twelve present, define and symbolically represent the Holy Lady through the words, sentiments and pains of a masculine aspirant and eventual suppliant. But are the cultural implications in verse derived solely from a Christian theology pervasive in all social spheres of medieval existence? Machaut's "knight" addresses a sympathetic audience with one poignant "je." The immediate focus on the man's perspective as a lover in distress recalls numerous "fin'amors" stories rendered paradoxical.

Sylvia Huot in "Patience in Adversity: The Courtly Lover and Job in Machaut's Motets 1 and 2" claims that "Machaut set courtly rhetoric against a tradition of Scripture and liturgy to elaborate a moral and spiritual critique of 'fin'amor.'"⁶⁰ While the first stanza of "La fonteinne" addresses a diffuse audience, and metaphorically, an absent lady, these sixteen lines in couplets reveal a discontent with courtly relationships. Huot contends that "it is difficult to choose between allegorical and parodistic readings."⁶¹ Therefore, Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne"

prompts a query. Although seemingly sincere in its allegorical representation of the Trinity as an abundant fountain, does the reader not sense an element of parody in the lover's attitude toward the Virgin, the perfect substitute for a disdainful, hence imperfect human lady? The preponderant analogy of courtly to spiritual love inherent in medieval culture increases the interpretive ambivalence. The bemoaning suitor, the "je," turns from a haughty, secular woman to a divine lady, the Madonna, in a search for solace devoid of responsibility. This abrupt transition incites one to question whether Machaut, in his sincere effort to praise the Virgin Mother, also sought to reveal the devotional inconsistencies, both feminine and masculine, of a petrified and corrupt "fin'amors" culture. In the tenor's statement of submission from Motet #5, Huot notes:

Courtly love might elevate the lover's sentiments to the status of religious adoration; it might illuminate the idolatrous nature of his passion, which has led him to substitute a human lady for God; or it might even represent the deeply hidden seeds of a true conversion from erotic to spiritual passion, a recognition that the denial of sexual desire is in fact the will of God and an embracing of the religious ideal.⁶²

Thus, in order to determine the metaphorical import of Machaut's lady to Virgin association, and lover to woman or Madonna relationship, one must understand the meaning behind the courtly tradition, the myth or cult of the Virgin, and then reconcile the integral message of the **two**.

The "fin'amors" ideal merged the earthly woman's secular image with that of the sacred Virgin. Virtuous, moral, spiritual, refined and

chaste, the courtly lady represents the perfect woman in human form.

According to Eileen Power in Medieval Women:

[Despite the] maternal and divine implications, the devotion of the Virgin Mother was often indistinguishable in form from that which the knight lavished upon the mortal lady The cult of the lady was [in fact] the romantic counterpart of the cult of the Virgin.⁶³

Levarie asserts that the religious and the secular, the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the worldly proved inseparable in the Middle Ages.⁶⁴ John Montague in “Love’s Equal Realm” writes: “[C]ertainly in medieval Christian Europe, the Lady became sanitised and sanctified as the Blessed Virgin.”⁶⁵ Critic Montague’s assertion expresses at once the ideal of purity sought in blurring distinctions between the aristocratic lady and the Virgin. The fusion discloses subtle commentaries on the “fin’amors” culture, the role of women and religion in medieval society and implicitly acknowledges man’s complex relationship to these diverse forces.

With respect to Machaut’s “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” Montague’s words raise questions: 1) Did Machaut, the poet, intend to highlight the meshed image of the secular lady and Virgin in Lai No. 16?; 2) If so, how might the reader assess the man’s attitude toward women, religion and love—as direct and sincere or egotistical and irresponsible?; 3) And despite ambiguities, does the general import of the verse reveal man’s passionate desire or religious devotion? In order to respond to these

queries, the analyst must probe the words in verse and quietly ponder the emphatic silences.⁶⁶

Shirker or Divine Suitor?

Although an endless number of poetic and linguistic details could serve to elucidate Machaut's true intentions in composing the poetry of "La fonteinne," this analysis will focus on the supplicant's attitude(s), most often deduced by reading between the lines. After an initial perusal of "Le Lay de la fonteinne," one assumes that the sole intent of its writing is to praise the virtues of the Holy Family, especially the Virgin. Such may in fact be the case. The assumption appears clear given the number of stanzas, 11 out of 12, that are attributed to religious desire, versus the one stanza that is directed toward human passion. Just the same, the opening lines of the poem disclose typical male propensities toward shirking, that is, the medieval mania of expecting woman's perfection to compensate for pitiful "paresse."

In the beginning, the adoring courtly lover prays without ceasing to his dear lady.⁶⁷ He seems, of course, pious. However, as soon as we reach line three, the truth of the man's character is revealed. He is not pious; he is lazy. "Lighten my burden of woe," he pleads.⁶⁸ How and why? one might ask. Of course, such questions never arise in his egotistical mind. As the woman proves reticent, not to say obstinate, in her response, the despondent lover suddenly turns critical. It is, hence,

her fault. She is harsh, haughty, inflexible, rigid as a stone, and therefore, this rhetorical lover cannot have his way with her.⁶⁹

Of course, he wastes no time locating another more suitable candidate. Since the first one failed to assuage his primal desires, he rests assured that the second will provide him with joy everlasting. Truly convinced that this alternate, unnamed woman will instantaneously satiate each and every desire, and that she will never stray from him or rebuke him, he commits his life completely to loving her. And no wonder, the rewards are many and the work minimal. The poetic translation succinctly summarizes the pleasure seeker's underlying attitude:

Thus, shall I approach another,
She, who of pleasure be?
Unfaltering,
Replete with glee,
Endlessly fickle free,
Fervent,
I do choose thee,
O Joy everlasting.⁷⁰

So, by stanza 2, the man has unequivocally altered his direction and is now in pursuit of anonymous perfection. Still speaking of "joy" and "joyous pleasure," he submits to a life of servitude in praise, reveling in the glorious breast of the eternal Mother:

For he who revels
In your breast
Shall enter the kingdom
Of eternal glory."⁷¹

After this, perhaps unintentional, however humorous opening that Machaut discreetly camouflages in courtly rhetoric, the quality of the verse changes. Historical religiosity ensues. We learn the past and the identity of the unknown woman.⁷² A virgin, the Mother of God, supplants the human ideal. The courtly feminine image meshes with the Madonna in divine conception. This unfortunate suitor could not discover the solution to his problems on earth and therefore has sought supreme solace in his spiritual imaginings.

Although medieval Christianity may have encouraged followers to turn to God, Jesus and the Virgin Mother for comfort in daily distress, Boccaccio in the Decameron jests at the apparent hypocrisy of medieval spirituality, especially when one is really in pursuit of sex. The anonymous suitor in Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne" represents one potential example of a man who is flagrantly unwilling to assume responsibility for his emotions and sexuality, at least in the beginning.

With respect to religious hypocrisy--in order to avoid any confusion or accusations of sacrilege, I must make it clear that it is not my intention to defile the sacred character of the poet's verse. It is my intention, however, to expose the fallacy in this particular suitor's attempt to free himself from human responsibility. Turning to the Virgin Mother for compassion and assistance in dealing with life's daily burdens, in and of itself, does not constitute escapism. Total reliance on a superior being, devoid of conscious participation, however, denotes a

malady, otherwise known as chronic depression accompanied by obsessive tendencies. While Freud and kind had not yet set foot on earth during the period in question, and therefore, religion remained the sole hope for the psychologically troubled, we should recall that varying forms of insanity were rampant in the Middle Ages. Abuse of women, beatings, verbal degradation, rape and murder proved accepted social norms, evidenced by countless historical and legal documents, which clearly uphold that men could rape or kill a woman devoid of dire, not to say any, consequences. Women, on the other hand, were either imprisoned, executed or burned at the stake for transgressions, sometimes minor, against a man or hateful spouse. Hence, misogyny flew in the face of God in the M.A. (the Middle Ages).

Our suitor and eventual supplicant does not represent an extreme case of the violent medieval man. In my interpretive view, however, he does depict the emotional and psychological tendencies of the medieval male to rely upon women for solutions to their multi-faceted, i.e., primarily sexual, problems. So, as it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be until the end.

In any case, the poetry flows, just as the fountain, the source, the prime metaphor of the cleansing intermediary--the fluid Virgin and the three-in-One streaming Trinity. Stanzas 3 through 8 tell the story of birth, supplication and regeneration, an extended moment for Machaut to disclose Christian theology and to proclaim respect for its ordinances.

The lovely Lady emerges as the Queen, a brilliant star, miraculous and transforming.⁷³ The respectful Mother bears life. The immaculate conception regains validity in the waters, the purifying metaphor. And he who emanates from her “vessel void” walks on holy water, “good, wise, and beautiful,” the Savior of humankind.⁷⁴

While the “beneficent Son” promises to save humanity from the Satanic verses, the suppliant appears mildly suicidal, or extremely devoted, as one may prefer to view his case.⁷⁵ Rather than suffer fear for a moment, he is ready to cast himself into the dirty waters, the Somme, the Jordan or the Nile. Neither here nor there, “For what,” he asks, “is life without God?”

But I would rather be in Rome
Or overseas in exile
Or thrown in the Somme,
Or the River Jordan or the Nile
Than believe anything that a worthy man
Should not believe without risking his soul;
For is anything worth a fig
Without God? Certainly not, I say!⁷⁶

So, he is a coward, too, devout ‘tho he be.

After positing the question, “What is life without God?” and responding, “[Nay] nothing,” the devoted suppliant completes the poem in a plea for forgiveness and aid to free him from misery.⁷⁷ He whimpers and he moans. In spite of protestations to the contrary--he says he cries “little” and begs not--just the same, he seeks unwavering security in divinity.⁷⁸ Although the suppliant continues to request utter solace from the Virgin Lady in stanza 9, one can also observe a noticeable

change in the fearful man's attitude. Having espoused theology and ardent faith in the Holy Family for ~~six~~ stanzas, the egotistical passion for the secular lady evident in stanzas 1 and 2 has abated. The once suitor, has now turned spiritual devotee. He appears sincere and completely focused on serving the Virgin:

I offer you my soul
And give it up to you without hesitation,
And choose you
Above all things.
Now be my refuge.⁷⁹

Clearly, the narcissistic side of the man has been diffused in a profound attempt to address the hateful self, past sins rooted in his heart slumbering beneath the surface, the cause of persistent suffering. The transformation becomes all the more obvious at the end of stanza 9 when the desperate man turns to the Madonna as a friend, she who will fight by his side against the injurious one—"the devil"--and she who will secure him from harm.

The one-sided image of the pleasure seeker in the initial lines of the poem is now multi-faceted. In the mirror, he sees both himself and the Virgin in a relationship of mutual understanding. Sexual joy, the once prime motivator to praising the secular lady, has melted away and now rests in latent obscurity. The prayer for joyous ecstasy, the external band-aid, evolves into a truly pious plea for assistance in healing inner wounds. In spite of the man's sincerity, however, one cannot help but notice that he still depends entirely on the Virgin to solve his problems,

“Car en toy sont tuit mi tour / Et mi retour,” “For in you lies all my fate / And destiny.”⁸⁰ He is, without a doubt, impotent and hopeless without her.

Crippled and unable to speak, the man who formerly concerned himself only with earthly pleasures struggles against death, Satan’s forte.

Misery!
Torment and sorrow
Cripple me.
I cannot speak!
Sin destroys in *perpetuum*,
The enemy slumbers not,
But works
To trace my name
In the Book of Death.⁸¹

The cleansing waters, soothing and compassionate, the conciliatory fountain, sweet and demure as an attentive woman, listens ...⁸² The suppliant rants and raves, “Free me from this dirty, stinking, ugly devil. Lift me higher, above the rafters of human infection. Heal my affliction.”⁸³ In the final stanza, the man discovers comfort in the Virgin’s bosom, the hearth of graciousness and security and implores the virtuous Lady to intercede on Judgment Day, to request our Savior’s forgiveness, to grant us breath and life. “O Perfect bliss.”⁸⁴

The journey is complete. The meshing of the secular and sacred worlds thrives after a multitude of emotional and psychological states. The passage to redemption via the channeling of the passions is complete. We arrive at that peaceful place barely having noticed the transgressions, the diversions, the digressions. Selfish humanity sought

all, crawled through misery and exited from the lowly abode in an imagined perfect reality. And Machaut, the master “craftsman,” accomplished this feat without exposing his aims, neither discreetly, nor unabashedly. The poet never lifts a hand against Christian doctrine, the Father, the Son or the Holy Mother. In my estimation, however, he does manage to infuse into the poem diverse dimensions--the earthly and the heavenly. Machaut, the artist, calls upon one man, the devoted suitor, to demonstrate how those two planes, interdependent in medieval life, may be either mutually supportive or divergent, in harmony or in conflict. Through his verse and his art, he succeeds in telling the story of a past unknown: The Medieval Myth of humanly divine love.

Chapter 6

MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF “LE LAY DE LA FONTEINNE”⁸⁵

“Le Lay de la fonteinne,” an often neglected composition from the medieval archives, employs symbolic allegory to comment upon the nature of love on earth as it is in heaven. The secular ideal, epitomized in the courtly woman, flows naturally toward divinity ... the Virgin Mother. She alone beautifully manifests the power of God.

How did Machaut communicate through music an aura of sublime devotion? By means of ethereal sound, florid melodies, intricate harmonies, distinct rhythms and poetic words.

Sound

The Holy Trinity, ever-present in Machaut’s Lay No. 16, is first and foremost reflected through the alternation of monophonic and three-voice polyphonic stanzas. The three-in-One association serves as a constant reminder of the pervasive force of the divine spirit. Vocal lines, in rudimentary polyphony, solo or three-voice unison, create the heavenly effect. The human voice, an expression of inner love, resonates God, the profound spirit. A limited range of g4 to b5 either restricts the composer --in line with Christian discipline--or in the case of octave displacement, affords the performer unlimited expression.

Both sound scenarios described apply to the themes inherent in “Le Lay de la fonteinne.” The story begins and ends on a g4 reciting tone.

This medieval “tonic” or “finalis” appears consistently throughout the lai. It is readily observed in m. 1, 2, 4, 6, 12, **13**, 14, 18 of stanza 1. It occurs at all major cadences (e.g., m. 18, 58 and 134), and it is reencountered again in at least one of three vocal lines in m. 42, 76 and 158. Exceptions to this dominant unifying factor occur at the final cadences of stanzas 5, 6, 9 and 11.

The b5 high note, by contrast, appears in four measures only. As a climatic pitch in the lai’s central stanza 6, the b5 arises in m. 96, 99 and 102, a poignant moment for Machaut to illuminate divine sovereignty in sound. The b5 resurfaces at a point of symbolic consequence in monophonic stanza 9, where the supplicant bemoans sin. Seemingly, Machaut wished to emphasize the intensity of the suitor’s pain.

A d5 tessitura, a fifth above the tonic g4 and a fifth below the a5 predominant high note, establishes two perfect consonances which are representative of the harmonious three-in-One Trinity. In light of the repeated interaction of these three pitches—g4-d5-a5—I attribute the following symbolism to each: g4-the Son on earth; d5-the Holy Spirit or the Virgin Mother, intermediaries between heaven and earth; and a5-God in heaven.

While the pitches, which include frequent accidentals, are clearly indicated on the printed manuscript, dynamic markings are not. The performer must decide where and when to utilize “crescendo” or

“diminuendo” to enhance meaning. The Hilliard Ensemble’s rendition of “Le Lay de la fonteinne” exposes a dynamic range from “piano” to “mezzo-forte.” The predominant level of sound, however, hovers around “mezzo-piano,” a rather quiet dynamic that evokes serenity.⁸⁶ Upon listening to the Hillier compact disc, a character of sound becomes apparent. The sound ascends and descends on a continuum, fluid and respectful of melodic contour, subtly moving and undulating, rubatic in motion. In humility, these flourishing tones recede at phrase ends. Accents, discreetly placed on initial notes of brief melismatic figures, emphasize the perpetual rise and fall, further exclaimed by surges in dynamic level throughout the florid passages.

By contrast, stanza 4, with its unusual rhythmic intricacies, demonstrates limited dynamic vacillation in the Hillier performance. Alternations between “mezzo-piano” and “mezzo-forte” assist in establishing an undaunted flow in spite of rhythmic juxtaposition. All dynamic transitions involve gradual, sloping motions, devoid of terraced abruptness.

The alternation of monophonic (odd stanza) and polyphonic (even stanza) textures defines the basic contrast in this tightly woven “chace.” Because of this integrated cross-over between light and relatively dense textures, the resulting fabric may be likened to a constantly moving musical web. In spite of the simplicity of notation and the composer’s or performers’ predispositions for clear expression, Machaut’s lai imposes

countless dynamic and textural changes regardless of performance intent.

After a light musical introduction by the solo suppliant in stanza 1, stanza 2 immediately proposes a thicker polyphonic texture, albeit disjointed. Frequent rests establish a sense of truncation and diminish the contrast in texture from the solo line. While the entire lai relies upon equal distribution of six monophonic and six polyphonic stanzas to stabilize the degree and frequency of variance, musical distribution diverges from the basic scheme. Machaut enhances the musical significance of the “chace” stanzas by according them two additional measures of music to accompany two verses of poetry. Monophonic sections, by contrast propose fewer musical measures but employ two to four verses of poetry.

Melody

Large dimension melodic analysis discloses twelve stanzas with diverse line configurations (see [Table F. 1](#)). Stanzas 1, 6, 7 and 12 display sixteen lines, equally divided as 8 + 8. Congruent with medieval symbolism, the first, middle and last stanzas, 1, 6 and 12, as well as stanza 7 representative of the seven virtues, are all accorded the same stabilizing weight. A variety of interpretations apply to the numbers 1, 6 and 12. God is the One; the Holy Ghost or the Virgin Mary, centrally located intermediaries, hover around number six; and Jesus, the last of the Holy Family to walk on earth, stands at twelve. A second

interpretation might focus on the purely structural consideration of marking the beginning, middle and end of a composition, which could be construed as a Christian expression of creation and time.

Regardless of the symbolism attributed to these four stanzas, the line distribution chosen by Machaut remains the structural pivot point of the entire lai. Only three remaining sections--3, 9 and 11--develop structural unity in a 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 twenty-line stanza. Sections 2, 4, 5, 8 and 10 are completely unique in conception. Machaut thereby discreetly diversifies form and performance through alterations in length and division as opposed to changes in “tempi” or by the incidence of “ritardando” or “accelerando.”

A through-composed work, each stanza of “Le Lay de la fonteinne” displays new music with the exception of the last, which carries the same melodic line as the monophonic opening, however this time a fifth higher and in three-voice canon. The initial and final musical verses, therefore, provide both a sense of balance and closure within a varied framework. Otherwise stated, melodic cohesion and symmetry reign amidst independence. Each verse is divided into two sections, with the exception of stanzas 3, 5 and 11, which are divided into four sections. All segments within verses use the same music, another means of enhancing both unity and symmetry.

Middle dimension analysis exposes brief verses, varied line lengths and a syllabic declamation with neumatic or melismatic embellishments.

Neumatic flourishes often occur at the beginning of a line (e.g., m. 4, 9, 35, 43, 130), to illuminate phrasal distinctions. This is a less emphatic but more detailed manner of establishing structure throughout the composition. In monophonic sections, phrases correspond to line verse, with each phrase end being denoted by a rest (e.g., stanza 1: m. 3, 6, 11, 13, 16). Two exceptions intervene in measures 9 and 17 where a breath substitutes for a rest. In addition, Machaut maintains balance of phrase in monophonic stanzas through antecedent/consequent relationships (e.g., m. 1-3, antecedent/m. 4-6, consequent). By contrast, the polyphonic stanzas expose a disjointed phrase structure, an unavoidable result of rhythmic interplay among three vocal lines (e.g., stanza 4, m. 65-70). Active phrase motion pervades both the monophonic and polyphonic sections, in spite of an alternating fluid monophony and articulate polyphony.

Typical of medieval melody, an arch-like curve defines the overall melodic and phrasal contour. Machaut's melodies are predominantly conjunct however, employing frequent leaps in thirds (m. 7-8, c5-e5; m. 9-10, d5-b-flat4) and occasional leaps in fourths (m. 10, a4-d5), fifths (m. 19, d5-g4) and sixths (m. 32, g4-e5). Despite these many truncations in the vocal line, a general undulating pattern characterizes the lai's melodic flow. Continuous movement within a phrase is sustained despite brief respites of a quarter to dotted-quarter rest at line ends. These rests create sufficient pause to individualize each enunciation,

without allowing the slight hesitation to impede the forward motion between phrases.

In small dimensions, the lai employs a limited range of a sixth or less, with a variable tessitura, dependent upon composer discretion as to where the phrase lies on the staff (c.f., m. 103, a4; m. 35-36, f5; m. 226-228, d5). Once again, Machaut utilizes this device as an avenue to individuality amidst melodic conformity. The lai also discloses similar melodic motives, which establish the overall character of the composition and develop melodic unity through patterning. Frequently encountered is a rise from or a descent to the g “finalis” (e.g., m. 1-rise; m. 2-descent) and a fall in thirds, with or without passing tones, from e to c via the fifth, d (e.g., m. 9, 15, 16, 47, 67 in tenor). Both tendencies demonstrate the composer’s predilection for an efficient use of melodic material.

The primary methods of unifying the melody are symmetry, repetition, sequence and expansion. Vocal range and the controlling of initial and final pitches imbue the composition with a consistent sense of departure and return. Melodic motives and the recombination of these patterns assist in the process of solidifying cohesion. Although Lai No. 16 predisposes itself of countless paths to musical interest, the high and low points prove minimal. Masterfully concealed in a predominantly conjunct undulating line, reinforced by a stable tessitura within each phrase, obvious peaks and lows are infrequent but do occur on the e4 in

stanza 7 (m. 121, 133); the b5 in stanza 6 (m. 96, 99, 101) and in stanza 7 (m. 163).

Harmony. Medieval consonances and their corresponding ratios include the unison- 1:1, octave-2:1, fifth-3:2, and fourth-4:3. Dissonances encompass major and minor thirds, major and minor sixths--5:4, 6:5, 5:3 and 8:5, respectively—seconds and sevenths. According to music historian Henry Derrick, the selection of intervals by the fourteenth-century composer reflects both medieval taste and the overtone series.⁸⁷ In the ordered musical universe of the Middle Ages, all mathematically perfect intervals were considered consonant. Imperfect by comparison, all other pitch combinations expressed dissonance. This juxtaposition of comfortable and uneasy "harmonies" characterizes the essential quality of medieval music.⁸⁸ In Style and Symbol, Andrew Hughes claims, "Medieval harmony depends upon the distinction between consonance and dissonance; and in the medieval mind, the position of the interval was a reflection of divinity as the musicians believed that the interval itself corresponded perfectly to the mathematical ratio that produced it."⁸⁹

Stanza 2 provides an ideal example of this constant interplay of intervallic consonance and dissonance, most noticeable in the canonic sections of Lai No. 16. Amidst the complexity of Dorian-Lydian bi-modality, the tenor speaks first in measure 19. In the following measure, the medius enters. Strict imitation provides both rhythmic and intervallic continuity and initiates the development of the harmonious

base. Measure 22 offers a glimpse of the traditional medieval harmonic motion, which constantly vacillates from an unstated tension to resolution, with an inevitable return to tension.⁹⁰ The first interval encountered, a minor sixth, the f sharp⁴ in the tenor to the d⁵ in the medius, presents a mildly unstable but blending sound, a straying complement to the just passed “tonic”g⁴ one bar prior. Memory establishes the crossover from consonance to dissonance when the perfect fifth, g⁴ to d⁵, temporarily submits to the syncopated minor sixth, f sharp⁴ to d⁵. This tension is momentarily resolved in a g⁴ unison on pulse 2. The f sharp leading tone from the Lydian mode, encountered on the second eighth of both bars 21 and 22, interchanges with a repeated Dorian f natural in measure 22. The final tenor eighth note of that same bar at last reasserts the initial consonant d at a lower octave.

Measure 23 resembles measure 22 in harmonic quality, with a slight degree of added tension but in another configuration. The first interval, a minor sixth, d⁴ in tenor to b flat⁴ in medius, provokes medieval sensibilities. The “musica ficta” b flat alters the Dorian-Lydian bi-modality to introduce a dissonant major sixth.⁹¹ One quarter note later, the passing consonant fifth, the a³ in tenor to e⁵ in medius, momentarily recalls the stable opening. The measure ends on a major sixth, c⁴ to a⁴, the interval that urges the phrase to completion and eventual octave unison. A perfect fourth, b³ to f sharp⁴, and a major

sixth, a4 to f sharp4, pave the descent to an octave unison on the “finalis” in bar 24.

The intervallic complexity increases in bar 25. Three voices, instead of two, interact in imitative canon. The combination hocketing and ever-transforming consonance/dissonance scheme is both impressive and exhilarating. Although dissonances are constantly present, Machaut camouflages the potentially inharmonious effect with abundant consonances — fourth, fifths, octaves and mildly dissonant major or minor thirds. The octave reasserts priority on the second pulse in measures 25 and 26, while a unison and a perfect fifth serve simultaneously as closed and open cadences in measure 27, the onward termination to an intricate and seamless phrase (see [Figure G.1](#)).⁹²

While this interplay between consonance and dissonance in the polyphonic sections of “Le Lay de la fonteinne” determines the crux of the composer’s harmonic intent, Machaut has also exploited modality to its extreme. His facility with Dorian-Lydian bi-modality becomes immediately apparent in the opening section of the lai. Accidentals abound -- an f sharp, b naturals and many b flats are observed in measures 1, 5, 10 and 13. The b flat in particular serves to establish the minor sound in stanza 1, reminiscent of our modern d minor scale.⁹³

Machaut relies upon the lowered third to emphasize the suitor’s dejected state expressed in the poetry. Although the music initially conveys this feeling of sadness and solitude, it soon informs the listener

that better days will arrive. Many f sharps, the Lydian leading tone, pervade the lai (e.g., m. 3, 4, 12, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, etc.). One vital c sharp in measure 9, the leading tone to the fifth and a frequent accidental thereafter, prefaces the lilting spirit to come, joy unending in a D major flavor.

The Dorian-Lydian b-modality relies predominantly on the g reciting tone for stability. The modes, in combination, display the following predominant pitches: g—~~a~~—~~b~~ flat—b natural—c natural—c sharp—d—e—f natural—f sharp—g. The primary half-steps occur between the third and fourth degrees, the b natural to the c natural in Dorian and Lydian and the seventh degree or leading tone to the octave in Lydian.⁹⁴ Based on this pitch disposition, a “harmonic” hierarchy ensues that assigns relative importance to individual degrees. The first, fifth and seventh degrees retain preferential attention and significance. The first degree, the g reciting tone, stabilizes and unifies the entire work and often serves as a closed cadence at phrase and section endings. The fifth establishes the required consonance in medieval harmony and also signals open cadence points. The seventh heightens the level of dissonance and urges the return to the finalis.

The Lydian mode colors the majority of the lai. Monophonic stanzas 1 and 7 prove notable exceptions to a persistent Lydian gaiety as they are composed in a bemoaning Dorian. A noticeable minor sound is rendered apparent by virtue of the increased incidence of the lowered

b flat third. Machaut thereby displays the emotional cohabitation of consonance (major) and dissonance (minor) within the distressed suitor. The eventual abandonment of the lowered third and consistent appearance of the b natural in lieu of b flat indicates the lover's optimistic hope for prayers answered by the Virgin Mother.

Beyond intervallic harmony inherent in melodic motion, cadences in medieval music establish resting points, moments of reprieve, such as we might recognize them today. Contrary to modern cadential intent, however, these temporary breaths do not, in general, indicate directionality as it is imposed on contemporary tonal works. In the medieval era, stability and instability were perpetually reasserted, motive to motive and phrase to phrase. Beyond the Dorian-Lydian bi-modality that underlies "La fontinne's" harmonic organization, it is important to note that all twelve stanzas terminate on either an open fifth or closed finalis cadence. In fact, Machaut often doubles the g reciting tone at the octave to emphasize finality. Within sections, however, he selects to hover around the *lais* two primary pitches, g and d, which in combination form a consonant fifth. Stanza 1 offers an exceptional example of the repeated cadential insistence encountered throughout the *Lai* No. 16 and provides insight to the continuous divergence from and return to the finalis, along with the ever-present ethereal mate, the consonant fifth.

To unify harmonic intent, Machaut also relies upon a particular phrasing technique in the monophonic sections of the lai. Stanza 1 provides a representative example of melodic movement and phrasal distribution, both of which imply intervallic or harmonic motion. Measure 1 departs from the principal pitch, g⁴. The reciting tone passes over an a⁴ to immediately designate the lowered third by a b flat⁴. The rise to b flat⁴ is followed by a descent to f sharp⁴ in measure 3. This leading tone propels the harmony forward despite an intervening dotted-quarter rest. In measure 4, the g⁴ reasserts predominance in three instances. The minor b flat⁴ reappears in measure 5, and then the phrase closes on the already familiar g⁴ in measure 6.

The text displays two lines of verse to one musical phrase, this being comprised of two sub-phrases. The second full phrase (m. 7-13) proposes an extension of the first (m. 1-6) in spite of the g⁴ cadence in measure 6. Measure 7 introduces the fifth (d⁴), which proceeds to an f⁴ climax in measure 8. From that high point, the phrase descends by step, passing through a c sharp⁴ leading tone to the fifth in measure 9. Then there **is** a return to the distinctive b flat⁴ in measure 10, until we momentarily settle on a dotted-quarter a⁴ in the following bar.

The second degree in the Dorian mode requires “resolution to the medieval tonic.” After a brief repose, Machaut reactivates harmonic curiosity in a quick passage through the f sharp leading tone to g⁴, with an accent on a b natural in measure 12. Impatient, the b natural reverts

harmonically. The music in “Le Lay de la fonteinne” glides miraculously along as though it were water pouring forth from a fountain.

Rhythm. Rhythmic analysis of “Le Lay de la fonteinne” divulges $6/8$ duple prolation, the once imperfect temporal assignation associated with fallible humanity. The advent of the “Ars nova” elevated duple prolation to the near status of perfect triple prolation, the metric representative of the spiritual world. In spite of this egalitarian view among progressive medieval musicians, duple meters $2/4$ and $4/4$ appear less frequently than their triplet counterparts.⁹⁶

Fourteenth-century mensuration explored a new system where duple ratios-- $8:4:2:1$ --mirrored corresponding triple ratios-- $27:9:3:1$. At each layer of rhythm, the composer reserved the right to use either triple or duple relationships, $12:6:2:1$ or $12:6:3:1$. These various layers were often represented in medieval books by hierarchical trees (See Figure G.1).⁹⁷

In “Le Lay de la fonteinne” Machaut makes significant use of duple configurations throughout the twelve stanzas but continually disrupts the moving two-pulse drive with triple rhythms. This technique permitted Machaut to establish an underlying three against two pull while maintaining perfect rhythmic balance. Although “Ars nova” duple prolation permeates “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” the sacred three patterns, symbolic of the Holy Trinity, continue to assert predominance. This alternation of two against three or three against two creates a feeling of

cross-rhythms, a syncopated effect sometimes perceived as hemiola. Machaut saturated his lai with variant forms of subtle rhythmic conflict. Perfect fluidity of rhythm is observed from the first to the last stanza in spite of the frequent and simultaneous imperfect two and perfect three presence. In “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” secular and divine love in rhythm have become one.

At a surface rhythm level, one observes the dotted quarter as the unifying value. The entire lai moves in sixteenths, eighths, quarters and dotted quarters, with the sixteenth notes serving a predominantly ornamental function. Phrase length also plays a role in establishing surface rhythm. As a general rule, three measures account for one phrase. The first measure provides momentum at the point of inception—the beginning; the second measure develops the initial idea—the middle; and the third measure fictitiously terminates the forward motion in temporary hesitation. The listener is thereby continually thrust forward, only to encounter again and again a reticence to surge. Another technique the composer employs to enhance the persistent but elusive feeling of rhythmic tension and resolution is the repeat of three-measure phrases, thus three against a subtle two. Subliminally, we perceive the Trinity leading with humanity tagging along.

An analysis of “Le Lay de la fonteinne” quickly demonstrates Machaut’s facility for rhythmic manipulation, a means by which the

composer enhances rhythmic play between unity and diversity. Five of the medieval rhythmic modes with their corresponding ornamental forms appear in the first stanza of the lai. (The sole rhythmic mode absent from stanza 1, no. 5, appears in the first measure of stanza 2 in condensed form--two dotted quarters instead of three.) In only eighteen measures, the composer was able to establish a concise rhythmic base, one from which he derived an entire twelve-stanza composition.

In examining Machaut's predispositions to rhythm in his Lai No. 16, it becomes immediately obvious that the composer relied most heavily on the third of the six pre-mensural rhythmic modes--the dotted quarter-eighth-quarter configuration (see [Figure G.2](#)). It is important to note, however, that Machaut integrated all six of the medieval modes into the rhythmic material of "La fonteinne" at various junctures. In 6/8 modal notation, measures 1 to 3 display this propensity for mode 3. These measures augur its interminable appearance. Measure 1 presents the mode; measure 2 reinforces the initial rhythmic statement; and measure 3 presents only a portion of the complete pattern, the first dotted quarter. One measure later ornamentation is introduced to the basic pattern, a technique witnessed from the beginning without end. This is a very effective, multi-layered technique, which minimizes rhythmic repetition as it permits the composer to counterbalance duple and triple patterns.

The fourth measure initiates ornamentation limited to three to five notes to a figure. The original dotted quarter of rhythmic mode 3 now asserts individuality in a dotted eighth/ three-sixteenths configuration. As anticipated, the usual eighth and quarter follow to complete the variation of mode 3 in familiar form. Measure 5 is a perfect restatement of the mode. Measure 7, however, diverges from the previous statements by exhibiting mode 3 in diminution. A dotted eighth-eighth-sixteenth pattern substitutes for the initial dotted quarter-eighth-quarter pattern.

In measure 8, Machaut begins to combine modes. Both modes 1 and 2 appear in rhythmic juxtaposition. That is, the last two notes of mode 1—the quarter and the eighth—are turned around in the first pulse of the measure to read an eighth followed by a quarter. Mode 2, placed at the opening of the measure, allowed the composer to subsequently revert to the omnipresent mode 3 in rhythmic retrograde (m. 8-9) as a means of emphasizing tentative rhythmic resolution at a phrase end. (I insist upon the word “tentative” because Machaut lures the listener into believing that a moment of brief repose has arrived, but as he finalizes one phrase, he ostensibly initiates the next.) The first note in measure 9, a dotted quarter, serves simultaneously as the last note of mode 3 in rhythmic retrograde and the first note of the same mode in its usual form. The dotted quarter however does not begin the following phrase. We must await the eighth note to move forward in an uninterrupted

manner. Just the same, this dovetailing technique creates a sense of intermittent lull in an otherwise fluid line.

Measure 9 revisits mode 3 with yet another embellishment. The usual dotted quarter-eighth discovers accent in a four-sixteenth-note division of the final quarter. The following measure introduces new material by combining a previously stated embellishment with an additional alteration to mode 3. The dotted eighth-three sixteenths encountered in measure 4, a substitute for the dotted quarter of rhythmic mode 3, reasserts its importance in measure 10. The expected eighth note follows, however, an ornamented figure--a sixteenth-eighth-sixteenth--stands in the place of the final quarter note. The alterations on the last quarter establish rhythmic diversity with a syncopated feeling.

Measure 13 introduces mode no. 6—three eighths—and measure 14 varies a formerly ornamented figure from mode 3--the dotted eighth-three-sixteenths—and changes it to a sixteenth-eighth and three sixteenths. This transformation occurs as the composer also alludes to mode no. 4, an eighth-quarter-dotted quarter pattern. Measures 16 and 17 alternately display modes 4 and 3, respectively, in embellished form, and the entire first stanza ends in measure 18 on rhythmic mode 4.

While one might consider that Machaut would, or even should have ended the opening section with the initial and predominant mode of his choice to reinforce regularity and to establish closure, he did not. We

must ask ourselves why. If stanza 2 begins suddenly in a noticeably different character, why did the composer intentionally divert the listener away from finality? Two reasons come to mind. First and foremost, mode 4 is an exact reversal of mode three, which means instead of initiating the pattern on the longest note—a dotted quarter, mode 4 completes the pattern on that note value, which by virtue of its length tends to indicate we have arrived at a resting point. The second reason is that mode 4, once again, introduces diversity and thereby defies finality, subtly leading the listener to the next section.

While stanza 2 introduces the first of six chace sections, in examining the omnipresent polyphony and hocketing in “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” stanza 4 (m. 59-82), the second three-voice section, also demonstrates well this composer’s facility within the new polyphonic context. Syncopation and fragmentation reign supreme in this constant interchange among voices. The “chace” or hunt is expressed by exact imitation in each line. This canonic rhythmic structure offered Machaut the opportunity to reduce motives and their embellishments to the barest of elements. Frequent hocketing, one-to-three-note statements interrupted by rests (e.g., m. 62, 63, 65, 66, 68, 69, etc.) and syncopation (e.g., m. 59, 60, 62, 63, etc.) combine to recall and reject previous rhythmic motives. Machaut was so adept at these reduction techniques that one might consider him the veritable precursor of Beethoven in his maniacal 5th mode! In spite of this incessant interplay and a truncated

melodic line, this crafty composer managed to maintain a sense of the moving suppleness heard in the first monophonic, purely melodic section.

Music was originally discreet, seemly, simple, masculine, and of good morals. Have not the moderns rendered it lascivious beyond measure? (Jacob of Liege- 14c.)⁹⁸

Text. Nothing is more characteristic of human nature
Than to be soothed by sweet modes ...
We are so naturally attuned to musical modes
By a kind of spontaneous feeling
That no age is without delight in sweet song.
(Boethius, c. 480-524)⁹⁹

According to Pythagoras, the first channel of inquiry in music is its mathematical relationship to the universe, in a word—meter. The second channel of inquiry involves realizing the semantic rapport between the poetic and the musical texts.¹⁰⁰ In the twenty-first century, we wonder, “Did imitation occur in the transfer of poetic word to ligature during the Middle Ages? Although music and poetry grew up together during the fourteenth century, and in fact reached a pinnacle of development at that time, scholars yet debate whether medieval music expresses the text or functions independently of it.¹⁰¹ In general, analysts consider medieval music as a detailed representation of mathematical calculations in line with Pythagorean premises, minimally dependent on either its mimetic or expressive potential.¹⁰² John Stevens in Words and Music in the Middle Ages confirms this claim, asserting that poetry and music in song function as separate, while interrelated entities.

When words and music come together, they have to agree, but this agreement is primarily a matter of parallel ‘harmonies,’ agreements of phrase and structure, of balance and ‘number,’ so that in song, the mind and ear may be ‘doubly charmed by a double melody.’¹⁰³

In spite of the fact that the poetic verse and the musical phrase in medieval song display the versatility of communicating different ideas, the listener should not automatically assume that no semantic rapport exists between the two mediums. Emotional states may in fact be reflected in both word and melody, and the powerful effects of music are often called upon to enhance or explain linguistic concepts. Limits exist, however. Such limits become clear in analyzing the text-to-music relationship in Machaut’s “Le Lay de la fonteinne.”

As word painting occurred infrequently in fourteenth-century compositions, the music critic must seek alternative avenues to discover the reasons behind the implicit interdependence of a dual-disciplined art form—the medieval song, or in this case, the lai. Rather than look for the reflection of specific ideas in the melodies, harmonies and rhythms, one must seek to reveal how the melodic and poetic grammar, syntax, and at moments, semantics remain united in a wealth of mirrored reflections.¹⁰⁴

Machaut’s lai primarily employs a syllabic treatment of the text, with frequent reliance on internally neumatic or melismatic devices to extend syllables. Word-rhythms derived from rhythmic mode 2, the complement to the poetic iamb, establish a rapport between the musical

phrase and the poetic or spoken line.¹⁰⁵ Although the interactive fluency that emanates from this rhythmic interplay between sound and word may give the listener the impression that the declamation is “natural,” it in fact is not. Machaut strays from daily expression, often displacing the elongated French accent, which occurs at the end of a word, phrase or line.

In analyzing stanza 1 of Lai No. 16, both natural and unnatural stresses occur. The first three bars propose a closed, however modified, version of spoken French accentuation. To realize the effect of the divergence from daily language, each syllable, and its association to subsequent syllables, must be taken into account. The first phrase flows easily: “Je ne ces – se de pri – er.” The initial word, a subject pronoun, receives the primary stress, as anticipated by its usual syntactic relationship to the word following, the negation “ne.” The “ne” by comparison is glossed over as a virtually insignificant syllable, as we are in haste to meet with the next articulated sound, which begins the all important vowel, “ces – se.”

Although the musical rhythm reflects the general linguistic rapport described, the note values exaggerate the enunciated case. A ratio of 3:1 is apparent between the omnipotent “Je” and the ignored “ne.” At most, a 2:1 calculation might pertain to the spoken reality. Equally disturbing to the native speaker is the second syllable “se” in the verb “ces – se.” Machaut has attributed an excessive amount of musical time to a

syllable that in this instance would barely receive stress given the implications of the mute “e.” One could argue, however, that in reading poetry, the mute “e” would receive additional emphasis. Still, the underlying ratio between the first and second syllables of “ces – se” would fall at best on 1:2, not 2:3.

Machaut closes the initial phrase in near conformity to spoken accentuation, with one eighth note on the diminished “de,” two eighths on the first syllable of the infinitive form of the verb “pri – er,” and three eighths on the final syllable “er.” In addressing the matter of syllabic declamation with respect to spoken and rhythmic intent, it is imperative to recognize that music historian Hoppin’s reference to the “natural rhythm of word accents as reflections of beats in time” requires a footnote.¹⁰⁶ First of all, Machaut still relies predominantly on poetic expression in resolving the declamation challenges in “Le Lay de la fonteinne”; second, he often exaggerates the poetic reading to accommodate the rhythmic modes. That said, the poet provides a clear and convincing portrayal of well-articulated and accentuated French verse in his Lai No. 16.

While accentuation plays a vital role in rendering the language and music compatible, basic structural indications require attention as well. A syllabic breakdown of “Le Lay de la fonteinne” displays both odd and even-lengths of verse in stanzas 1 through 3. The first two stanzas are divided into couplets (1a&b, 2a&b), with 8 and 9 lines per half stanza,

respectively; the third stanza is divided into two paired couplets of 5 lines each. Couplets 1a and b employ an alternating 7/5 syllabic scheme; 2a and b continue the same configuration with a slight variation. Lines 1 and 2 both contain 7 syllables and thereby modify the relational distribution of the 7 and 5-line syllables in stanza 1. Three-a and b expose a substantial shift in meter, moving from 7 and 5 syllables to 8 in each line, that is, odd to even meter (see [Table F.2](#)).

If one compares the linguistic breakdown of syllables to their musical treatment in “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” one discovers much interest in the compositional decisions that stand behind a predominantly syllabic but also often neumatic or melismatic declamation. The first sub-phrase of phrase 1 (couplet 1a, m. **1-3**) adheres strictly to a one-on-one syllabic setting. Each note value, g-a-b flat-a-a-g-f sharp, corresponds directly to seven one-syllable articulations: “Je—ne—ces—se—de—pri—er.” The second sub-phrase (m. 4-6) immediately strays from the one-on-one form. The first utterance, a seemingly meaningless preposition “a,” receives most of the attention. Machaut extends this open vowel, however, from a one-note syllable to a five-note ornamentation for vocal reasons: that is, to allow the voice to glide effortlessly along, unhampered and uninhibited by intervening consonants. The composer also breaks with declamatory protocol on the second syllable of measure 5, the “me” in “da – me.” A slur ties a c to a b flat on a, once again, linguistically negligible mute e.

As one peruses the first 18 measures of stanza 1, it becomes apparent that Machaut decided to emphasize the grammatical and syntactical elements of relative lesser importance in this segment of “La fonteinne.” For example, ornamentation is observed on the “mes,” a possessive adjective, one of several possible determinants and on the “si” (m. 9), an intensifying adverb of debatable semantic and grammatical consequence. Three cases arise in stanza 1 that somewhat limit the argument for Machaut’s embellishment of grammatically and semantically minor words. The first two occur in measure 10 on the “se,” a personal pronoun referring to the object lady in question, and on the first syllable of the corresponding adjective “chie – re.” Both words claim substantial grammatical, semantic, and in the case of “chiere,” syntactical value. The “se,” an object pronoun, stands for the subject; however, the emphasis on “se,” meaning “herself,” demonstrates the poet’s or suitor’s insistence on the woman’s self-adulating character. She is equally self-embracing at a syntactic level, as she proudly sits midstream between two adjacent embellishments. And, of course, close behind is the ornament “chiere,” proclaiming her self-worth via semantics and syntactic placement at line end.

The third exception in stanza 1 begins on the second pulse in bar 13 and runs through the first pulse in the following measure. The preposition “sanz” proves slightly different from the prior case of “a” in measure 4. Both prepositions initiate the musical and poetic phrase and

thereby gain in syntactic importance. However, vocally “sanz” is the much lesser of the two utterances, given a free and open “a,” versus the nasalized “sanz.” Just the same, the latter is accorded two dotted-quarters of attention as opposed to the dotted-quarter and one eighth granted to the former. Why? we query. It seems this woman is obnoxious as if we hadn’t already understood her erratic nature amidst the smooth-flowing, poetic verse. We realize the vitality of “sanz” once we have arrived at the subsequent verb—“amolliier” (m. 15). Apparently, there is no convincing this haughty and disdainful woman. One despondent man simply cannot soften her stance. And now we understand why Machaut chose to grant these many notes to the otherwise minimal “sanz.” This simple preposition thereby gains in the semantic and most certainly, the syntactic departments that which it forfeits in the grammatical stores.

In following the described line of syllabic reasoning throughout the lai, one recognizes similar intentions in the remaining eleven stanzas, again with notable exceptions. As a general rule, Machaut selects initial phrase utterances, internal syllables on open or nasalized vowels, and negligible words ending in the mute e, such as “me” or “ne” (e.g., m. 38 and 41). Flagrant exceptions include the verb “amer” in measures 33-34, 37-38 and **40-41**. In each instance, this substantive verb receives three dotted-quarter note values to a two-syllable declamation. A second instance where the composer opted to use melisma as a means of

emphasizing semantics is on the omnipotent word “trinite,” which receives three dotted-quarters of musical value to three linguistic syllables (see m. 95-96, 98-99 and 101-102). Overall, the stated principles of neumatic and melismatic declamation hold true in “Le Lay de la fonteinne” from start to finish.

While ornamentation afforded the composer flexibility in declamation, the inherent regularity and versatility of the lai’s form offered Machaut concurrent security and liberty in structure and variation. Half stanzas 1a and b propose ambivalent repetition. All sixteen lines display extended rhymes, vacillating between “ier,” the French masculine rhyme, and “iere,” the French feminine rhyme. The primary stanzaic configuration is one of masculine/feminine in alternation. Machaut, however, created subtle disruption in the expected scheme by introducing two consecutive feminine rhymes in lines 4 and 5. The deviation is readily assimilated as two identically opposing rhyme schemes emerge: 1. 1-4, abab; 1. 5-8, baba. The composite of 1a and b discloses ababbaba. Stanzas 2 and 3 of Machaut’s “Le Lay de la fonteinne” blatantly perpetuate the composer’s volition for regularized poetic transformation. Half stanzas 2a and b display only masculine “rhyme suffisant” within an aabbaabba couplet format. In opposition, stanza 3 employs solely feminine “rhymes riches” (see [Table F.3](#)).

Over the twelve stanzas of Lai No. 16, the poet uses a variety of masculine and feminine rhyme schemes. Although stanza 1 initiates the

rhyming with a masculine/ feminine alternation, the second stanza avoids the masculine/ feminine issue altogether and uses two infinitive verb endings, “ir“and “er,”with one exception at the end of line 8 of the first couplet. The word “per,”a noun meaning “peer,”not only strays from the predominant grammatical entry in stanza 2 but also from the actual rhyming pattern itself. The infinitive ending “er” is on a closed e, where the vowel sound in “per”is an open e. This particular word, therefore, may be referred to as an eye rhyme, a rhyme of visual similarity, devoid of auditory reference.

Stanza 3 employs two feminine rhymes, “ance” and “ere,”but Machaut never selects to use two masculine rhymes. He did, however, combine a number of verb forms with noun endings. Stanza 5 displays the verb ending “oit”and the masculine noun ending “age.” In general, he brought into association verbs and nouns, nouns and nouns, and in stanza 8, disjunctive pronouns and nouns.

The complex rhyme scheme in “Le Lay de la fonteinne” is without a doubt key in the merged product of language and music. The vocal sound lives and breathes by virtue of its partnered linguistic phonemes. While this fact determines musical choices in a global sense, is it possible to discover a rhyme-to-pitch organization that reveals the composer’s intent to select tones based on rhymed ends? After an analysis of Lai No. 16,I ascertain that there is no discernable rapport at all between line rhyme and the cadential notes which occur at the end of

the musical phrase. Machaut includes the usual cadences, the finalis, the fifth, or sometimes the leading tone to the fifth or the leading tone to the finalis for sub-phrases seemingly indiscriminately. That is, the “ir” rhyme ending in stanza 2 might conclude on the “tonic” or the fifth. The matter of pitch selection with reference to rhyme, therefore, appears to be a purely musical decision.

Other poetic techniques supporting basic rhyme perceived in varying degrees in “La fonteinne” include recurrence of labials and sibilants, alliteration and emphasis of certain vowels. Machaut’s poem relies heavily on labials and sibilants to create a smooth line. Within the first three stanzas, the following letters occur repeatedly: p (25), m (30), s (25) to reach a total of 55 labials and 25 sibilants.

We must ask the question again: Is there a relationship between the recurrence of these three phonemes—p, m, s—and the incidence of particular pitches? While the answer is not definitive, there appears to be an extremely high associative coincidence between the letter p and the reciting tone or the consonant fifth. In French poetry, the letters p, m, and especially s, receive unusual emphasis as a means of rendering the verse softer, sweeter, more melodious. Poetic harmony of sound plays a vital role in establishing fluent verse, such as the “tonic” and the fifth in medieval musical discourse. The m and the s, on the other hand, seem to rely upon the inherent “douceur” of the phoneme to add a lighter touch to both the poetry and music in song. One possible reason behind

Machaut's decision to frequently link the p with consonant pitches but to neglect this same association in the cases of the m and s may rest in the p's lesser quality of sound. In the French language, p's are not as soft and supple as m's and s's. In recognizing this linguistic fact, the composer likely sought to enhance the poetic potential of the p by tying it to a consonant tone the majority of the time.

Assonance and alliteration are frequently observed as well in "La fonteinne." The lai emphasizes certain vowels but avoids vowel patterning. It predominantly displays two pure vowels—[a] and [e]—along with the nasal [ahn], and the semi-vowel [ie]. In general, alliteration occurs on initial consonants. For example: "mes maus," "si se," "tant la truis" (m. 7-8, 9-10 and 12, respectively), "puet perir" (m. 26), "siens, sans" (m. 29), "C'est celle" (m. 43), "parole et par la puissance" (m. 46-48), "po de peinne" (m. 67), "prouver puis," (m. 67-68) "seurs un suis" (m. 76), "Po pleur les pechies" (m. 165).

While the claim cannot be made consistently, numerous instances of repeated pitches arise when alliteration is observed. "Mes maus" displays two e5's with intervening passing tones, but "si se" rests upon distinctly different pitches, with the exception of the common c5 amidst the embellishment of both the "si" and the "se." "Tant la truis" functions independently of the music as does "puet perir." "Siens, sans," however, is obviously tied to two eighth-note e5's, the composer's manner of supporting the alliteration through pitch repetition. The remaining

examples cited avoid the association of phonemic sound to musical pitch but still contribute their own linguistic melody to the compositions.

In addition, Machaut often employs anaphora: “Nejoye / Ne puet” (m. 16-17), “Et qui / Et la mettroit, Qui Fils / Qui consentoit” (m. 83.85), “Po descri / Po pleur, Et doing / Et te tri” (m. 160.163). These examples comprise a limited list of anaphora in “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” however one that clearly demonstrates the poet’s propensity for beginning neighboring lines with the same word. In examining whether a relationship exists between the word and pitch in the case of anaphora, one discovers that the repeated word is not matched by repetition of pitch. It is worth noting, however, that two or three instances of anaphora may fall on the same tones in different verses.

Assonance, epistrophe, listings, and tricolons complete a preview of Machaut’s sonorially sublime lai. Subtle assonance in stanza 1—“A ma dame” (m. 4-5)—discovers stylistic emphasis in subsequent epistrophe—“A ma dame chiere / Mais si se tient chiere” (m. 9-11). Tricolons, “Sans fin, sans amour legiere, / Sans amenuisier” (m. 12-15) and “c’est ma foy, c’est ma creance, / C’est ma vie” (m. 46-49), disclose Machaut’s penchant for repetitive phrasing. Nominal listings, devoid of repetition, establish a sense of rhythmic progression: “Une vertus, une substance / Un pooir, une sapience” (m. 49-54), “ceste trinite / en eternité / En possibilite / en toute autre chose / En sens, en qualite / En gloire, en verité” (m. 94-105).

After a lengthy analysis of the poet-composer's means to an end—the art of combining poetry with song—we revert to the initial queries posed. Does a relationship exist between the text and the musical phrase? In line with primary Pythagorean theory, meter seems to predominate in the overall scheme to join the linguistic and the melodic, while the second channel of inquiry--the potential realization of a semantic rapport between word and sound—hovers in the background.

Imitation, not especially word painting, but similarity in emphasis occurs in the transfer from verse to neume. Often, however, this transfer proves indiscernible, not to say, devoid of credibility. This sometime changeover can, under specific circumstances, enhance expression, but rarely does it persist in a formulaic fashion. John Stevens, therefore, summarized well the character of medieval song. Agreement by parallel harmonies, phrase, structure, balance and number create the delight of a dual melody and underpin the beautiful declamation unveiled in “*Le Lay de la fonteinne*.”¹⁰⁷

Chapter 7

MACHAUT AND HUMANISM

An integrated sensibility was characteristic of the aesthetic experience of the medievals. Life appeared to them as something wholly integrated, in the sense of a culture whose value systems are related to one another.¹⁰⁸

Medieval people, perhaps, viewed life in the ideal as a constant flow from the mundane to the spiritual. To an extent, this depiction of their daily existence holds true. However, to assume that the everyday person during the Middle Ages lived in a “wholly integrated” world is, in my opinion, fallacious. Dire concerns for survival riveted a void in the medieval psychology, a void that rendered integration nigh to, if not, impossible.

Just the same, artists who walked among a finer crowd attempted to realize the holistic dream: that is, to reconcile sublime aesthetics, cultural hardships, day-to-day and religious aspirations into one, unified, artistic expression. Machaut is such an artist. To what source or sources must he have turned to manifest his metaphysical “Lay de la fonteinne”? The “musica” of the philosopher Boethius called upon the “quadrivium” subjects—arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. Machaut clearly structured his Lai No. 16 in a mathematical fashion. In ancient Greece, music was manifested at three levels of existence: “musica mundana,” which represented the order of the universe; “musica humana,” the order of the human soul, and “musica instrumentalis,” the

order of musical sound. Machaut seems to have resorted to the musical roots of Antiquity in determining the organization, feeling and sound of his lai. However, last but not least, we resort to the scholarly argument of the Middle Ages and recent centuries. What is the “true handmaiden of medieval music — language or mathematics?”¹⁰⁹

After a lengthy discussion of ratios, form and poetic inclinations, the response appears obvious in the case of Machaut, although somewhat more complex than to simply state, “Machaut prioritized both language and mathematics in his lai.” He also prioritized culture, religion, art and love. He infused the poetry from “La fonteinne” with a sense of the “religio-philosophical,” a representative system of virtue, vice and sin. Courtly love falls under the heading of “religio-philosophical” love, and Machaut upholds its precepts at the musical level without question in his Lai No. 16. The sound floats above humanity’s domain and reaches the heavens via divine vocals. Ask any musician, and she will tell you, “Music is the most spiritual of all the arts.” After listening to “Le Lay de la fonteinne” countless times, I would tend to agree. Song requires not only voices but words, and among the words, we discover gaps, minor hesitations, failings--in a phrase, human frailty.

In spite of these inconsistencies, the Christian allegory overrides the tale of two estranged lovers, the courtly suitor and his secular lady. The extended metaphor structures the language system, much as the lai’s poetic and corresponding musical organization is determined by the

flow of syntactical sound. Inherent in allegory is the ability to discern variant levels of meaning, to isolate the physical implications from the spiritual and to recognize where each lies and why.

At times the answer becomes clearer in retrospect. Machaut's influence as a composer of *lais* ended at his death. But music and literature continued to thrive, having derived benefit from both his conformity and experimentation. Music grew in polyphonic and eventually harmonic directions. Literature relied less upon the now disintegrated ideal of courtly love but ridiculed it. Shakespearean sonnets mocked the exaggerated quintessential "noblesse" inherent in this rigid code of amorous liaison, and Louise Labé reminded men that women, earthly women, stand on a par (if not a "per") with men. The human had indeed overcome the celestial.

But Machaut lives on and so too medieval music and its accompanying poetic verse. We can only surmise the reality of this composer's existence, especially when traveling away at his art and his craft. We can only listen to "Le Lay de la fonteinne" to hear the penetrating medieval "armonia," harmony in progress.

ENDNOTES

¹Translation of Machaut's verse by Patricia Turcic. [Guillaume de Machaut, Oeuvres (Geneve: Slatkine Reprints, 1977)7-8.]

²According to Levarie, "[The]idea of perfect proportion lies at the center of all medieval aesthetics." St. Thomas Aquinas in the Summa theologiae considers three elements essential to beauty: 1) integrity or perfection; 2) true proportion or consonance; 3) brightness or brilliant color. [Siegmond Levarie, Guillaume de Machaut, ed. John J. Becker (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969)22.]

³In Singer: "Christian concepts of eros [love] closely resemble Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas about the soul's search for the highest good." One therefore recognizes the transformation of the philosophical concept of three distinct points (beginning, middle, end) into one divine God in three images (Father, Son, Holy Ghost). [Irving Singer, The Nature of Love (New York: Random House, 1966) 164.1]

⁴"Ars Antiqua," the old musical style, which was based on six rhythmic modes, endured from 1116 to 1320. "Ars nova," the new art of fourteenth-century France, espoused an innovative spirit that emerged around 1320. The basic premises of the "Ars nova" are defined in two treatises: The Ars nove musice by Johannes de Muris and the Ars nova of Philippe de Vitry. The primary advance in musical concepts after the "Ars antiqua" period revolved around notational principles. The extension of the Franconian notational system of rhythmic modes now added smaller units to the "long" and the "breve." Semibreves, minims, semiminims, in both triple and duple mensurations, increasingly appeared in late medieval compositions. Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne" is only one of countless medieval compositions that exemplifies the possibilities of the newly proposed rhythms. [Richard H. Hoppin, Medieval Music (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978)353-4.]

⁵"Tempus" or time during the "Ars nova" period meant the subdivision of a breve (short duration) into three semibreves (perfect) or two semibreves (imperfect). Medieval symbolism often equated divisions of "3" with the Trinity and therefore, paralleled the "tempus perfectus" with the sacred realm and equated the duple divisions of "tempus imperfectus" with the secular world. [Hoppin, 353-4.]

⁶Monophony or single-voice texture, vocal or instrumental, prevailed in music internationally until 10 AD. Between 1000 and 1600, contrapuntal polyphony developed in Western music, while monophony retained prominence in the Asiatic and Arab worlds. Polyphony or many-voiced texture proposes the juxtaposition and integration of two or more musical lines while each line remains rhythmically independent. [Joseph Machlis, The Enjoyment of Music, 3rd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1970)307-8.]

⁷The inclusion of measured rests in notation prompted a new rhythmic technique. The alternation of single notes, pairs of notes, or small groups of notes and rests among vocal lines developed a rapid rhythmic effect similar to hiccupping. The word "hocketing" is derived from the French "hoquet," meaning hiccup. [Andrew Hughes, Style and Symbol: Medieval Music (800- 1453) (Ottawa: The Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1989)66.]

⁸In the Summa theologiae, Saint Thomas Aquinas questioned “whether God should be praised with song at all.” After numerous objections, Aquinas eventually acquiesced that “the use of music in the divine praises [was] a salutary institution” [Levarie, 3 1.]

⁹Between 1305 and 1415 the papacy was exiled from Rome to Avignon, France, where it remained under the protection of the French monarchy. When attempts ensued to return the papacy to Rome, chaos erupted among the ecclesiastics. This period of intense disruption, that threatened to split the Church, is referred to as the Great Schism. The ardent dispute continued from 1378 to 1417 when, after several Councils had met, the papacy was permanently restationed in Rome. [Hughes, 2 1.]

¹⁰Provence, 1324-5: Pope John XXII issued a bull critiquing the modern polyphonic compositions. A segment of the initial paragraph from the bull follows: “Certain disciples of the new school [“*Arno*va”], much concerned with measured rhythms [mensuration], write in new notes, preferring to devise methods of their own rather than to continue singing in the old way. The music therefore of the divine offices is now performed with semibreves and minims, and with these notes of smaller value every composition is pestered. Moreover, they truncate the melodies with ‘hoquets’; they lubricate them with counterpoints, ‘discantibus’; and sometimes they even stuff them with upper parts, ‘triplis’ and ‘motetis,’ made out of secular songs. [They include these measures to such an extent] that often they lose sight of the fundamental sources of our melodies in the Antiphoner and Gradual and forget that upon which their superstructure is raised.” [Levarie, 33-4.]

¹¹While artists prior to the fourteenth century remained anonymous, numerous musicians, composers and theorists emerged during this transitional fourteenth-century period. Machaut’s contemporaries--Philippe de Vitry, Johannes de Grocheo, Johannes de Muris, Jacobus of Liege, Francesco Landini, Jacopo da Bologna, Ghiradella da Firenze--confronted the obstacles inherent in medieval life and reveled in the challenges that this uncertain era proposed. [(Donald H. Van Ess, The Heritage of Musical Style (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970) 93.1

¹²The stated metaphysical reality relates to the abstract qualities of the music, which remain physically ungraspable, however psychologically and emotionally influential. Machaut’s music evokes spirituality beyond theological symbolism expressed in notes. If the metaphysical truth lies in the realm of psychic transformation, it ineluctably proves mutable, hence indefinable, in spite of its enduring merit.

A definition from The American College Dictionary may provide clues to the understanding of this elusive subject: **Metaphysical:** *philos.* a. concerned with abstract thought or subjects, as existence, causality, truth, etc.; b. concerned with first principles and ultimate grounds, as being, time, substance. [C. L. Barnhart, gen. ed., “Metaphysical,” The American College Dictionary (New York: Random House, 1969) 765.1

¹³Composed during the first half of the fourteenth century, “Le Lay de la fonteinne” is No. 16 of Machaut’s nineteen lais. “La fonteinne” represents one of four lais that introduced polyphony to late medieval music. Twelve stanzas alternate monophonic and three-voice canon or “chace” sections. [Lawrence Earp, Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1995) 407.1

¹⁴Augustine of Hippo (354-430), the primary exponent of Christianity and proponent of Neoplatonism after Plotinus, revealed in his Confessions an extensive account of the trials and process of renewal on the path to spiritual conversion. Indisputably, Augustine altered theological attitudes on the meaning of conversion. The once heroic martyr was transformed by him into a disciple, who passed through a life-long journey aspiring to acceptance of God's will. As a philosophical theologian, Saint Augustine, "[m]ore than any other Church Father, shaped the future intellectual development of Western Christianity ...; [h]is commentaries on Scripture formed the basis of all subsequent medieval and Reformation biblical interpretation" [Edward Peters, Europe and the Middle Ages, 3rd ed. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1997) 47-50.]

¹⁵In the Roman system of education, the seven liberal arts constituted the standard format of medieval higher learning. "The arts consisted of **two** branches: the 'trivium'--grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic--and the 'quadrivium'--geometry, mathematics, astronomy and music." The "trivium" assisted in the mastery of language and practical verbal skills; "[t]he 'quadrivium' ... reached beyond utilitarian needs and dealt with the abstract world of ideas." [Donald H. Van Ess, The Heritage of Musical Style (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970) 60.]

¹⁶"The political theology of the Middle Ages was dominated by a single 'sententia,' (496 AD) the passage of the letter of Pope Gelasius I to the Emperor Anastasius I of 494, in which he wrote: 'The world is chiefly governed by these **two**: the sacred authority of bishops and the royal power. Of these, the burden of the priests is greater insofar as they will answer to the Lord for the kings of men themselves at the divine judgement. For you know, most merciful son, that although you rule over the human race in dignity, you nevertheless devoutly bow the neck to those who are placed in charge of religious matters and seek from them the means of your salvation; and you understand that, according to the order of religion, in what concerns the receiving and correct administering of the heavenly sacraments, you must be subject rather than in command.'" [James H. Burns, Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 288-9.]

¹⁷In the Policraticus John Salisbury (c. 1120-80) proposed the analogy of a "well-organized political community and a human body, guided by the soul--the priesthood--ruled by a wise head--the King--and populated by all the limbs and organs, from the counselling heart to the peasant feet, necessary for the efficient, just and mutually beneficial functioning of the entire organism." [Cary J. Nederman and Kate Langdon Forhan, ed., Medieval Political Theory-A Reader (London: Routledge, 1993) 27.] John Wyclif (c. 1330-83) developed a three-fold hierarchical system as well graphically represented by a three-tiered house. The first level, the roof, closest to heaven, represents the Church and the priests; the second level, the walls, symbolizes the secular lords or defenders of the kingdom; the third level stands for the common people or labourers. Wyclif asserts: "When this three-fold hierarchy is proportionally arranged in quantity and quality according to God's standards, the kingdom will proceed to prosper." [Nederman, 224-5.] Christine de Pisan's (c. 1365-1430) "body politic" perpetuated John Salisbury's political organizing theme based on a metaphor of interdependence and hierarchy. Pisan's system arranges French society into three major classes or "estates": 1) the Prince; 2) the knights and the nobles; 3) the common people, merchants, clergy, students, artisans and peasants. [Nederman, 230-31.]

The three systems described emphasize the mutual responsibility of each tier in order to maintain socio-political equilibrium. All three bear a resemblance to the higher

metaphysical concept of the socially and politically pervasive three-in-One Trinity, ever-apparent in Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne."

¹⁸The first French woman poet, Marie de France (12c.), lived and worked at Henry II and Alienor of Aquitaine's court. The author of numerous fables and twelve narrative *lais*, Marie de France has retained literary prominence throughout the centuries. The *lais*, in particular, offer original insight into love relationships that transgress the rigid conventions of "l'amourcourtois." Lagarde and Michard describe the aura and essence of the narrative poems: "C'est une peinture tres delicate, tres feminine, de sentiments tendres, d'une emotion voilée et doucement melancolique La femme est une creature aimante et fidele, prête a se sacrifier pour le bonheur de l'être aimé." ("Thelais depict a delicate and feminine tableau of tender, restrained feelings and barely melancholic emotion The woman is loving, loyal and self-sacrificing for the happiness of the desired one.") [Andre Lagarde and Laurent Michard, "Marie de France," *Moyen Age* (Paris: Bordas, 1985)45.]

¹⁹"The Fable of a Man, his Belly and his Limbs," a popular poem during the Middle Ages, expresses the "political moral" of the body politic. A paraphrase of the original text follows:

The hands, the feet and the head resented the belly
For he was consuming their earnings.
To wit, they refused to work.
Hence, the starved belly weakened the other parts
Who then resumed their tasks
With the hope of restoring health to the entire body.
But their efforts were in vain.
The impoverished belly, *i.e.*, the once grandiose Church,
No longer functioned as before.
And the leader--the heady King--
And his workers, the labouring hands and feet,
Perished as a matter of course.

[Marie de France, "The Fable of a Man, his Belly and his Limbs," Nederman and Langdon, 25.]

²⁰Stanley Sadie, "Troubadours, Trouveres," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 19 (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001) 799 . In general, these poet-composers emerged from the noble class and boast an impressive compositional legacy of secular expression: "some 2,000 troubadour poems, 250 notated melodies, about 400 trouvere poems and 1,400 melodies are extant." The predominant forms of the troubadours and trouveres include the "chanson de geste," the "rondeau," "virelai," "ballade," and the "lai." Machaut, "the last of the trouveres," refined the courtly *art* by restructuring the lyrical *lai* and by redefining the "formes fixes," the *rondeau*, *virelai* and *ballade*. [Van Ess, 71.1]

²¹Hughes defines "fin'amors" as "a [European] courtly ideal [and a code] partly related to Christian notions of charity and moral behaviour and partly associated with the new veneration of the blessed Virgin--and by extension, womanhood in general." As a convention and a myth initiated by twelfth-century vernacular songs in Latin, the courtly tradition persisted in diverse forms through the seventeenth century. "Fin'amors" or refined love aspired to noble sentiments but often included sexual references imbedded in poetic verse. Although the troubadours and trouveres' love songs remain complementary in theme and tone, linguistic displacement from southern

to northern France induced a change in name: “fin’amors’ became ‘fine amour.’” [Hughes, 409- 12.1]

²²According to Smith, Jean de Meun’s Roman de la Rose presents an “original mosaic” while “[t]he more conservative Guillaume de Lorris works almost entirely within the lyrical tradition of the troubadours and trouveres.” Lorris’s twelfth-century version of the idyllic garden, a human-crafted Eden, espouses courtly elegance and provides the perfect allegorical myth for forlorn love poets. Jean de Meun’s completion of the Roman de la Rose during the fourteenth century satirizes the devoted lover and reflects the denigration of a tradition. [Nathaniel B. Smith, “In Search of the Ideal Landscape: From Locus Amoenus to Parc du champ joli in the Roman de la Rose,” Viator: Medieval & Renaissance Studies 11 (1980)225-43.]

²³The interrelationship between the sacred and secular worlds is often difficult, if not impossible, to unravel. Christian thought, translated into spiritual ideals, pervaded each and every aspect of courtly medieval life. Many divergences from the espoused ideals, however, infiltrated thought processes and behaviors, especially in the fourteenth century. When considering both music and literature from this period, one must grapple with constant ambiguity and contradiction. Thus, while the sacred and the secular meet on numerous planes and reinforce each other’s dicta on a superficial level, they equally conflict and engender hypocrisy in both realms, e.g., sexual liaisons. [q.v. Boccaccio’s Decameron.]

²⁴During the Middle Ages, priests taught their congregations that “Eve, a woman, brought sin into the world.” The Church preached that “women should be pure and holy like the Virgin Mary.” The ecclesiastics, although opposed to adulterous strains in the courtly tradition, supported the ideal of a secular lady in virtuous union with the Virgin. [Carol Adams, et. al., From Workshop to Warfare: The Lives of Medieval Women. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983)3.]

²⁵Coleridge saw in Petrarch the ‘final blossom and perfection of the troubadours.’” Petrarch (1344-74), “the father of humanism,” refined troubadour verse in praise of one deified lady--Laura. Dozens of sonnets attest to the unique style of Petrarchism which merged medieval conventions and mythological allegory. Petrarch, the Italian bridge to humanism, analogous in many respects to Machaut in France, revived “the study of sexual love, with all its paradoxical potentials of joy and anguish” [Petrarch, Selected Sonnets, Odes and Letters, ed. Thomas Goddard Bergin (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1966)xiv.]

²⁶While Petrarch ne’er ceased to deify Laura, Machaut offered a more Chaucerian view of fourteenth-century secular life and the cult of courtly “amour.” Many of his songs explore the denigrated side of intimate relationships between men and women as well as the passionate “douceur” associated with the ennobling aspects of courtly love and its complement, the cult of the Virgin.

²⁷The Hundred Years’ War (1337-1453) disrupted political and social life at all hierarchical levels in France. Two primary causes pushed the French and English into a seemingly interminable and futile conflict: 1) a persistent territorial claim by the English on the French duchies of Aquitaine and Normandy, and 2) the rejection of Edward III as heir to the French throne. Both disputes plummeted the rival countries into a sporadic, however seemingly endless battle.

²⁸The ravages of the Hundred Years’ War ceased during the six-year outbreak of the Black plague (1346-52). Rampant pestilence affected the whole of society and

engendered fear, insanity and cruelty. The Age of Calamity offers a concise portrait of the plague's "inhumanity": "The deceased were depicted on their tombs as hideously emaciated and tortured, permanent witnesses to the social and psychological scars inflicted by the Black Death." [The Age of Calamity (Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1989)9.]

²⁹According to Levarie, "Machaut was deeply touched by the calamities around him." In the opening pages of "Le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre," Machaut expressed his sadness when faced with the inhuman suffering of his immediate society. A condensation of the verse follows:

Justice and truth have perished. Avarice rules supreme. Everyone cheats and deceives—father, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother. Families reap destruction on one another without pity or compassion. The perils are unimaginable. The war takes hundreds of thousands of lives. No one cares. The Jews are inhumanly persecuted—hanged, cooked, drowned or beheaded. Mad beyond belief, Christians flagellate themselves in a vain attempt to reach paradise. Nature is punishing humankind for its sins. The plague has killed so many people, no one can imagine or compute the losses.

Although Machaut expressed his thoughts in writing, his friends were no longer witness to his feelings: "[C]omment qu'assez de mes amis fussent mors et en terre mis." His friends, along with the rest, were "dead and buried." [Levarie, 8.]

³⁰The "formes fixes," the ballades, rondeaux and virelais, comprise the bulk of Machaut's secular song oeuvre. Although considered dance forms, many of his songs were composed strictly for court entertainment. [Stolba, 134.1]

³¹Scholars still debate whether medieval music expresses text or remains independent of it. According to Balzer, et. al., "[m]usic and poetry in the Middle French period reach their full development simultaneously, no doubt as part of a single process, but afterward they are much less interdependent." Machauvian metaphysical aesthetics permit the sublime integration of two unique but complementary systems: language and music. "Le Lay de la fonteinne" exudes universal, cultural and moral truths through a refined interweaving of words and notes at a philosophical level, devoid of word painting. [Balzer, Cable and Wimsatt, 6.]

³²A three-in-one numerical symbolism pervades "Le Lay de la fonteinne," but the entire composition diffuses a poetic and musical aura definable only by an imagination sensitive to artistic beauty. [Lawrence Earp, Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1995)407.1]

³³Nicolas Ruwet, Langage, musique, poesie (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972) 12.

³⁴q.v. Noam Chomsky, French linguist and major proponent of a "universal grammar." While music and language function independently at a technical or grammatical level, they unavoidably merge in the metaphysical realm by accessing verbal, mathematical, emotional, conceptual and motor skills to realize content. The two systems thus become inextricably linked partners, equally important expressions of a creative culture.

³⁵"[M]ythology and religion are inextricably entwined." [Mark Morford and Robert Lenardon, Classical Mythology 5th ed. (New York: Longman Publishers USA, 1995)3.]

³⁶Morford and Lenardon, 4.

³⁷Morford, 4.

³⁸Ruwet, 68.

³⁹Morford, 5.

⁴⁰Marian devotion in its rudimentary stages, with martyrs and saints as intercessors of the people, began in 1AD. In the early Middle Ages, feasts, hymns, art, festivals and churches became signs of an ever-growing tendency of the populace to praise the Virgin Mary. By the year 1000, “the deep feeling of love and confidence in the Blessed Virgin, which hitherto had expressed itself vaguely and in accordance with the promptings of the piety of individuals, began to take organized shape in a vast multitude of devotional practices.” Shrines were erected all over Europe, and “homage paid to Our Lady during the later Middle Ages was universal.” [Herbert Thurston, “Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary,” The Catholic Encyclopedia (1996) 1-8.

⁴¹Jeremy Yudkin, Music in Medieval Europe (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1989) 17.

⁴²Irving Singer, The Nature of Love (New York: Random House, 1966) 49.

⁴³“The theory developed that music on earth was a reflection of the greater ‘music of the spheres’ – a harmony created by the relative distances and rates of motion of the planets, a harmony that was constantly present, if only people were sufficiently sensitive to hear it. This was a higher order of music, one with which humanity should strive to be in tune.” [Yudkin, 22-23.]

⁴⁴Pythagoras’s (580-507 BC) theory of numbers provided a means for understanding the universe, the planets, human experience and musical intervals when expressed through numerical ratios. Theorists after Pythagoras were able to mathematically calculate sounds and their relationships to various facets of human existence. Almost 100 years after the mathematician’s death, Plato (429-347 BC) expanded upon the Pythagorean philosophy, the “universal significance of music and the practical discovery of its mathematical basis.” According to Plato, music could ennoble the human soul but needed to be controlled, as improper application of the universal art could disturb both social and personal equilibrium. [Yudkin, 23.] The flourishing of Christianity in the early Middle Ages, supported by Saint Augustine, altered the concept of music dramatically. Augustine conceived the ethereal art in sound as “profound expression and inspiration to spiritual devotion,” not as the “mathematical calculation of intervals and proportions,” in accordance with Pythagoras’s earlier conceptions. [Yudkin, 31.]

⁴⁵The French “chanson” has a long and diverse history. In the eleventh through thirteenth centuries, the troubadours and trouveres espoused love in northern and southern France either orally or from manuscript. Their poetic “vers” took on a variety of forms and intents. Among the numerous kinds of “chanson,” several are worth noting. The typical “canço” or “chanson” pertains to courtly or chivalric love, the “pastourelle” depicts a pastoral love scene with knights and shepherdesses, and the “alba,” the song of dawn, speaks of lovers parting at daybreak. [Stolba, 109-110.]

Despite the rigid technical constraints imposed upon the “chanson,” the author of this thesis maintains that the words accompanying a claimed mathematically

conceived music still render French song, in all its versions, a “language-based mode of expression.”

⁴⁶Balzer, Cable, and Wimsatt, ed. The Union of Words and Music in Medieval Poetry (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991) 10.

⁴⁷Henry Derrick, Medieval and Renaissance Music (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1983) 35.

⁴⁸Guillaume de Machaut, Oeuvres (Geneve: Slatkine Reprints, 1977) 7-8.

⁴⁹Derrick, 38.

⁵⁰Siegmund Levarie, Guillaume de Machaut, ed. John J. Becker (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1954) 29 and Jan Aertsen, “Beauty in the Middle Ages,” Medieval Philosophy & Theology 1, ed. Norman Kretzmann (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991) 70.

⁵¹“Important as Philippe de Vitry was in establishing both the mensural principles of the “Ars nova” and the structural principles of the isorhythmic motet, he still stands in the shadow of his somewhat younger and considerably more prolific contemporary Guillaume de Machaut.” [Richard H. Hoppin, Medieval Music (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978) 396.1

⁵²“Le Lay de la fonteinne” provides an excellent integrated example of “Ars nova” advances—duple mensuration, polyphony, hocket, canon—and “Arsantigua” rhythmic modes and “tempus perfectus.”

⁵³“[I]t is an important measure of Machaut’s greatness that he could range at will between the extremes of intellectual constructivism and folklike simplicity. No other medieval composer left proof of such versatility. No other wrote with equal success in all the forms and styles of his time. Not until the beginning of the Renaissance do we find composers of comparable universality.” [Hoppin, 432.1

⁵⁴“He is referred to as ‘maistre’ on several occasions and thus obtained a degree, probably the ‘maître-ès-ars.’” [Earp, 3.]

⁵⁵“Although he never became a priest, his position as canon of Reims cathedral, beginning in 1340, would likely have demanded the subdeaconate.” [Earp, 3.] In spite of Earp’s claim, Machaut’s earlier positions as clerical assistant to John of Luxembourg in 1323 and later his standing as the king’s secretary clearly paved the way for his facile entrance into the ecclesiastic world as canon, a title granted to him by Pope Benedict XII at Reims in 1335. This appointment afforded Machaut both personal and professional freedom and brought a wealth of noble contacts to his doorstep. He resided in his own home while he worked with limited constraints at the court of John of Luxembourg’s daughter Bonne. [Stolba, 131.]

⁵⁶Yudkin, 487. Considering Machaut’s multi-faceted existence, his composing output was tremendous. The works that are available to the contemporary performer include his isorhythmic “Messe de Notre Dame” for four voices, 23 motets, 42 ballades, 21 rondeaux, 33 chansons balladees, and 19 lais. [Van Ess, 97.1 For a more comprehensive listing of Machaut’s compositions, see Appendix E.

⁵⁷Yudkin, 474.

⁵⁸Derrick, 62.

⁵⁹Levarie, 24.

⁶⁰Sylvia Huot, "Patience in Adversity: The Courtly Lover and Job in Machaut's Motets 2 and 3." Medium Aevum 63:2 (1994)222.

⁶¹Huot, 223.

⁶²Huot, 223.

⁶³Eileen Power, Medieval Women, Ed. M. M. Postan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975)20.

⁶⁴"*Amor spiritualis facile labitur in nudum carnalem amorem*" ("Spiritual love easily becomes worldly love.") Levarie asserts: "To the historian of the Middle Ages, the inseparability of the religious and secular spheres is expressed in the liveliest manner by the fact that profane melodies might be used indiscriminately for sacred purposes and the sacred for profane." [Levarie, 12-13.] While Machaut's poetry in "Le Lay de la fonteinne" clearly seeks to praise the Virgin, the inherent overlap between courtly and celestial images places the supplicant in an ambiguous position, which reaffirms the "inseparability" of the sacred and the profane espoused by medieval music critic Siegmund Levarie.

⁶⁵John Montague, "Love's Equal Realm," The Southern Review 31:3 (1995) 1

⁶⁶In an attempt to answer these questions, I shall refer to Machaut's original Middle French poetry from "Le Lay de la fonteinne," to the Hillier English translation, which is largely literal, and to my own poetic translation, which seeks to illuminate the latent parody in an otherwise seemingly sacred poem. [See Appendices A and B.]

⁶⁷Guillaume de Machaut, composer, "Le Lay de la fonteinne," Dir. Paul Hillier, Perf. The Hilliard Ensemble (1989) 1.1-2.

⁶⁸Hillier, dir., 1.3.

⁶⁹Hillier, 1.4-8.

⁷⁰Guillaume de Machaut, "Le Lay de la fonteinne," Trans. Patricia Turcic (2001) 1.9-16.

⁷¹Turcic, trans., 2.16-19.

⁷²Hillier, 3.1-14.

⁷³ Turcic, 4.12-19.

⁷⁴Turcic, 4.18 and 5.1-25.

⁷⁵Turcic, 6.1 1.

⁷⁶Hillier, 7.9-16.

⁷⁷Hillier, 7.17-18 and stanzas 9-12.

⁷⁸Turcic, 9.18.

⁷⁹Hillier, 9.11-15.

⁸⁰Machaut, 11.9-10.

⁸¹Turcic, 10.9-17.

⁸²Turcic, 11.1-6.

⁸³Paraphrase of translated verse. [Turcic, 11.13-22.]

⁸⁴Turcic, 12.1-17.

⁸⁵See Appendix C. [Guillaume de Machaut, “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” Mass of Notre Dame and Lays (1968)45-53.

⁸⁶Guillaume de Machaut, “Le Lay de la fonteinne,” dir. Paul Hillier, perf. The Hilliard Ensemble (1989)CD.

⁸⁷Derrick, 47.

⁸⁸I use the word “harmony” throughout this section in generous terms. In reality, tonal harmony, as we recognize it in modern compositions, did not exist. All mathematical calculations and the selection of tones were based on the interval, which involved only **two** pitches. Combinations of intervals, but not triads, were then intermingled in three and four-part compositions. Therefore, the “harmonic” sound of medieval music in performance may not differ greatly from many modern works, but the means by which the sound was realized does.

⁸⁹Hughes, 111.

⁹⁰Although medieval music seems obscure and outdated to many contemporary musicians, it continues to pervade our modern conceptions of tonality, rhythm and melody. Classical tonal relationships, as exploited by Haydn and particularly Mozart, attest to the 18th-century reiteration of rudimentary dominant-tonic tension and resolution apparent in “Le Lay de la fonteinne” in spite of the claimed theoretical absence of propelling cadential motion during the medieval period.

⁹¹“[T]he frequent change between the b natural and the b flat in a melodic line as well as in the texture of the whole setting is the characteristic feature of the old b-tonalities, Lydian or Dorian.” [Willi Appel, “The Partial Signatures in the Sources up to 1450,” Medieval Music (1986)42.

⁹²Measures 25 to 27 contain a complexity of intervallic medieval harmony that is impossible to unfold in writing. [Figure G. 1](#) expresses Machaut’s musical intent and composing genius much better than could ever be stated in words.

⁹³The complication is that the basic harmonic interval in part-music is the fifth, which has to be perfect, and in certain positions cannot be **so** without the addition of accidentals, e.g., between the notes b and f. **An** easy way of seeing that this diminished fifth was always perfect was to have a flat in the clef of the tenor in two-part writing,

often in the contratenor as well as in three or four parts. This was Machaut's usual method, which to some extent accounts for the so-called partial signatures, in which certain parts, usually the lower ones, had flat signatures, while the other voices had less or none. Also involved, however, was the concept of transposition, well-known previously in plainsong. Thus, the Dorian mode could be transposed to g or c by one or **two** flats in the tenor clef. This was the medieval minor, while the unecclesiastical major on c could be transposed to f and b flat." [Derrick, 27-28.)

⁹⁴Both the Dorian and Lydian modes retain the flexibility of vacillating between the b flat and the b natural, but only the Lydian mode employs the raised leading tone as its seventh degree—hence, f sharp in Lydian versus f natural in Dorian.

⁹⁵Although there is never mention of triadic harmony in fourteenth-century music theory treatises, the melodic and "harmonic" motion in stanza 1 of "Le Lay de la fonteinne" could easily fool the modern listener. Machaut relied so heavily on the "tonic," the third and fifth degrees of the modal scale that one could easily hear triads en route.

⁹⁶The related development of mensural rhythm, an influence of Arabic mathematics, added a shorter note value, the "minima," to the ever-present "longa," "brevis" and "semibreve," which allowed for more complex mathematical calculations with respect to rhythmic proportions." [Hughes, 67.]

⁹⁷Hughes, 67.

⁹⁸Joseph Machlis, "Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque Music," The Enjoyment of Music 3rd ed. (1970) 305.

⁹⁹Machlis, The Enjoyment of Music, 311.

¹⁰⁰Balzer, 2.

¹⁰¹Balzer, 6.

¹⁰²Balzer, 9.

¹⁰³John Stevens, Words and Music in the Middle Ages: Song, Narrative, Dance and Drama, 1050-1350 (1986) 409.

¹⁰⁴Balzer, 20.

¹⁰⁵In addition to the fluid iamb, "La fonteinne" includes noticeable incidence of the poetic trochee, derived from rhythmic mode 1.

¹⁰⁶Paraphrase of Hoppin, 102.

¹⁰⁷Stevens, 409.

¹⁰⁸Norman Kretzmann, ed., Medieval Philosophy & Theology v. 1 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991) 69.

¹⁰⁹Balzer, 10.

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Appendix A

*LE LAY DE LA FONTEINNE ORIGINAL VERSE

Stanza 1:

Je ne cesse de prier
A ma dame chiere
Que mes maus veille aligier.
Mais si se tient chiere
Et tant la truis dure et fiere,
Sans amolliier,
Qu'adoucir de ma priere
Nè puis son dangier.

S'en veil une autre acointier
Qui joie plenièr
M'otriera de ligier
Et a bonne chiere,
Sans fin, sans amour legiere,
Sans amenuisier;
Nè joye qu'a li s'affiere
Ne puet homs trier.

I never stop beseeching
My dear lady
To lighten my burden of woe,
But she so much keeps her distance
And I find her so harsh and proud
And unbending
That with my beseeching I cannot soften
Her resistance.

And so I shall approach another lady,
Who will grant me utter joy
Easily
And with a smile
Forever; this is no fickle love
And it will never grow less;
Indeed, the only true joy one can choose
Is the joy that lies in her.

Stanza 2:

Et ou porroit on querir
La joie qui amenrir
Ne puet ne finer
Et qui ne fait que doubler
En joieus plaisir?
Tout li mondes, sans mentir,
N'en porroit finer,
Sans la dame qui n'a per
Amer and chierir.

Mais ame ne puet perir
M'a dampnation venir
Qui son temps user
En li servir et loer
Vuet sans repentir;
Car qui siens, sans retollir,
Vuet tous demourer,
En gloire l'estuet regner
Qui ne puet faillir.

And where may one seek
This joy which never lessens
And never ends
But instead increases
In joy and pleasure?
No one, make no mistake,
Can achieve all this
Without loving and cherishing
That peerless lady.

But no soul may perish
Or be damned
If it spends its life
Serving and praising her
With constancy,
For whoever remains
Entirely hers
Will come to everlasting glory
Without fail.

Stanza 3:

C'est celle qui par ordonnance
De parole et par la puissance
D'Esperit Saint, qui ouvra en ce,
Et par devine pourveance
Faite au commandement dou Pere

Conçut vierge, sans violence,
Porta vierge, sans desplaisance,
Enfanta vierge, sans grevance,
Li Fil Dieu qui prist no semblance
Pour nous tous getter de misere.

Mais n'i ha point de difference,
Car cil trois font toute une essance,

Une vertus, une substance,
Un pooir, une sapience:
Ci ha trop merveilleus mistere.

Et si n'en fais nulle doubance,
Car c'est ma foy, c'est ma creance,
C'est ma vie et ma soustenance,
Par celle qui par excellance
Est fille au pere et dou fil mere.

Stanza 4:

Ces trois un a po de peinne,
Assez prouver puis:
Considere une fonteinne,
Le ruissel, la duis;
Ce sont trois, mais ces trois truis
Tout un, soit petite ou pleine,

Soit par pintes ou par muis:
Par tous ces conduis
Est eaue d'un goust certainne;

Tous seurs un suis.
He! roïne souverainne,
Qui seur toutes Luis
Plus cler que la tresmonteinne
Es obscures nuis,
Aussi l'iaue et li dous fruis
De vie prist char humeinne
Et fourme en tes costes vuis.
S'est bien hors d'annuis

She it is who, bidden
By word and the power
Of the Holy Ghost, which brought this about,
And by divine destiny
And the command of God the Father

Conceived while yet a virgin, inviolate;
She bore a child with no distress
And gave birth without pain
To the Son of God who became man
To save us in our misery.

But there is in fact no difference
Between these three,
for they are one in essence,
One in virtue, one in substance,
One in power, one in wisdom:
This is truly a great mystery.

But I do not in the least doubt this fact,
For this is my faith, this is my belief,
This is my very life and what sustains me,
Through her who by her excellence
Is daughter to the Father and Mother
to the Son.

These three with little difficulty
I can prove to be one:
Think of a fountain,
The stream flowing from it, and its source;
There are three things, but these three I find
Are really one, whether they be small or great,

Flowing by pints or gallons:
Through each of these points
Comes water of one taste alone:
This is quite certain,
And of this I am sure.
Ah! sovereign queen,
Who shines above all others,
Brighter than the guiding star
On dark nights,
Just like water, the sweet fruit
Of life took on human flesh
And human shape in your empty womb.
Indeed anyone is freed from trouble

Et de fortune mondeinne
Cils que tu conduis.

And worldly care
If he is led by you.

Stanza 5:

Et qui de ceste eaue prendroit
Et la mettroit
Par un temps froid
En un vaisel, elle prendroit
Et jalerait
Si qu'on feroit
De la glace une ymage;

And if you took this water
And put it
In cold weather
In some vessel, it would set
And freeze
So that you could
Shape the ice;

Mais ja son goust n'en perderait
Ne mueroit,
Qu'adès seroit
Eaue et nature d'eaue aroit,
Chascuns le voit
Et aperçoit
Par le temps yvernage.

But it would never lose its taste
Or change it,
For henceforward it would still be
Water and have the properties of water.
Anyone can see that
And observe it
In the wintertime.

L'iaue de vie ainsi venoit
Et descendoit
En tes flans froid,
Que Sains Esperis amenoit
Et conduisoit,
Dont il formoit
Le bel, le bon, le sage,

Just so the water of life came
And descended
Straight into your body,
Led by the Holy Ghost,
And channeled
To form
The fine, the good and wise man,

Qui Fils de Dieu le Pere estoit,
Qui consentoit
Et qui voloit
Que fourme et char humeinne aroit
Et qu'il morroit
Et getteroit
D'enfer l'umein lignage.

Who was the Son of God the Father,
Who consented
And wished
Him to have human form and flesh
And to die
And release
The human race from hell.

Stanza 6:

Mais ceste trinité
Est en eternité,
En possibilite
Et en toute autre chose,
En sens, en qualité,
En gloire, en verite,
Une seule unite
En Dieu le Pere enclose,

But this Trinity
Is everlasting
In its powers
And in all other things,
In sense, in quality,
In *glory*, in truth,
The single unity
In God the Father,

Qui par douce pite,
Par vraie humilite
Nous ha tous respite,
Quant en toy, douce rose,
Prist nostre humanite
Le Fils par amité.
Ce nous ha tous gette,
Dont Sathans ne repose.

Who through his kindness and pity
And true humility
Saved us all
When in you, sweet rose,
His Son took human shape
Out of compassion for us,
This gave us all deliverance
And confounded Satan.

Stanza 7:

De la duis le Pere nomme,
De la fonteinne le Fil
Qui vient dou Pere et fu homme,
Dou ruissel cler et gentil
Saint Esperit; c'est la somme.
Dou Pere et dou Fil vient il.
Ces siz sont trois, qui bien somme
A entendement subtil.

The source, then, **is** God the Father,
The fountain is the Son
Who comes from the Father and became man,
And the clear and gentle stream
Is the Holy Ghost, that is how it is;
It comes from both the Father and the Son.
These *six* are three, that works out
If one gives it careful thought.

Mais mieus vorroit estre a Romme
Ou outre mer en essil
Ou getes dedens la Somme,
En flun Jourdain ou en Nil
Que croire riens que
Nè puist croire sans peril;
Car tout vaut il une pomme
Sans Dieu? Je di que nenil.

But I would rather be in Rome
Or overseas in exile
Or thrown in the Somme,
Or the River Jordan or the Nile
Than believe anything that a worthy man
Should not believe without risking his soul;
For is anything worth a fig
Without God? Certainly not, I say!

Stanza 8:

Et pour ce di que cil troy
De no foy
Te firent droit fondement,
Quant li Filz se mist en toy.
Car j'en voy
Parfait le Vieil Testament
Et fait le Saint Sacrement.
Ce m'apprent
Que la duis de nostre loy
Y es et de no suavement
Proprement
La fonteinne, einssi le croy,

And so I say that these three
Made you
The true foundation of our faith,
When the Son entered into you.
For by this act I see
Fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament
And the Holy Sacrament accomplished.
This teaches me
That you are the source of our religion,
And of our salvation
Truly
You are the fountain, this I believe,

Ou chascuns boit qui ha soy,
sans anoy:

Where **all** those who are thirsty may drink
Freely;

Et qui pardurablement
Vuet vivre avuec le grant roy
Lave soy
En ruissel qui en descent.
C'est ta grace vraiment
Qui s'estent
A tous ceux qui en recoy
Pleurent et plaignent souvent.
Tendrement
De leurs pechies le desroy.

And whoever wishes to live
Everlasting with the King of Kings,
Let him be cleansed
In the stream which flows from there.
For that is, in truth, your grace
Which is extended
To all those who secretly
Weep and often lament
Bitterly
The folly of their sins.

Stanza 9:

Pour ce te pri,
Vierge, oy mon depri,
car po cri,
Po descri,
Po pleu les pechies

Qui sont en mi,
Vieil et endormi.

S'en fremi,
Car emmi
Mon cuer sont fichies

M'ame t'otri
Et doing sans detri,
Et te tri.
Seur tot tri.
Or soyés mes chies

Et aveuc **mi**
Contre l'anemi,
Car ami
Ne demi
N'ay en mes meschies.

For this reason I beg you,
Virgin, hear my prayer,
For little do I declare
Or decry
Or lament the sins

Which are in me
From long past, slumbering beneath the
surface,
And they make me shudder,
For they are rooted
In my very heart.

I offer you my soul
And give it up to you without hesitation,
And choose you
Above **all** things.
Now be my refuge

And be with me
Against the devil,
For I have no friend
Nor any help
In my misery.

Stanza 10:

Mais de tel confort
Com de plourer fort
Petit me confort,
Vierge, se ne me fais fort
Qu'apaiserai l'ire
De ton Fil, qu'au fort
Homs n'a si grant tort
Qui n'en soit ressort,

But such comfort
As weeping greatly
Brings me little relief,
Virgin, if you do not assure me
That you will calm the anger
Of your Son, so that in the end
Man can commit no sin so great
That it may not be forgiven,

Quar a toy vie ne mort
Ne scet escondire

Las! Or sui au port
De tout desconfort,
Quant mes maus recort;
Et si fort me desconfort
Que ne le puis dire,
Car pechies me mort;
Anemies ne dort,
Eins fait son effort
Qu'en livre de mort, moy mort,
Me puist faire escrire.

Stanza 11:

He! fonteinne de concorde,
La duis de misericorde,
Ruissaus qui leve econcorde
Meins pecheurs, fluns de douçour,
Oy ma clamour:

Fais que pechies ne me morde,
Si qu'anemis ne m'encorde
De ses craus et de sa corde,
Car en toy sont tuit mi tour
Et me retour.
Fais tant que de li m'estorde;
Car il n'a maison ne borde
Qui vils, sale, obscure et orde
Ne soit, pleine de puour
Et de laidour,

Et mes cuers vuet et t'acorde
Que ton dous salut recorde,
Tant que de li naisse et sorde
Une fonteinne de plour
Et de tristour

Stanza 12:

Pour laver et nettoier
En telle maniere
Les vices qui de pechier
Me donnent matiere.
Vierge, que ta grace acquiere,
Si que trebuchier
Ne me puist en sa chaudiere

For He cannot deny you
Power over life and death.

Alas! Now I am prey
To all kinds of torment
When I recall my sins:
And this causes me more distress
Than I can say
For sin is gnawing at me;
The devil does not sleep
But rather attempts
To write me into his book of death
When my life has ended.

Ah! Fountain of harmony,
Source of mercy,
Stream which raises and
Reconciles many a sinner, gentle river,
Hear my lament:

Make it so that sin does not gnaw at me,
And the devil cannot entangle me
With his hooks and his rope,
For in you lies all my fate
And destiny.
Make it so that I escape his clutches;
For he has no house or hovel
Which is not vile, dirty, dark and horrid,
Full of stench
And nastiness,

And my heart desires and consorts
To recall your saving grace,
So great that from me wells and springs
A fountain of tears
And grief

To wash and cleanse
In this way
The vices which
Give me cause to sin.
Virgin, may I gain your grace,
So that Satan may not topple me
Into his cauldron

Sathans n'accrochier.

Encor te vueil supplier,
Roïne et lumiere
Des angles, qu'a ton Fil chier
Ta douceur requiere
Que son ire ne nous fiere
Au jour darrenier,
Et la joie qu'est entiere
Nous vueille ottroier.

Nor drag me there.

Again I wish to beg you,
Queen and light
Of angels, that in your gentleness
You ask your dear Son
Not to strike us down in anger
On judgement day,
But to grant us
Everlasting bliss.

*Original Middle French poetry by Guillaume de Machaut with Hillier English translation. [Guillaume de Machaut, "Le Lay de la fonteinne," The Hilliard Ensemble, Paul Hillier, dir. (London: Hyperion Records Ltd., 1989) CDA66358.]

Appendix B

*LE LAY DE LA FONTEINNE A POETIC TRANSLATION

Stanza 1: I never cease praying
To my lovely lady.
Lighten my troubles, I plead,
But precious she be,
Harsh and proud,
Unbending,
Implorations ne'er
Her stance recede.

Thus, shall I approach another?
She, who of pleasure be?
Unfaltering,
Replete with glee,
Endlessly fickle free,
Fervent,
I do choose thee,
O Joy everlasting.

Stanza 2: And where I ask might one seek
Happiness that never waxes
Or wanes,
But increases
Ecstasy?
All the world, it is true,
Could not dwell
Amidst loving tenderness
In the absence
Of this peerless *dame*.

Let the soul be free
Of deathly damnation,
Passing time,
Serving and praising thee.
O Impassioned desire.
For he who revels
In your breast
Shall enter the kingdom
Of eternal glory.

Stanza 3: And she,
By order of the holy word
And the power of the Holy Spirit
Revealed
By divine destiny
The Father's command.

A virgin, in peace,
Bore a child,
Devoid of distress,
And birthed a babe,
Torment free.
The Son of God,
A man,
A Savior.

But distinguish not,
For these three are One.
One force,
One source,
One power,
One wisdom.
Marvelous mystery!

And doubt not,
My faith,
My belief,
My life,
My sustenance,
The epitome of
The obedient daughter--
The Virgin Mother.

Stanza 4: Three-
In-One.
A fountain flows
Into a stream,
A source.
The Trinity unfolds
In unison.

Water divine,
Much or little,
From all places,
Tastes the same.

Ah, Sovereign Queen!

Brilliant,
Shining star,
Brighten the night,
Miraculous water,
Sweet and transforming
Flesh in your vessel void,
Free us from worry!

Stanza 5: Drink this water
In chilly climate.
Watch it freeze,
And imagine
An image floating on the ice.

Water divine
Yet tastes the same,
Unchanging,
Natural
Perception.
A phenomenon
In the frigid frost.

O Water of Life,
Your direct descent
Into his cold loins,
Hath been guided
By the Holy Spirit
To form
The good, the wise and the beautiful.

The Son of God the Father
Consented
To live in the flesh
And to die,
Unleashing
Humanity from Hell.

Stanza 6: Trinity eternal,
Omnipotent omnipresence,
Reasoned substance,
Glorious truth,
The One
In God the Father.

Mercy
And humility
Pardoned all
When in you, gentle flower,
Your beneficent Son
Accepted our humanity,
Delivered us
And unsettled Satan.

Stanza 7: Discover the Father, the source,
And the Son, the fountain,
Who walks on earth,
The offspring of mercy,
Hand in hand with the stream,
The Holy Spirit,
Radiating aura
Of the compassionate two.
Thus, *six* in three proclaim
The sublimely crafted lesson.

Better in Rome,
Exiled,
Or flung into the Somme,
The Jordan or Nile
Than give credence
To fearful inanity.
For what is life without God?
Nothing.

Stanza 8: Hear the refrain, "Three in faith,"
The concept
In the womb.
And perfectly I perceive
The Old Testament prophecies fulfilled,
The Holy Sacrament enacted,
The great teachers
Of law,
Salvation,
You,
The One true fountain.

Stanza 9: O Virgin, hear my prayer,
My imploration,
For little do I cry,
Or beg,

Or weep for sins
In me.

Hiding,
Latent,
In my pierced heart.
I offer up my soul to you
This day,
Completely.
I do choose thee,
My refuge.

Secure me from harm.
Neither friend,
Nor aid
Have I in misery.

Stanza 10: Aid in weeping
Reassures not.
Protect me, dear Virgin,
Subdue your Son's wrath,
And in the Judgement hour,
Save us,
Sinners all.
O Lady of Life.

Misery!
Torment and sorrow
Cripple me.
I cannot speak!
Sin destroys in *perpetuum*,
The enemy slumbers not,
But works
To trace my name
In the Book of Death.

Stanza 11: Conciliatory fountain,
Compassionate source,
Uplifting stream,
Sinners,
Sweet, sweet river,
Listen ...

Neither sin annihilate,
Nor enemy encumber me
With hooks and twine

To keep me from you,
My passage,
My Salvation.

Free me from these nettings.
The devil wanders homeless
In vile, dirty, dank and infectious,
Stinking
Ugliness.

Heart of desire
Search above
Your salutary grace,
The source,
The tearful fountain of affliction.

Stanza 12: Cleanse away
Vice and Sin.
Lead me not astray
But nestle me in your bosom,
Lest I stumble,
Or be drawn
Into Satan's pitiless pot.

And repeatedly
I implore thee,
Luminous Queen,
The angelic host,
Request your kind and precious Son
Pardon us
On Judgement Day,
That we may
Live and breathe with you.

O Perfect bliss

*I have translated Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne" for two reasons: First, Professor Ludlow Hallman in the University of Maine Music Department at Orono requested an original translation to supplement the literal Hilliard CD version. Second, I wished to study the words and syntax of the original Middle French poetry to enhance my own comprehension of Machaut's verse and to provide for the reader of this thesis a translation that communicates the aesthetic and metaphysical essence of courtly and sacred love in fourteenth-century France.

Appendix C

LE LAY DE LA FONTEINNE MUSICAL MANUSCRIPT

1a. Je ne ces . se de pri . er a ma da . me chie . re que mes mausvueille a . li . gier . Mais si se tient chie .
 1b. S'en vueil une autre a . coin . tier qui joi . e ple . nie . re m'o . tri . e . ra de li . gier et a bon . ne chie .

re et tar ? : la truis dure et fie . re , sanz a . mol . li . er , qu'adou . cir de ma pri . e . re ne puis son dan . gier .
 re , sans fin . sanz a . mour le . gie . re , sanz a . me . nuis . sier ; ne joy . e qu'a li s'a . fie . re ne puet homs tri . er .

I. Chace

2a. Et ou por . roit on que . rir ?
 2a. Et ou por . roit on que . rir la joi . e qui a . men . rir ne puet ne fi . ner

II.

2a. Et ou por . roit on que . rir la joi . e qui a . men . rir
 2b. Mais a . me ne puet pe . rir n'a dam . pna . ti . on ve . nir

III.

la joi . e qui a . men . rir ne puet ne fi . ner et qui ne fait que dou .
 n'a dam . pna . ti . on ve . nir qui son temps u . ser en li ser . vir et lo .

et qui ne fait que dou . bler en joi . eus plai . sir ?
 en li ser . vir et lo . er vuet sans re . pen . tu ,

ne puet ne fi.ner et qui ne fait que dou. bler en. joi.eus plai. sir?
 qui son temps u. ser en li ser.vir et lo. er vuet sans re. pen. tir;
 bler en joi.eus plai.sir? Tous li mon.des, sans men.tir,
 er vuet sans re- pen-tir; car qui siens,sans re. tol.lir,
 Tous li mon.des, sans men.tir, n'en por.roit fi. ner, sans la da.me qui n'aper
 car qui siens,sans re. tol.lir, vuet tous de.mou.rer, en gloi.re l'e.stuet re-gner

36
 Taus li mon.des, sans men.tir, n'en por.roit fi.
 car qui siens,sans re. tol.lir, vuet tous de.mou.
 n'en por.roit fi. ner, sans la da.me qui n'a per
 vuet tous de.mou.rer, en gloi.re l'e.stuet re-gner a.
 qui
 a- mer et chie. rir. 2b. Mais a -
 qui ne puet fail. lir.

39 42
 ner, sans la da.me qui n'a per a. mer et chie. rir.
 rer, en gloi re l'e.stuet re-gner qui ne puet fail. lir.
 mer et chie. rir. 2b. Mais a - me ne puet pe. rir
 ne puet fail. lir.
 me ne puet pe. rir n'a damp.na.ti.on ve.nir qui son temps u. ser

45 48
 3a. C'est cel.le qui par or.don.nan.ce de pa.role et par la puis.san.ce d'E.spe.rit Saint,qui ou.vra
 con. cut vier.ge,sanz vi.o. len.ce, por.ta vier.ge, sanz des.plai.san.ce, en.fan.ta vier.ge,sanz gre.
 3b. Mais n'i ha point de dif.fe.ren.ce, car cil trois font toute une es.san.ce, u.ne ver.tus, u.ne sub.
 Et si n'en fais nul.le dou.btan.ce, car c'est ma foy, c'est ma cre.an.ce, c'est ma vie et ma sou.ste

51 54 57 62
 en ce, et par de.vi.ne pour.ve.an.ce faite au com.man.de.ment dou Pe.re,
 van.ce, li Fil Dieu qui prist no.sem.blan.ce pour nous get.ter de mi. se.re.
 stan.ce, un po.oir, u.ne sa.pi.en.ce: ci ha trop mer.vil.leus mi.ste.re.
 nan.ce, par cel.le qui par ex.cel.lan.ce est fille au pere et dou fil me.re.

II.

4a. Ces trois un a po de pei.ne, as.sez prou.ver puis: con . si . dere u . ne fon . tein . ne,

Chace

III.

4a. Ces trois un a po de pei.ne, as.sez prou.ver puis: con . si .
 4b. He ro . y . ne sou . ve . rein . ne, quiseur tou . tes luis plus cler

puis: con . si . dere u . ne fon . tein . ne, le ruis . sel . la dui;
 luis plus cler que la tres . mon . tein . ne es ob . scu . res nuis,

le ruis . sel, la dui; ce sont trois, mais ces trois truis tout
 es ob . scu . res nuis, aus . si l'aue et li dous fruis de

69

dere u . ne fon . tein . ne, le ruis . sel, la dui; ce sont trois.
 que la tres . mon . tein . ne es ob . scu . res nuis, aus . si l'aue

ce sont trois, mais ces trois truis tout un, soit
 aus . si l'aue et li dous fruis de vi . e

un, soit pe . tite ou plein . ne, soit par pin . tes ou par muis:
 vi . e prist char hu . mein . ne et fourme en tes co . stes vuis.

75

mais ces trois truis taut un, soit pe . tite ou plein .
 et li dous fruis de vi . e prist char hu . mein .

pe . tite ou plein . ne, soit par pin . tes ou par muis: par tous ces conduis
 prist char hu . mein . ne et fourme: en tes co . stes vuis. S'est bien hors d'a.nuis

par tous ces conduis esteau.e **Bun** goust cer . tein . ne; tous se.urs en suis.
 S'est bien hors d'a.nuis et de for . tu . ne mon . dein . ne cils que tu con . dui.

ne, soit par pin - te: ou par muis: par tous ces con. duis
ne et fourme en tes co - stes vuis. S'est bien hors d'a. nuis

est eau. e d'un goust cer - tein - ne; tous se. urs en suis.
et de for - tu - ne mon - dein - ne cils que tu con - duis.

4b. He! ro. y . ne . sou - ve - rein-ne, qui seur tou. tes

est eau. e d'un goust cer tein - ne; tous se. urs en suis.
et de for - tu - ne mon - dein - ne cils que tu con - duis.

4b. He! ro. y . ne sou - ve - rein-ne, qui seur tou. tes

iuis plus cler que la tres - mon - tein ne

5a. Et qui de ceste eau . e pren.droit et la mettroit par un temps froit en un vais.sel. el .
mais ja son goust n'en per-de . roit ne mu-e . roit, qu'a . des se . roit eaue et na . tu . re .
5b. L'iau . e de vie ein - si ve . noit et de . scendoit en tes flans droit, que Sains E . spe . ris
qui Fils de Dieu le Pere e . stoit, qui con.sen.toit et qui vo - loit que fourme et char hu .

le pren.droit et ja . le . roit, si qu'on fe . roit de la glace une y . ma - ge;
d'eaue a . roit. Chascuns le voit et a . per - coit par le temps y . ver - na . ge.
a . me . noit et con . dui . soit, dont il for - moit le bel, le bon, le sa - ge, gca . ge.
meinne a . roit et qu'il mor.roit et get - te . roit d'en . fer l'u mein li .

I. Chace

6a. Mais ce ste tri - ni - te est en e . ter . ni . te. en pos . si . bi . li . te

II.

6a. Mais ce . ste tri - ni - te est

III.

6a. Mais ce . ste tri - ni - te est en e . ter . ni . te,
6b. Qui par dou - ce pi - te, par vraie hu . mi . li . te

en e . ter . ni . te, en pos . si . bi . li . te et
vraie hu . mi . li . te nous ha tous re . spi . ti, quant

et en toute au - tre tho - se, en sens, en qua .
quant en toy, dou - ce ro - se, prist nostre hu . ma .

en pos - si - bi - li - te et quant en toute au - tre
nous ha tous re-spi - té, en toy, dou - ce

en toute au - tre cho - se, en sens, en qua - li - te, en gloire, en
en toy, dou - ce ro - se, prist nostre hu - ma - ni - te li Fils par

li - te, en gloire, en ve - ri - te, u - ne seu le
ni - te li Fils par a - mi - te. Ce nous ha

108 cho - se, en sens, en qua li - te, en gloire, en ve - ri - te, u - ne
ro - se, prist nostre hu - ma ni - te li Fils par a - mi - te. Ce nous

ve - ri - te, u - re seu - le u - ni - te en
a - mi - te. Ce nous ha tous get - té, dont

u - ni - te en dont Dieu le Pere en . clo . se 6b. Qui par dou -
tous get - té, dont Sa - thans ne re - po . se.

114 seu - le u - ni - te en dont Dieu le Pere en . clo . se.
ha tous get - té, dont Sa - thans ne re - po . se.

Dieu le Pere en clo . se. 6b. Qui par dou - ce pi - te, par

ce pi - te, par vraie hu . mi . li - te nous ha tous re-spi - ti.,

120 7a. De la dui - le Pe - re nom . me, de la fon . tein - ne le Fil qui vient
7b. Mais mieus vor - roit estre a Rom . me ou ou - tre mer en es - sil ou ge .

123 dou - Pere et fu hom . me, dou rui . sel cler et gen - til Saint E . spe . rit; c'est la som . me. Dou Pere
tes de . dens la Som . me, en flun Jour . dain ou en Nil que croi . re riens que pre . dom . me ne puist

129 et dou Nil vient il. Ces siz sont trois, qui bien som . me a en - ten - de - ment sou - stil.
croi . re sans pe - ril; car tout vaut il . u . he pom . me sans Dieu? Je di que nen - nil.

135

I. Chace

8a. Et pour ce di que cil troy de no foy te fi - rent droit fon.de.ment, quant li

138

II.

8a. Et pour ce di que cil troy de no foy te fi - rent droit fon.de.ment, quant li

141

III.

pour ce di que cil troy de no foy te fi - rent droit fon.de.ment, quant li Filz se mist en toy

cha. scuns boit qui ha soy, sans a - noy; et qui par. du ra.ble.ment vuet vivre a.veuc le grant roy

Car j'en voy parfait ie Viel Te. sta. ment l a - ve soy en ruis. sel qui en de. scent.

144

rent droit fon.de.ment, quant li Filz se mist en toy. Car

par. du ra.ble.ment vuet vivre a.veuc le grantroy l a .

Car j'en voy parfait ie Viel Te. sta. ment et fait le

la. ve soy en ruis. sel qui en de. scent. C'est ta gra .

et fait le Saint Sa. cre. ment. Ce ma. prent que la

C'est ta gra. ce vrai.e. ment qui se. stent a tous

150

j'en voy parfait le Viel Te. sta. ment et fait le Saint Sa. cre. ment.

ve soy en ruis. sel qui en de. scent. C'est ta gra. ce vrai.e. ment

saint Sa. cre. ment. Ce ma. prent que la d'uis de no. streloy

ce vrai.e. ment qui se. stent a tous ceus qui en re. coy

auis de no. streloy yes et de no sau. ve. ment pro. pre. ment la fon.

ceus qui en re. coy pleu. rent et plain. gnent sou. vent. Ten. dre. ment de leurs

153

Ce ma. prent que la d'uis de no. streloy yes et de no

qui se. stent a tous ceus qui en re. coy pleu. rent et plain.

yes et de no sau. ve. ment pro. pre. ment la fon. teinne, einsi le croy,

pleu. rent et plain. gnent sou. vent. Ten. dre. ment de leurs pe. chies le des. roy.

teinne, einsi le croy, 8b. ou cha. scuns boit qui ha soy, sans a. noy; et qui

pe. chies le des. roy.

sau - ve - ment pro - pre - ment la fon - teinne, eins - si le croy,
guent sou - vent. Ten - dre - ment de leurs pe - chies le des - roy.

8b. ou cha - scuns boit qui ha soy, a - noy; et qui
par - du - ra - ble - ment vuet vivre a - veuc le grant roy

159 162 165 12
9a. Pour ce te pri, Vierge, oy mon de - pri, car po cri, po des - cri, po pleur les pe - chies
qui sont en **mi**, viel et en - dor - **mi**. S'en fre - **mi**, car **em mi** mon cuer sont fi - chies.
9b. M'a - me t'o - tri et doings sans de - tri, et te tri seur tout tri. Or **soy** - es mes chies
et a - veuc **mi** con - tre l'a - ne - **mi**, car a - mi ne de - **mi** day en mes mes - chies.

166 171
I. Chace
10a. Mais de tel con - fort com de plou - rer fort pe - tit me confort, Vier - ge, se ne me fais

III. 174 177
10a. Mais de tel con - fort com de plou - rer fort pe - tit me confort, Vier - ge, se
10b. Las! or sui au port de tout des - con - fort, quant mes maus re - cort; et si fort
pe - tit me confort, Vierge, se ne me fais fort qu'a - pai - se -
quant mes maus re - cort; et si fort me des - con - fort que ne le
fort qu'a - pai - se - ras l'i - re de ton Fil, que au fort homs da
fort que ne le puis di - re, car pe - chies me mort; a - ne -

180
ne me fais fort qu'a - pai - se - ras l'i - re
me des - con - fort que ne le puis di - re,
ras l'i - re de ton Fil, que au fort homs na si grant tort
puis di - re, car pe - chies me mort; a - ne - mis ne dort,
si grant tort qui n'en soit res - sort, quar a toy
mis ne dort, eins fait son ef - fort qu'en li - vre

de ton Fil, que au fort homs n'a si grant tort qui n'en soit
car pe . chies me mort; a . ne . mis ne dort, eins fait son
qui n'en soit res . sort, quar a toy e ne
eins fait son ef . fort qu'en li . vre de mort, moy
vi . e ne mort ne- scet e . scondi . re. 10b. Las! or
de mort, moy mort, me puist faire e . scri . re.

res . sort, quar a toy vi . e ne mort ne scet e . scondi . re.
ef . fort qu'en li . me de mort, moy mort, me puist faire e . scri . re.
mort ne scet e . scondi . re. 10b. Las! or sui au port de tout des . con . fort,
mort, me puist faire e . scri . re.
sui au port de tout des . con . fort, quant mes maus re . cort; et si fort me des . con .

11a. He! fon . tein . ne de con . cor . de, la duis de mi . se . ri . cor . de, ruis . siaus
fais que pe . chies ne me mor . de, si qu'a . ne . mis ne m'en . cor . de de ses
11b. Fai tant que de li m'e . stor . de; car il n'a mai . son ne bor . de qui vils,
et mes cuers vuet et t'a . cor . de que ton dous sa . lut re . cor . de, tant que
qui leve a con . cor . de meins pe . cheurs, fluns de dou . cour, oy ma cla . mour:
craus et de sa cor . de, c2r en toy sont tuit mi tour et mi re . tour.
sale, ob . scure et or . de ne soit, plein . ne de pu . our et de lai . dour,
de li naisse et sor . de u . ne fon . tein . ne de plour et de tri . stour,

I. Chace 207 II. 210
12a. pour la . ver et net . toi . er
12a. pour la . ver et net . toi . er en tel . le ma . nie . re

III. 213
12a. pour la . ver et net . toi . er en tel . le ma .
12b. En cor te vueil sup . pli . er, ro . yne et lu .
en tel . le ma . nie . re les vi . ces qui de pe .
ro . yne et lu . mie . re des an . gles, qu'a ton Fil
les vi . ces qui de pe . chier me don . nent ma . tie . re.
des an . gles, qu'a ton Fil chier ta dou . ceur re . quie . re

nie . re les vi . ces qui de pe . chier me don .
 mie . re des an . gles, qu'à ton Fil chier ta dou .
 chier me don . nent ma . tie . re. Vier . ge, que ta grace ac .
 chier ta dou . ceur re . quie . re que son i . re ne nous
 vier . ge, que ta grace ac . quie . re, si que tre . bu . chier
 que son i . re ne nous fie . re au jour dar . re . nier,

nent ma . tie . re. Vier . ge, que ta grace ac . quie . re, si
 ceur re . quie . re que son i . re ne nous fie . re au
 quie . re, si que tre . bu . chier ne me puist
 fie . re au jour dar . re . nier, et la joi .
 ne me puist en sa chaudie . re Sa . thans n'ac . cro . chier. 12b. En . cor te
 et la joi . e qu'est en . tie . re nous vueille ot . troi . er.

que tie . bu . chier ne me puist en sa chaudie . re Sa . thans n'ac . cro . chier. 225
 jour dar . re . nier, et la joi . e qu'est en . tie . re nous vueille ot . troi . er.
 en sa chaudie . re Sa . thans n'ac . cro . chier. 12b. En . cor te vueil sup . pli . er,
 e qu'est en . tie . re nous vueille ot . troi . er.
 vueil sup . pli . er, ro . yne et lu . mi . re 225

Appendix D

*LE LAY DE LA FONTEINNE A DANCE INTERPRETATION

Choreography, a complex and intriguing endeavor—

Dance, its means to expression, relies upon motion, shapes in space, gesture and rhythm to evoke sensation, to develop an ambiance. The dancer/choreographer aims to synthesize arm, leg and head movements in fluid forms that depict a tableau, a tangible aura. Throughout history, dance has combined separate entities, facial expressions and body extensions to produce a unified statement. This physical mode of communication merges with music, an inspirational medium that supports and transforms motion. The choreographer's task remains to communicate this meaningful link between movement and music.

Should an innovator juxtapose physical and auditory impressions, or should she integrate similar while distinct forms in a fluent work of art? The opportunity to choreograph a dance for ballet class allowed this dancer to explore form, shape, rhythm, unity and variety, independent of, and in harmony with, the selected musical accompaniment--Guillaume de Machaut's "Le Lay de la fonteinne." The medieval context that underscores the lai's development provides one of several ties to an evolving composition. While the notes assert tradition and innovation, "Ars antiqua" and "Ars nova," the poetry merges religious reverence with secular culture. Courtly love and the cult of the Virgin meet in poetic verse and musical reticence. A lovely lady and the

Madonna hover above a distressed suitor and proclaim noble superiority. Machaut's "Lay de la fonteinne," an alternating monophonic and polyphonic song, reiterates the timeless poetic message where the human and the spiritual meet in medieval harmonic tones and rhythmic motifs.

In conceiving the dance, I attempted to blend a courtly aristocratic aura with religious adoration by using traditional and modern dance techniques. Performed in silence, the opening and closing sections denote regality and French "douceur." The lovely lady, to whom an ardent lover speaks, remains a distant, admirable beauty. The Virgin of ineffable qualities espouses virtuous warmth and without hesitation accepts the supplicant's attentions.

Initial shapes recall medieval dance, the rudimentary stages of contemporary ballet. Simple walking movements, graceful arms and facial gestures interrelate to effect prominent stature. Three positions—first, second, and fifth—depict evolution: the passage from old to new. Continuously flowing arms introduce the courtly and sacred qualities of reverence, nobility, virtue and beauty. A forward turning "attitude," "port de bras" and "cambré" reflect an aristocratic and devotional countenance. The composition begins and ends in quietude. Love and God communicate at a profound level. Words encumber meaning. Movement suffices to reveal refined emotional intensity.

While the dance technique displays historical and textual designs in medieval music, dance and culture, the entire choreographed composition represents the overall form of Machaut's "Lay de la fonteinne." The dance includes an opening, A and B sections, and a closing in imitation of the

opening section. The lay begins and ends with the same music. The remaining stanzas (2-11) alternate monophonic and three-voice canon as flowing and disjointed phrases continue to disclose melodic and rhythmic details presented in the first stanza.

The dance imitates these many structural and phrasal elements. Stanzas 1 and 2 are divided into couplets, one means by which the lay asserts poetic and musical distinction within a unified frame. Repeated shapes are identified with rhythmic motifs throughout the dance. Regal “arabesques” and aristocratic “attitudes” provide the motivic foundation that supports the entire composition. Minor modifications, alternations right to left, a “penche” in lieu of an “arabesque,” front and back “attitudes,” reaffirm Machaut’s ever-present while transforming rhythmic modes.

Section A, the “Adagio,” moves to a sprightly, although still noble “Allegro.” This quick-paced section combines traditional balletic and modern dance techniques, reminiscent of Machaut’s “Ars antiqua” and “Ars nova” styles. The merging of classical and modern dance also reflects the medieval and twentieth-century musical techniques discovered in fourteenth-century French song. The “Allegro”’s first couplet elaborates upon the preceding “Adagio.” The second couplet terminates the body of the composition in a concentric twirling motion. Only a few intervening “pas de chat,” representative of musical hockets, disrupt the accelerating motivic interchange that ultimately ceases on a consonant fifth. Poised and serene in this closed

position, the dancer completes the cycle: The three-in-One Trinity, the circle of life in three positions — first, second and fifth.

*This choreographic endeavor permitted one dancer, a liberal studies student, to imagine the meeting place between the physical and the ethereal. Dance and music interact to evoke not only musical complexity and social mores but also art's powerful expression at each level of human awareness: the physical, the emotional and the spiritual. I thank you for the opportunity to share this unique dance with you.

Appendix E

*MACHAUT'S OEUVRE

Literary Works

Prologue

Narrative Dits

Le Dit du Vergier
Le Dit dou Lion
Le Livre du Voir dit
Le Dit de la Rose
Le Dit du cheval
Le Dit de la Marguerite

Rondeaux

Blanche com lys
Ce qui soustient moy
Douce Dame, quant vers vous
Gentils cuers, souveingne
Se vos courrous me dure
Se li espoirs, qui maint en moy
Qui sert se faire vuet **a** point
Sans cuer, dolens
Se par amours n'amiez autrui
Pour Dieu, Dame
Douce Dame, tant com vivray

Ballades

Se ne suy pas de tel valour
Se pour ce muir qu'amours
Onques mes cuers ne senti se dure dolour
Plourez, Dames, plourez
Trop est crueux li maulz
Dame, vous aim de **fin**
Riches d'amour et mendiants
Je puis trop bien ma Dame
Las! Amours me soloit estre douce
Se vos regars, douce amie
Douce, plaisant, simple et sage
On ne peut rien savoir
Ballade contre la goutte
Ballade sur la liberalite des seigneurs
Ballades faites par le frere d'Agnès de Navarre et par Machault

Complaintes

Complainte au Roi
Complainte a Henry

Poesies

Le Jugement du Roi de Navarre
Le Remede de fortune
Le Confort d'ami

Correspondances

de Machaut et de sa dame par amour

Musical Works

Mass

Messe de Nostre Dame

Double Hocket

Hoquetus David

Motets

1. Quant en moy/Amour et biaute/Amara valde
2. Tous corps/De souspirant cuer/Suspiro
3. He, Mors, com tu es haïe/Fine Amour, qui me vint navrer/
Quare non sum mortuus
4. De Bon Espoir/Puis que la douce/Speravi
5. Aucune gent/Qui plus aime/Fiat voluntas tua
6. S'il estoit nulz/S'amours tous/Et gaudebit cor vestrum
7. J'ay tant mon cuer/Lasse! je sui en aventure/Ego moriar pro te
8. Qui es promesses de Fortune/Ha, Fortune! trop suis mis loing/
Et non est qui adjuvet
9. Fons tocius superbie/O livoris feritas/Fera pessima
10. Hareu, hareu, le feu/Helas, ou sera/Obediens usque ad mortem
11. Dame, je sui cilz/Fins cuers doulz/[tenor]
12. Helas! pour quoy/Corde mesto/Libera me
13. Tant doucement m'ont attrait/Eins que ma dame/Ruina
14. Maugre mon cuer/De ma douleur/Quia amore langueo
15. Amours qui ha le pouvoir/Faus Samblant/Vidi Dominum
16. Lasse! Comment oubliery/Se j'aim mon loyal ami/
Pour quoy me bat mes maris?
17. Quant vraie amour/O series summe rata/Super omnes speciosa
18. Bone pastor Guillerme/Bone pastor qui pastores/[tenor]

19. Martyrum gemma latria/Diligenter inquiramus/A Christo honoratus
20. Trop plus est bele/Biaute paree/Je ne sui mie
21. Christe qui lux es/Veni Creator Spiritus/Tribulatio proxima
22. Tu qui gregem/Plange, regni/Apprehende arma et scutum et exurge
23. Felix virgo/Inviolata genitrix/Ad te suspiramus

Ballades

1. S'amours ne fait
2. Helas, tant ay dolour
3. On ne porroit penser
4. Biaute qui toutes autres pere
5. Riches d'amour et mendiens
6. Doulz amis, oy mon compleint
7. J'aim mieus languir
8. De desconfort, de martyre amoureux
9. Dame, ne regardes pas
10. Ne penses pas, dame, que je recroie
11. N'en fait n'en dit
12. Pour ce que tous mes chans fais
13. Esperance qui masseure
14. Je ne cuit pas qu'onques
15. Se je me pleing, je n'en puis mais
16. Dame, comment qu'amez de vous
17. Sanz cuer/Amis, dolens/Dame, par vous
18. De petit po, de nient volente
19. Amours me fait desirer
20. Je sui aussi com cilz
21. Se quanque amours
22. Il m'est avis qu'il n'est dons de Nature
23. De Fortune me doy pleindre
24. Tres douce dame que j'aour
25. Honte, paour, doubance
26. Donnez, signeurs
27. Une vipere en cuer
28. Je puis trop bien ma dame comparer
29. De triste cuer/Quant vrais amans/Certes, je di
30. Pas de tor en thies pais
31. De toutes flours
32. Plourez, dames
33. Nes que on porroit
34. Quant Theseus/Ne quier veoir
35. Gais et jolis
36. Se pour ce muir
37. Dame, se vous m'estés lointeinne
38. Phyton, le mervilleus serpent
39. Mes esperis se combat
40. Ma chiere dame, a vous
41. En amer a douce vie
42. Dame de qui toute ma joie vient

Rondeaux

1. Doulz viaire gracieus
2. Helas, pour quoy se demente
3. Merci vous pri
4. Sans cuer, dolens
5. Quant j'ay l'espart
6. Cinc, un, treze
7. Se vous n'estes
8. Vo doulz resgars
9. Tant doucement me sens emprisonnés
10. Rose, liz
11. Comment puet on mieus
12. Ce qui soustient
13. Dame, se vous n'avez aperceu
14. Ma fin est mon commencement
15. Certes mon oeuil
16. Dix et sept, cinc
17. Puis qu'en oubli
18. Quant ma dame les maus
19. Douce dame, tant com vivray
20. Quant je ne voy ma dame
21. Dame, mon cuer en vous remaint

Virelais

1. He, dame de vaillance
2. Loyaute veil tous jours
3. Aymi, dame de valour
4. Douce dame jolie
5. Comment qu'a moy lonteinne
6. Se ma dame m'a guerpy
7. Puis que ma dolour agree
8. Dou mal qui m'a longuement
9. Dame, je veil endurer
10. De bonte, de valour
11. He, dame de valour que j'aim
12. Dame a qui m'ottri
13. Quant je sui mis au retour
14. J'aim sans penser laidure
15. Se mesdisans en acort
16. C'est force, faire le veil
17. Dame, vostre doulz viaire
18. Helas, et comment aroie
19. Dieus, Biaute, Douceur
20. Se d'amer me repentoie
21. Je vivroie liement
22. Foy porter, honneur garder
23. Tres bonne et belle, **mi** oueil

24. En mon cuer a un descort
25. Tuit **mi** penser sont
26. Mors sui se je ne vous voy
27. Liement me deport par samblant
28. Plus dure qu'un dyamant
29. Dame, mon cuer emportes
30. Se je souspir profondement
31. Moult sui de bonne heure nee
32. De tout sui si confortee
33. Dame, a vous sans retollir

Lais

6. Loyaute que point ne delay
7. J'aim la flour de valour
8. Pour ce qu'on puist
9. Nuls ne doit avoir merveille (Lay no. 5)
10. Par trois raisons me vueil deffendre (Lay no. 6)
11. Amours doucement me tente (Lay no. 7)
12. Amis, t'amour me contreint ('Laydes dames' – Lay no. 10)
13. Un mortel lay vueil commencier ('Laymortel' – Lay no. 12)
14. Ne say comment commencier ('Layde l'ymage' – Lay no. 14)
15. Contre ce doulz mois de may ('Layde Nostre Dame' – Lay no. 15)
16. Je ne cesse de prier ('Layde la fonteinne' – Lay no. 16)
17. S'onques douleureusement ("Layde confort' – Lay no. 17)
18. Longuement me sui tenus ('Layde Bonne Esperance' – Lay no. 18)
19. Malgre Fortune et son tour ('Layde plour' no. 1 – Lay no. 19)
20. Pour vivre joliment ('Layde la rose' – Lay no. 21)
21. Qui bien aime, a tart oublie ('Layde plour' no. 2 – Lay no. 22)
22. Pour ce que plus proprement ('Layde consolation' – Lay no. 23)
23. En demantant et lamentant (Lay no. 24)
24. Qui n'aroit autre deport ('Layde Bon Espoir')

Complainte

Tels rit au main qui au soir

Chanson Royal

Joie, plaisence et douce norriture

*Literary and musical works:

Guillaume de Machault, Oeuvres, ed. Prosper Tarbé (Geneve: Slatkine Reprints, 1977).

Stanley Sadie, ed., "Guillaume de Machaut," The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians 15 (2001)488-9.

Appendix F

CHAPTER 6 TABLES

F. 1. *Stanza Configuration

<u>Stanza</u>	<u>Number of Lines</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1	16	8 + 8
2	18	9 + 9
3	20	5 + 5 + 5 + 5
4	20	6 + 14
5	28	7 + 7 + 7 + 7
6	16	8 + 8
7	16	8 + 8
8	24	12 + 12
9	20	5 + 5 + 5 + 5
10	20	10 + 10
11	20	5 + 5 + 5 + 5
12	16	8 + 8

*Stanzas 1, 6, 7 and 12 are 16 lines each with an 8 + 8 distribution, and stanzas 3, 9 and 11 are 20 lines each with a 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 distribution. Stanzas 4 and 10 are both 20 lines but with variable distributions, 6 + 14 and 10 + 10, respectively. The remaining stanzas—2, 5 and 8—diverge in number of lines and distribution from the eight stanzas mentioned.

F.2. Text Structure

<u>Verse</u>	<u>Rhyme Scheme and Syllabic Breakdown</u>	
1a	a b a b b a b a	(1b same)
2a	c c d d c c d d c 7 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5	(2b same)
3a	e e e e f / e e e e f 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8 8	(3b same)
4a	g h g h h g 7 5 7 5 7 7	(4a)
4b	h h g h g h g h h g h h g h 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 5 7 7 7 7 7 5	(4b)
5a	i i i i i i j / i i i i i i j 8 4 4 8 4 4 6 8 4 4 8 4 4 6	(5b same)
6a	k k k l k k k l / k k k l k k k l 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6	(6b same)
7a	m n m n m n m n 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7	(7b same)
8a	o o p o o p p p o p p o 7 3 7 7 3 7 7 3 7 7 3 7	(8b same)
9a	q q q q r q q q q r 4 5 3 3 5 4 5 3 3 5	(9b same)
10a	s s s s t s s s s t 5 5 5 7 5 5 5 5 7 5	(10b same)
11a	u u u v v u u u v v 7 7 7 7 4 7 7 7 7 4	(11b same)

F.3. Rhyme Scheme

Paired Rhymes by Stanza

1. ier / iere
2. ir / er
3. ance / ere
4. einne / uis
5. oit / age
6. é / ose
7. omme / il
8. oy / ent
9. i / ies
10. ort / ire
11. orde / our
12. ier / iere

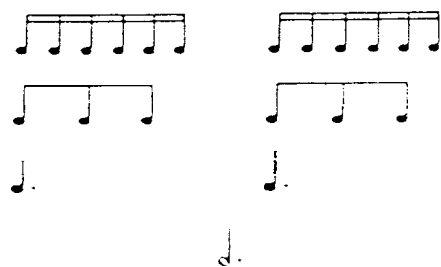
Appendix G

CHAPTER 6 FIGURES

G.1. Intervallic Analysis

Handwritten intervallic analysis of a musical score. The score is written on three staves. The top staff has two parts: 2a. and 2b. The bottom staff has lyrics. The analysis includes various interval labels such as m3, P4, M6, m7, P5, and others, connected by lines to specific notes on the staves. The lyrics are: "et qui ne fait que doubler en joyeus plaisir? en li servir et loer vuet sacs re. penitir".

G.2. Rhythmic Trees



G.3. Rhythmic Modes

mode 1	L B	2 1	
mode 2	B L	1 2	
mode 3	L B B	3 1 2	
mode 4	B B L	1 2 3	
mode 5	L L L	3 3 3	
mode 6	B B B	1 1 1	

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Patricia A. Turcic was born in Jersey City, New Jersey on September 29, 1955. She was raised in Paramus, New Jersey but completed her last year of high school at Nokomis in Newport, Maine, the institution from which she graduated in 1973. She attended Colby College the following year and graduated in 1977 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in French.

After college, Patricia established residence in Toledo, Ohio and worked as a bilingual secretary at the Champion Spark Plug Company while she completed a Master of Arts program at Bowling Green State University. After becoming a member of the French honorary society “Phi Delta Pi” and having received her Master of Arts degree in French Language and Literature in 1988, she then served as School Director and primary French instructor at the “Alliance Francais de Toledo” for one year. She spent the following two years studying in Paris, France at the “Institut des Etudes Politiques” and the Sorbonne.

Upon returning to the United States, Patricia studied music for one year at the University of Toledo and later transferred to the University of Maine-Orono where in May of 1996, she was awarded a Bachelor of Music degree in performance as a violin major and vocal minor. After graduation, she immediately entered the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program at Orono, which afforded her the opportunity to combine previously acquired skills in both language and music. Local employment as French instructor at the

Stillwater Montessori School in Old Town, as French tutor at the University of Maine-Orono, and as vocalist at the Christian Scientist Church in Bangor has allowed Patricia to apply her academic skills in practical settings.

Subsequent to graduation, Patricia plans to continue her academic pursuits at the University of Maine-Orono as a doctoral student in the I Ph.D. program. The I is an interdisciplinary program of study, and Patricia will once again have the opportunity to explore multiple avenues of research and performance, simultaneously reencountering French, English, music and theatre. Patricia is a candidate for the Master of Arts degree in Liberal Studies from The University of Maine in December, 2001.