

MUSICOLOGICAL STUDIES & DOCUMENTS

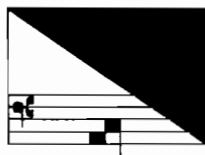
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THE SONGS OF GUILLAUME DUFAY

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by

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THE SONGS
OF GUILLAUME DUFAY

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PREFACE

Much has happened since Besseler's edition first appeared in 1964. Eleven manuscripts entirely unknown to Besseler have been located; several more, particularly poetry manuscripts, can now be seen as relevant to editing Dufay's songs. So this revision uses 68 early sources, as against Besseler's 47, giving a total of just over 300 versions of which some 50 have been located since 1964. Manuscripts that Besseler knew only from incomplete microfilms are now easily available or even published in facsimile; most have since received detailed scholarly investigation. Further editions of several pieces open the eyes and ears to alternative readings. Easier travel has made it possible to compare many transcriptions with the original sources.

Moreover, the publication of Besseler's 1964 volume was itself an event of major importance for our view of 15th-century music. No fewer than 40 songs were published there for the first time. Two years later, Besseler completed his edition of Dufay's works. Since then there has been a vast increase in musical research and in performance of the music. The entire contents of this volume, for example, were recorded on a boxed set of six records by the Medieval Ensemble of London; and a very large portion of Dufay's output can now be heard at the touch of a button.

So a reviser has many advantages. Besseler's original volume was a towering achievement; but much can now be done to improve it. Three main principles informed most decisions about the revision.

First, for the music the original typography, layout, pagination and numbering have been retained insofar as possible — partly because of their sheer quality but also because people have learned to know their way round the original volume. Many corrections have been made, and two pieces have been entirely reset; but I have not disturbed Besseler's arrangement, taken pieces out of the appendix of *Opera dubia* or put other pieces in there (though I have expressed my views on these matters in the commentary).

Second, the commentary lists the changes that have been made (omitting only changes of punctuation and diacritics) and attempts to

INTRODUCTION

1. ORDER OF PIECES AND CHRONOLOGY. Within each section of the volume, Besseler attempted to present the works in chronological sequence. The essence of his thinking on this was laid out in BesselerB and applied specifically to Dufay's songs in the Foreword to the 1964 version of Besseler's edition (p.V-XII). It can be seen particularly in the 59 rondeaux (nos. 26-84), which he subdivided largely according to their mensural usage. His chronology has been refined in HammC and revised (for the *Ox* works) in BooneD. But the order remains unchanged in this revision, not least because it is surely due for considerable further refinement in the years to come.

This chronology is of course ultimately related to external factors, particularly works that are dated independently, and what is otherwise known about the dates of the manuscripts.

Dated works fall into two categories. The first is in the manuscript *Ox*, which actually adds dates for nine works, two of them by Dufay: *Je me complains piteusement* (no. 14), dated 12 July 1425, and *Adieu ces bons vins de Lannoys* (no. 27), dated 1426. The reliability of these dates has sometimes been questioned (and it has even been suggested that they could be copying dates) but they stand relatively firm. *Ox* also marks *Quel fronte signorille* (no. 7) with the comment 'Rome composuit', which places it between October 1428 and July 1433. The second category of dated works is those in which internal references make it possible to pinpoint the occasion for which they were composed. Perhaps the clearest case is *Resvelliés vous* (no. 11), which Besseler brilliantly demonstrated to have been for a Malatesta wedding on 18 July 1423. Somewhat less secure, though relatively convincing, is the date 1433 for *C'est bien raison* (no. 16). Besseler's date of 1454 for the *Lamentatio Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (no. 10) has now been changed to 1455. For other works dates have been suggested in more recent literature, and these are recorded in the notes; but none of them is yet generally agreed. Finally, a certain amount of rather more indirect help can be gained from comparison with other datable works by Dufay (all of them

A. CANTIONES ITALICAE

I. BALLATAE

1

L'alta belleza tua, virtute, valore

UNIQUE SOURCE

Ox(3), f.40v (no.75), 'Guillermus dufay' over an erased ascription to 'Vgo de [lantins]', ed. *Lo43736*, f.56-8, DuffinD, 26.

OBSERVATIONS At first glance this looks like a ballata with the *volta* text missing. But that raises severe problems (drawn to my attention by Prof. Giuseppe Tavani). (a) The *piedi* rhyme bcb/ cbc whereas they should have the same rhyme scheme. (b) A ballata in which the *piedi* have more lines than the *ripresa* is virtually non-existent. (c) The *ripresa* appears to have no main verb. One conceivable solution would be that it is a sonnet, lacking two lines from sect. 1 and all four lines of its repeat, though Dufay's normal texting procedure makes that seem unlikely.

Given that Dufay (like Hugo de Lantins) often tried new solutions to the received Italian forms, it is difficult to reconstruct the original. In *Ox*, there is plenty of room for missing text, but there are several cases where the scribe left space for further text which he sometimes added later. In the absence of a clear solution, performers should perhaps retain the ballata form.

The second *piede* (sect. 3 below) is underlaid to the music. Text can be fitted flawlessly to the Contratenor.

TEXT

- 1 L'alta belleza tua, virtute, valore
A che so donna m'ai donnatò amore.

- 2 Quanto più miro el tuo lizadro aspeto
Angelico, real, digno d'impero,
D'amor s'enfiama più l'ardente peto,

Neither source indicates a *rentrement* after the first stanza. Since there is no other *virelai* setting with two stanzas from this generation, confidence about its inclusion would be rash. But a refrain at this point would surely be expected.

An extended analysis of the text is in George M. Jones, 'The »First« Chansonnier of the Biblioteca Riccardiana' (diss., New York University, 1972), 22-40, and of the music, 101-11.

TEXT

1 De ma haulte et bonne aventure,
Dont mon deul cesse,
Remercye avec ma princesse
Amour, qui m'a par pitié pure
Fait ouverture
De l'espargne de sa richesse.

I

2 Apres l'ennuy de longue attente
Soubs feible espoir

3 Ce plaisir me paist et contente
Sans decevoir.

4 J'ai confort doulz pour douleur dure:
Choys de maistresse
Et secours de plaisant Josnesse,
Ou biens de grace et de nature
Sont sans mesure
Espars d'outrageuse largesse.

[De ma haulte et bonne aventure,
Dont mon deul cesse,
Remercye avec ma princesse
Amour, qui m'a par pitié pure
Fait ouverture
De l'espargne de sa richesse.]

- 6.1 Veult confermer: Deust consentir (*PI719*), Voult conforter (*Sev*)
 6.2 Quant: Car (*Pav*)/ ce: le (*PI719*)/ nom (=Lans380, *Roh*): non
 (*Pav*), mot (*Cord, Di, EscB, JPI, Namur, PI719, Sev, Wo*), though
 the minority reading is retained here as not repeating 'mot' from
 line 2.2/ me: luy (*Cord*)

UNDERLAY VARIANTS 23i2-25: D'ung tout seul mot, 26i1-27i1:
 bien ordonné (*Pav*)/ 30i2: bien, 31i1: ordonné (*Cord*)

ITALIAN TEXT IN *Pix*

I' so'l tuo servitor, donna gentile,
 Del mio crudel martire.
 Pieta ti prendi non mi far più languire.
 Say ben madona mia con quanta fede
 Disposto el mio ad te sola servire.

LATIN TEXT IN *Tr90* (also found on f.461v)

Superno nunc emittitur
 Patris unigenitus,
 Virgo non corrumpitur
 Nostre saluti deditus Alvo tumescente.

CLEF VARIANT li1-8i1: C1 in *Ricc*

CORONAS i-iii: *BerK, MC, Pix, Wol* i-ii: *Cord*/ ii-iii: *EscB*/ none: *Por, CGiul, Di, Pav, Per431, Ricc, Sev, Tr90*

MENSURATION SIGNS 000: *CGiul, Pix, Ricc*/ 0—0: *Cord, Di, MC, Pav*/ 0— —: *Per431, Wol* none: *Por, BerK, EscB, Sev, Tr90*

KEY-SIGNATURES These are complex since the E^b is often mis-
 placed or repeated at different octaves, but the upshot seems to be: bb
 bb bb : *Por, BerK, CGiul, Cord, EscB, MC, Pix* and perhaps *Tr90*; b b b : *Di, Per431, Ricc, Wo* and sporadically *Sev*/ b bb bb : *Pav*. Taken together with
 the scattered further accidentals and with *Bux226*, this seems to sug-
 gest that bb bb bb is the correct reading.