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THE SONGS
OF GUILLAUME DUFAY

DAVID FALLOWS

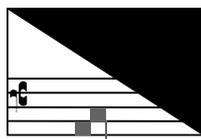
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47

THE SONGS OF GUILLAUME DUFAY

Critical Commentary to the Revision of
Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae,
ser. 1. vol. VI

by
DAVID FALLOWS



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY

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NOTE

This volume contains the editorial commentary newly prepared for my revision of Heinrich Bessler's edition of the Dufay songs in *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae*, ser. 1, vol. VI (original edition 1964, revised 1994). It appears in a separate volume partly to make it easier for the reader to consult music and commentary at the same time. I wish to thank Frank A. D'Accone, general editor of *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae*, for allowing me to publish this commentary separately, and Ursula Günther, general editor of *Musicological Studies & Documents*, for allowing its inclusion in her series.

Old Trafford
February 1994

D.F.

In the twenty-five years that have passed since this revision was first prepared, not a single relevant new musical source has come to my attention. Obviously there has been much new secondary literature; but it would be unrealistic to have incorporated this. This reprint is therefore offered without changes. The edition to which it is a commentary was reprinted—also without changes to the music—in 2006.

Choriton-cum-Hardy
March 2015

D.F.

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 plains 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

blank because a portion of the MS has fallen away, but the reconstruction established in DuffinD, used here with Duffin's kind permission, is almost certainly correct since the *minima* stems are of uniform length and their tops can be seen, so only 57ii2, 57ii4, 58ii2 and 58ii4 are totally invisible and these, in the circumstances, are scarcely open to doubt. Bessler's incorrect 56ii2 results from a restorer's misalignment of a sliver that remains./ 59ii4-5: originally flagged semiminims, with flags erased.

REVISION REPORT All changes noted under 'Text commentary' and 'Music variants' above/ 21i3: underlay moved from 21i2/ 27i2-4: underlay changed/ 42i3: parenthetical editorial \flat eliminated/ 44iii1: \flat made editorial/ 53i4B: editorial \flat added/ 55ii-iii: coronas restored.

4

La dolce vista

UNIQUE SOURCE

RU, f.11v-12 (no.8), full-black notation with red coloration and flagged semiminims, 'G. DVFAY', ed. Bernard Thomas, *Guillaume Dufay: 4 Italian Songs* (Brighton, 1991), no.3, facsimile in Enrico Marriott Bannister, *Monumenti vaticani di paleografia musicale latina* (Leipzig, 1913), vol.2, pl.130c.

OBSERVATIONS The source is perhaps the most puzzling of all 15th-century songbooks, with many errors. This ballata is laid out with its two sections separated: f.11v contains the *prima pars* of all three voices, in the order i, iii, ii, with ii spreading on to the top of f.12; then follows the *secunda pars* of the three voices. Presumably the exemplar had the song over two openings.

TEXT

- 1 La dolce vista del tuo viso pio
Conforta, donna, sempre el me desio.
- 2 [first *piede* missing]