

CHAPTER TWO: THE TRANSMISSION OF THE SONGS

From about 1600 onward, French monophonic song was transmitted by street-singers (chanteurs publics). These were itinerant performers similar to the jongleurs of the Middle Ages. Unfortunately, studies of the jongleurs cover only the period up to 1350,¹ and studies of the chanteurs publics begin with the seventeenth century.² The similarities between the two types of performers suggest that their tradition continued during the intervening centuries. A few references to similar entertainers, the so-called batelleurs, have been found for this period, and it would seem that they continued the jongleur tradition into the sixteenth century. Closely linked to the batelleurs are the players in the farces, moralities, and sotties of the time. Although they seem not to have been very important in the transmission of entire songs, the plays in which they performed appear to have been accessible to the general populace.

As indicated in Chapter One, a number of written sources of French monophonic song survive from this period: printed

¹See especially Edmond Faral, Les Jongleurs en France au Moyen Age, Paris, H. Champion, 1910 (repr. by the same publisher, 1964, in the series "Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes études. Sciences historiques et philologiques, 187, facs.).

²See especially Patrice Coirault, Formation de nos chansons folkloriques, Paris, Editions du Scarabée, 1953, 3 Vols., esp. Vol. 1.

collections of both secular and devotional song -- the latter now termed cantiques -- printed and manuscript versions of Christmas songs, and manuscripts which preserve secular monophonic songs. From these sources one can obtain a clearer idea of how and among whom the songs were transmitted and the uses to which they were put.

Oral transmission

Farces, sotties, moralités. French secular plays of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries frequently made use of monophonic songs.¹ The players in these works were largely amateurs connected with the legal profession. In the fifteenth century they began to form societies such as the Basoche in Paris and the Cornards in Rouen. By the end of the fifteenth century, there were about ten thousand Basochiens in Paris alone. From 1442 onward, they put on public plays with the Confrérie de la Passion, their productions coinciding with calendrical occasions such as Carnival and May Day.²

¹The phrase "secular plays" (or, more simply, "plays") is used here to distinguish farces, sotties, moralities and monologues from the mysteries of the sacred theater. Cf. Brown, Music in the French secular theater, passim. The latter is the authoritative work on the subject. For a list of sources for the plays, see Halina Lewicka (ed.), Le Recueil du British Museum, Geneva, Slatkine Reprints, c 1970, pp. vii-xvii.

²S. Stelling-Michaud, "L'Histoire des universités au Moyen Age et à la Renaissance," Rapports (Stockholm, Comité International des Sciences Historiques, 1960), I, pp. 97-143, esp. p. 475, and Howard Graham Harvey, The Theater of the Basoche, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 1941 (repr. New York, Kraus Reprint, 1969), passim.

Songs are found both within the plays and after, where they function as postludes to the action.¹ The texts of these postlude songs are never reproduced in the sources, and specific songs are not named. Within plays, monophonic songs usually appear in fragmentary form. A few lines or a strophe are quoted and then the spoken dialogue resumes.

The plays and songs share a common stock of characters.² For example, Roger Bontemps, the wandering performer, and Marion, the traditional shepherdess, appear in both types of literature.³ So do the maumariée or wife beleaguered by a difficult husband;⁴ the franc archer of the national police;⁵

¹Cf., however, François Lesure, "Elements populaires dans la chanson française au début du XVI^e siècle," Musique et poésie au XVI^e siècle, Paris, 1954, pp. 169-84, esp. 175-78, where no distinction is made between the ways in which songs are transmitted by the plays.

²Cf. Lesure, loc. cit., on characters shared by the plays and songs.

³Bontemps appears in the farce Faulte d'Argent, Bon Temps et les Troys Gallans (see Gustave Cohen (ed.), Recueil de farces françaises inédites du XV^e siècle, Cambridge, Mass., Medieval Academy of America, 1949, no. XLVIII) as well as in the song "Puisqu'elle m'a fermé son huys" (see Jeffery, op. cit., p. 45). Marion appears in the farce of the Enfants de Bagneux, Guillot Tabouret, Tybault Chenevotte (see Cohen, op. cit., no. XXVII) and in the songs "Puisque Robin j'ay à nom" and "Quant m'en venoye du bois lautrier" (Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., nos. 1 and 6). On songs relating to Roger Bontemps, see Helen Hewitt's article, "A Chanson Rustique of the Early Renaissance: Bon Temps," Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance music, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1966, pp. 376-91.

⁴See, for example, the farce Celuy qui se confesse (Cohen, Recueil no. II) and the list of maumariée songs in Gérold, Le Manuscrit, p. 128.

⁵See, for example, the monologue of the Franc archer de Baignollet (in Emile Picot and Christophe Nyrop (eds.) Nouveau recueil de farces françaises des XV^e et XVI^e siècles,

and gorriers or impoverished dandies.¹

The plays and songs also share a common stock of situations and poetic diction. The farce Regnault qui se marie à Lavollée, is constructed around a variant of the song "Lourdault."² Consistent with the monophonic song of the same name, "lourdault" is used as an epithet of contempt in the play Le Retraict.³ The cobbler in Le Savetier, Marguet, Jacquet thrice begs a woman to sing for "l'amour de moy."⁴ This phrase could be taken at face value to mean "my love." However, an extra resonance results from the fact that it is also the opening of a monophonic song.⁵ The foolish son in Ung qui fait examiner

Paris, Morgand et cie., Fatout, 1880, no. 2), and the timbre of the noël "Dieu éternel, quant Ciel et Terre eut fait" in BN 2368, no. 31 (see Appendix).

¹See, again, the farce of the Enfans de Bagneux, Guillot Tabouret, Tybault Chenevotte (Cohen, op. cit., no. XXVII) and the songs "Que diront nous de ceulx de Saint Omer" and "Ilz sont bien pelez, ceulx qui font la gorre" in Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., nos. 100 and 129, respectively.

²See Cohen, op. cit., no. VII and the song "Lourdault, Lourdault, Lourdault, garde que tu feras" in Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., no. 71. There seems to have been also some common ground shared by the plays and songs on the one hand and composers of polyphony on the other. Jean Braconnier adopted as his sobriquet the name Lourdault. Pierre Regnault was also known as Sandrin. Both of Pierre's surnames are from the plays. The former is substituted for Lourdault in Regnault qui se marie. See Helen Hewitt (ed.), Canti B, Chicago and London, University of Chicago, 1967, pp. 67-68 on Lourdault, and Lesure, "Elements," on Sandrin.

³Adrien Jean Victor Le Roux de Lincy and Francisque Michel (eds.), Recueil de farces, moralités, et sermons joyeux, Paris, Techener, 1831-38, 4 Vols., Vol. III, no. 53.

⁴Le Roux de Lincy and Michel, op. cit., Vol. IV, no. 73.

⁵Cf. "L'Amour de moy sy est enclose" in Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., no. 27 and Gérold, Le Manuscrit, no. 27.

wants to sing "à l'ombre d'un buisson," and the shepherd in Mestier et Marchandise similarly remains in his pastures "en l'ombre d'un beau buissonnet."¹ This locale, the shade of a thicket, also forms the setting of several monophonic songs.² The reverse also occurs: songs cite material usually associated with the plays.³ In short, many of the plays are saturated with material also found in the songs.⁴ In this way the two genres are strongly related, for they share certain cultural metaphors of the period. Accordingly, the often elliptical texts of the songs can be validly amplified if one pursues their parallels in the plays and vice versa. How the songs might have been transmitted apart from the plays is open to conjecture. However, one possible agent is the itinerant mountebank or "batelleur."

Batelleurs

A number of references in the plays indicate that the

¹Le Roux de Lincy and Michel, op. cit., Vol. III, no. 57 and Edouard Fournier, Le Théâtre français au XVI^e et XVII^e siècle, Paris, Garnier, n.d., 2 Vols., Vol. 1, p. 46.

²See Brown, Music in the French secular theatre, Catalogue, no. 97.

³For example, the theatrical troupe, the Enfants-sans-Soucy, is mentioned in "Nous sommes de l'ordre de Saint Babouin" (in Jeffery, op. cit., p. 123).

⁴See, for example, the plays Pèlerinage de mariage (Emile Picot [comp.], Recueil général des sotties, Paris, Firmin-Didot et cie., 1902-12, 3 Vols., Vol. III, pp. 290 ff.), and the cobbler plays Le Savetier, Marguet (Le Roux de Lincy and Michel, op. cit., Vol. IV, no. 73), Savetier nommé Calbain (Fournier, op. cit., pp. 282 ff.), and the tour de force, Savetier qui ne respont que chansons (Cohen, op. cit., no. XXXVII).

institution of wandering public singers was not yet dead. The shepherd in Mestier et Marchandise mentions among the people whom he sees traversing his pastures "those who go singing on horseback."¹ Trétaulde in Jehan de Lagny says of Olyve, a woman of dubious virtue, that "those who walk through the streets sing of you as well as of us."² These passages may or may not allude to professional singers. However, Le Bateleur deals entirely with street singers. A number of deceased, and in some cases possibly fictitious, singers are mentioned: Maistre Gilles des Vaultx, Rousignol, Brière, Penget, Cardinot, Robin Mercier, Cousin Charlot, Pierre Regnault, Robin Moyson, and the badins of Saint Gervais, Soteville, and Martainville.³ The use of sobriquets is interesting in that it is consistent with the tradition of the earlier jongleurs and the later chanteurs publics.⁴ According to the play, not only do these singers sing but they also indulge in jeux et esbas.⁵ Their profession also seems to involve playing in farces, for the

¹"Passer les uns en chevauchant/Vont chantant." Fournier, op. cit., p. 48.

²"Ceulx qui vont le pavé marchans/Vous chantent ausy bien que nous." Le Roux de Lincy and Michel, op. cit., Vol. II, no. 31.

³Fournier, op. cit., p. 325. Cf. note 11, above, on Regnault. Note also that the Le Bateleur has been dated in the 1540's by Emmanuel Philipot, Six farces normandes du Recueil La Vallière, Rennes, 1939, pp. 18 ff. However, the dates which Philipot offers are tentative in the extreme.

⁴See Coirault, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 14.

⁵Fournier, loc. cit. On the role of the jongleur as an amuseur, see Coirault, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 13.

varlet says that a person of breeding does not refer to a chantre by the terms batelleur or farceur.¹

Some idea of the songs such batelleurs sang can be obtained from the varlet's cry: "All the latest news of the week!"² and the Batelleur's "come-on": "Step right up, step right up; you will hear something new."³ A song which these batelleurs sing begins "Now listen, if you will/To a pleasant little song,"⁴ a familiar introductory formula of the "Come-all-ye" type.⁵ In the farce of Goguelu . . . l'Aveugle, la Chambrière, which also deals with street performers, the ensemble begins their song in a similar way: "Listen to what we will sing to you."⁶ Similar openings are also found in noëls:

Lords and ladies, listen to this,
Listen to this very song,
And you will hear presently
Great marvels indeed. 7

¹Fournier, loc. cit.

²"Tous nouveaux faictz de la seymayne!"

³"Aprochés-vous, aprochés-vous/Et vous orés choses nouvelles."

⁴"Or escoutés, sy vous voulés, /Une plaisante chansonnette."

⁵On the come-all-ye in Anglo-American folk song, see Theresa Brakeley, "Come-all-ye," Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend (ed. Maria Leach), New York, Funk & Wagnalls, © 1949-50, 2 Vols., Vol. I, p. 243. Similar openings are found in the repertoire of chanteurs publics. See, for example, Coirault, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 131, where a song begins as follows: "Approchez-vous pour écouter/Garçons, Filles et Servantes." ("Come on up to listen/All you boys, girls, and maidservants.")

⁶Cohen, op. cit., no. XLV. The passage reads: "Escouter que nous vous diron."

⁷"Seigneurs et dames, entendez cy,/Entendez cy,/Entendez à ce chant icy,/Et vous aurez présentement/Grant merveilles certainement." See BN 2368, no.-10 (in Appendix).

Hear, O Lords with your hearts and listen.¹

The traditional complement of such openings is an ending which comments on the (supposed) author of the song.² In "Hellas mon cueur n'est pas à moy" there is a closing reference to "him who made the song."³ Both "Chacun maudit [c]es jalleux" and the "Chanson de Verdelet" end with such comments.⁴ Moreover, the last song of the printed collection S'ensuivent plusieurs Belles chansons nouvelles. Et sont en nombre iiii.xx et dix, constitutes an entire poem not merely on the maker of the song itself, but on the supposed author of the whole collection.⁵

There are also references to a tradition of singing from door to door. In the farce Gogelu, the singers are begging for alms. The blind member of the group proposes that they go to sing "from house to house."⁶ In the farce Maraux enchessiez, two rogues discuss the possibility of singing for profit at a church.⁷ And among the noëls occur a number of aguillaneufs

¹"Oyez seigneurs du cueurs et escoutez." See BN 2368, no. 33 (in Appendix).

²For examples of such identifying passages see Coirault, op. cit., pp. 128-37, esp. p. 135.

³"Celuy qui la chanson a faicte." See Gérold, Le Manuscrit, no. 2.

⁴Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., no. 11 and Jeffery, op. cit., no. 90(a): 9, respectively.

⁵See Jeffery, op. cit., no. 90(a): 40, pp. 95 f.

⁶"De maison en maison." See note 29, above.

⁷See Cohen, op. cit., no. XLII.

("begging songs to be sung from door to door during the Christmas season").¹ Thus transmission might have taken place through chansons de quête ("begging songs"), either by amateurs at Christmas or professional singers throughout the year.

Finally, it should be noted that the blind man in the farce Gogelu strikes up a tune on his vielle "to recite a song."² This use of the vielle as an accompanying instrument is consistent with the medieval tradition of the jongleurs.³

Among the documents of Louis XI, are some Lettres de chanteurs et recordeurs de chançons. The term recordeur designated a musician who "to make his meagre living" went throughout Louis's kingdom "singing and recording songs, poems, and records dealing with good news and exploits."⁴ It is significant that songs dealing with current events both political and military are found frequently in monophonic sources of the times.⁵ Whether these recordeurs were identical with the

¹See BN 2368, nos. 38 and 39 and BA 10650², no. 15 (in Appendix).

²"Pour dire une chanson." See Cohen, op. cit., no. XLV.

³For references in songs of the chanteurs publics to the use of a violin in their performances, see Coirault, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 130 and 134-36.

⁴"Pour gagner sa povre vie." "Pour chanter et recorder chançons, dictez et records touchant les bonnes nouvelles et adventures." For this passage, see Louis Thuasne (ed.) Oeuvres de François Villon, Paris, Picard, 3 Vols., Vol. III, p. 460.

⁵See especially Emile Picot (ed.), Chants historiques français du seizième siècle, Paris, 1930 (repr. from Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France, 4 Vols., 1894-1900). Such songs are also found in the two manuscripts of monophonic songs

batelleurs has not been determined, but their role as itinerant transmitters of songs is not in doubt.

Depictions of the batelleurs also describe a special style of performance. In Le Batelleur, the varlet speaks of this type of performer as a "breaker of songs,/An ornamenter, a babbler."¹ These terms are reminiscent of contemporary accounts of gringotage, a multi-purpose word implying quick warbling, embellishment by divisions, and even primitive counterpoint.² The melodic style of many songs preserved in the monophonic sources is similarly of a highly ornamented and quick warbling type, and two of the predominantly monophonic sources contain a few examples of very simple polyphony,³ such as the following:



(see Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., passim, and Gérold, Le Manuscrit, passim) as well as in printed collections of secular songs ca. 1500 (see Jeffery, op. cit., passim).

¹"Rompeur de chançon,/Un fleureçon, un babillart."

²On gringotage, see Brown, Music in the French secular theater, pp. 101-15.

³See Paris, B. N., f. fr. 12744, 109 as well as Briand's collection, nos. 2, 3, 12, and 19 (in Appendix). The type of polyphony used has been discussed by the author in "The Virelais in MS Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, f. fr. 12744," unpub. Master's Thesis, Columbia University, 1972 and "Polyphony in a Monophonic Source: Paris, BN, f. fr. 12744," read at the regional chapter meeting of the American Musicological Society and the Society for Ethnomusicology, Smith College, Spring, 1972.



Thus, the sources might well preserve much the same performance practice as is attributed to the batelleurs.¹

Finally, there is a reference to the mores of these public singers. For example, the tradition of the drunken street entertainer, a tradition of both the jongleur and chanteur public,² is alluded to in Le Bateleur when Binete remarks after a desultory attempt at group singing: "Your throats are too constricted" to which the varlet responds: "For lack of drink, my [voice] is not clear."³

To conclude, the batelleur was probably an important agent in the oral transmission of monophonic songs. What information can be gleaned about him and his habits is consistent

¹One of the songs in the monophonic chansonner MS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale f. fr. 12744, is an example of primitive, two-part counterpoint, which also seems to be implied by the term gringotage. See BN A: 109 in the Appendix.

²Coirault, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 14.

³"Vos gorges sont trop résoulés," "Sans boyre la myenne n'est nete."

with the earlier tradition of the jongleur and the later one of the chanteur public. And the style of his poetry and melodies as described in Le Bateleur is also consistent with the style of contemporary monophonic songs.¹

Written transmission

Printed collections of secular texts. Brian Jeffery has edited and described thoroughly all known printed collections of secular song texts from the early sixteenth century.² One need only summarize his findings here. First the prints are typically cheap productions of the "popular" press. They are small (ca. 13 x 9 cm upright), printed on poor quality paper without distinguishable watermarks. Black letter type ("caractères gothiques") is used throughout. No ornamental capitals or decorative woodcuts appear, and only the most rudimentary signs of punctuation are employed.³ Both the title and table of contents are crammed onto the first page. And quite bothersome is the lack of indications as to publisher, printer (at

¹Stephen Bonime (personal communication to the author, May, 1975) has remarked that there are numerous references to batelleurs in the records of Anne of Brittany's reigns (ca. 1500). See Stephen Bonime, Anne de Bretagne and music (unpub. dissertation, Bryn Mawr, 1975) passim, for lists and discussions of the various sources relating to Anne's financial accounts and her entries into various cities.

²Jeffery, op. cit., esp. pp. 14-22. Jeffery's numbering of the songs (e.g., 90^{1a}: 1; 53: 4, etc.) will be used hereinafter.

³The following punctuation marks are used: **C**, to indicate the beginning of a new line or a new strophe or stanza; and /, to indicate the beginning of a new line or a comma.

this time often the same person), or date of publication.

Nevertheless, a fairly precise date can be assigned to them. Historical references are made in the songs to events of 1509, 1512, and 1519.¹ And several of the songs also appear in other sources of the time. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. fr. 12744 and 9346 account for the majority of concordances, and can be assigned the dates ca. 1500 and ca. 1510, respectively.² Furthermore, the songs differ greatly in literary style from those found in sources dating from ca. 1530. Thus Jeffery's assignment of the dates ca. 1515-25 does not seem farfetched.

A number of songs appear in more than one of the printed sources. In some cases (e.g., songs shared by S'ensuivent plusieurs Belles chansons nouvelles Et sont en nombre. iiii.xx. et dix. and the untitled Fragment A), the versions are almost exactly the same. In such cases one can conclude that a written tradition is involved. However, frequently the variations in text are so great (e.g., songs shared by S'ensuivent . . . iiii.xx. et dix. and S'ensuivent . . . cinquante et troys) that one might consider the intervening transmission to have been oral rather than written. For example the following strophe appears at the beginning of the first collection:

Adieu plaisir, adieu soulas
Adieu celle que j'aymoye tant;
*Puis que j'ay perdu ma mignongne
*En moy n'a plus de passe temps.

¹Jeffery, op. cit., Vol. I, passim.

²See below, pp. 64f.

*Je vivoye si joyeusement
 Et sans melencollye;
Maulditz soient ces envieulx
Qui m'ont osté m'amy.

whereas the following appears as the fourth strophe in a song of the second collection:

Adieu plaisir, adieu soulas,
 Adieu celle que j'aymoye tant.
 *Se je ne pourvoye à mon cas
 *Je languiray doresnavant.
 *Tousjours vivray joyeusement
 Et sans merencolie.
Maulditz soient ces faulx envieux
Qui m'ont osté ma mye.

But such changes might have arisen from revisions of written texts. Most likely in the printing of chanson texts, some were copied verbatim from exemplars, others revised on the basis of written versions, and yet others copied solely from memory. Another factor which clouds the issue of whether the songs were transmitted orally or in written form is the sloppiness of the typesetting. Lines are so often found to be obviously transposed that one wonders how accurately the songs generally were transmitted from manuscript to type.¹

The uses to which these plaquettes were put are shrouded in mystery. Jeffery has suggested² that they complemented polyphonic sources which generally lacked complete texts. However, by their very cheapness they seem to be aimed at a much broader readership than singers of composed polyphony. How many people who could have afforded these booklets and also read them is open to some question. There were about ten thousand lawyers

¹For comments on the typography of the collections and a stemma of them, see ibid., pp. 14-22.

²Ibid., pp. 33-34.

and law clerks in Paris at the end of the fifteenth century. Furthermore, it has been estimated that there were about ten thousand university students -- in all faculties -- in the capital a century earlier.¹ Since the university population is known to have increased throughout the fifteenth century, one can conclude that far more than ten thousand Parisians were literate around 1500. Moreover, these students appear not to have been exclusively from wealthy backgrounds: increasing numbers of poor students (pauperes) -- reaching in some cases thirty-five per cent of the enrollment -- were supported by bursaries.² Also many of those who did not attend university would have been literate, for from the middle of the fifteenth century onward, several of the smaller centers of France had humble schools (scholae) where freelance instructors (recteurs) taught French and Latin, often in their own homes.³ At the beginning of the Gutenberg era, then, it would seem that these little song books might have had a considerable readership.

Noëls and cantiques

Sources of noëls and cantiques ca. 1500 have been listed and briefly described by Gastoué.⁴ The extant sources of

¹Stelling-Michaud, op. cit., pp. 402-03.

²Ibid., pp. 119-20.

³Ibid., p. 405.

⁴Amédée Gastoué, Le Cantique populaire in France: Ses sources, son histoire, augmentés d'une bibliographie générale des anciens cantiques et noëls, Bourg, "Journal de l'Ain," Lyon, Janin frères, 1925.

noëls around 1500 include three manuscripts: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 3653, S'ensuivent aucuns dites et chansons faites en l'honneur de la nativité de Jhésu Crist commençans par Noël; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. fr. 2368, Livret de noëlz; and MS 2506 of the same collection. The latter two form a pair, 2506 being a fairly complete copy of 2368 with a few additional items. The three manuscripts will be referred to by their call numbers: BA 3653, BN 2368 and BN 2506, respectively.

In addition, there are a number of printed collections of noëls and cantiques. These include the following three, which form a group: S'ensuivent les noëlz tresexcelens et contemplatifz les quelz chantent les filles rendues par dévotion; Dévote contemplation exitant à la crainte de dieu moult utile et propice à ung chascun pécheur voulant penser de son salut laquelle chantent les filles répenties à paris par dévotion; and S'ensuit le dicté en françois de [F]rère Jehan tisserant docteur & frère mineur de l'order de l'observance, lequel il fait chanter à son sermon. The first contains noëls, the latter two, cantiques. A cantique by Olivier Maillard also survives: Chanson piteuse composée par frère Olivier Maillard, en plein prédication au son de la chanson nomée Bergeronnette savoisiene et chantée à Toulouse environ la penthecouste par ledit Maillard, luy estant en chaire de prédication L'an mil cinq cens et deux. Et bien tost après trespasa. Each of these printed collections will be referred to by a short title as S'ensuivent les noëlz tresexcelens, Dévote contemplation,

S'ensuit le dicté, and Chanson piteuse, respectively.

A special collection of noëls is that by Briand: Nouëls nouvaux de ce présent an 1512. Briand, a playwright, had used the songs in a Christmas play performed in Rouen.¹

In each of the above cases the date of the individual source or of the composition of its contents can be determined quite precisely. However, three other printed sources are more problematic. They are: 1) an untitled collection; 2) les grands Noëlz nouveaux composez sur plusieurs chansons Tant vieilles que nouvelles En françoys en poitevin Et en escossois; and 3) les ditez Des Noëlz Nouveaulx Lesquelz ont esté composez sur les chansons qui s'ensuyvent. All three are housed in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, under the call numbers 10649², 10650¹, and 10650², respectively. They will be referred to by their call numbers preceded by "BA." The songs in the individual sources of noëls and cantiques are tabulated below and are referred to by these numbers.²

Manuscript collections of noëls

Internal evidence strongly suggests 1491-98 as the range of dates for BA 3653's compilation, and Paris or the court of Charles VIII as its provenance. The forty-third song opens with an invocation to France as a whole ("Christiana Francia")

¹Edited by Henri Chardon, Paris, 1904. See the introduction to Chardon's edition.

²See Appendix. All songs to be considered henceforth (aside from those edited by Jeffery and Chardon) are edited and numbered in the Appendix, q.v.

to celebrate the incarnation. Regions of France are thereupon listed: first the north ("devota Normania de Harecourt et d'Alençon"), then central France ("Carnotensis patria"), and finally the south or Aquitaine ("fidelis Pictavia"). The second poem speaks of Christ as "Dux Israel Parisiecumque," that is, as leader of both Israel and Parisians. The following song asks that "Saint Denis [a suburb of Paris] . . . avecques Paris" give praise to Christ, and also mentions the Rue de Troyes.

The thirty-fourth song is addressed to Charles VIII, "Rex Karole francorum," and speaks of the rejoicing which the splendor of a girl provides ("gaudium/Quem adornat nitor puel-laris"). Charles VIII was married only once, to Anne of Brit-tany in December, 1491, and died without issue in 1498.¹ The records show that only one daughter was born to Charles, Anne, who died a few days after her birth in 1494.² The puella re-ferred to must thus be Anne of Brittany who was fourteen years old when she married Charles.³ The coincidence of the marriage with the Advent season suggests that BA 3653: 34 is an occasion-al text used in connection with either the wedding or anniver-sary celebrations. Later on in the same text, mention is made of a "Francis." A François was the son of Charles and Anne.

¹Anonymous, "Charles VIII" in Encyclopedia Britannica, London, New York, Encyclopedia Britannica, 1926 (13th ed.), 32 Vols., Vol. 5, p. 21.

²Henri Jouglà de Morenas, Grand armorial de France, s.l., Editions Héraldiques, 1934, 7 Vols., Vol. 1, p. 52; Père Augustin Dechausse Anselme, Histoire généalogique et chronologique de la maison royale de France, Paris, Michel, Guignard & Claude Robustel, 2 Vols., 1712, Vol. 1, p. 70.

³Anonymous, loc. cit.

Born in 1498, he lived only for a few days.¹

Among the songs of BA 3653 a few clues can be found concerning the uses to which noëls were put in the late fifteenth century. Over and over again in the Latin noëls reference is made to tripudium ("religious dance"),² once in connection with festum ("feasting or banqueting").³ An internal refrain in BA 3653: 8 is addressed to a concio ("assembly"). Another song in BA 3653 refers to ladies singing noëls "secretly and at leisure:"

At Christmas, you should enjoy
Ladies and listen to them
As they sing songs
Secretly and at leisure: "Noël, Noël, pray for us."⁴

The reference to dance, feasting, and an assembly suggest the medieval hall as a site for the singing of noëls. The single reference to ladies suggests the use of noëls for private, devotional purposes.

The source itself was probably used for such purposes in a wealthy household, possibly that of Charles VIII. Like other devotional manuscripts such as books of hours, it is small.⁵ It is also luxurious. Made of good quality parchment,

¹Jougla, loc. cit. and Anselme, loc. cit.

²BA 3653 nos. 2, 4, 5, 8, and 45.

³BA 3653 no. 45.

⁴BA 3653 no. 5. À Noël doit-on ioyr/Les dames et les oÿr/Dum cantus percanticunt/Secreto et sub ocio: "Noël, Noël, ore pro."

⁵13 x 9 cm., upright. Compare this with the similar size of printed text collections described above, p. 41.

it is adorned with painted capitals alternating between red and blue¹ which embellish the initial letter of each poem.² It is uniform both in its gothic script and in its overall organization. Each line of text is capitalized and begins on a new ruled line with no spaces left in between, and shiny and dull sides of the parchment alternate throughout. It is also complete and self-contained. Originally it was made up of sixty-four folios.³ The last, probably blank, has been cut away and the collection seems to have ended at the bottom of the third last folio, the second-last having been left blank. Although a table of contents does not survive and seems never to have existed, there is a certain degree of organization of the contents. Those noëls which are predominantly in Latin⁴ are grouped together as are those in the dialect of Poitou.⁵

BN 2368 seems also to have been compiled during the reign of Charles VIII (1483-98). Folio 1' contains Charles VIII's signature: "Carolus octavus" and in ornate script on

¹There are two exceptions, one on folio 3' and the other on folio 50.

²The first initial of the book is larger than the others, taking up three text lines instead of two. It is also more elaborate, replete with silver decorations and arabesques which flow into the margin.

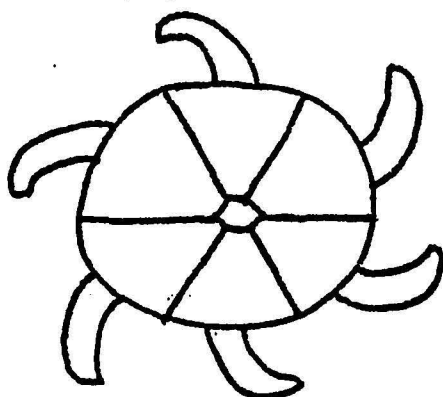
³The modern foliation begins with the second of two paper leaves, which have been added, rather than with the first parchment folio, which forms the original beginning. Two paper leaves have also been added to the end.

⁴Numbers 1 to 10 (except 9), 22 to 45 (except 24, 27 to 29, 33, 41, 42, 44), and 54 and 55.

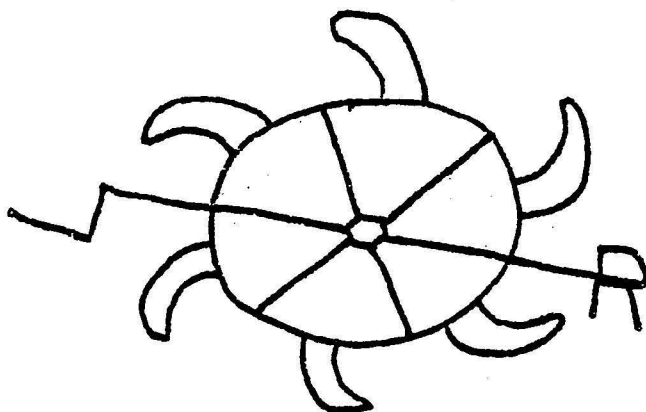
⁵Numbers 48 to 50.

folio 76 appears the inscription: "A moy . . . [?] Charles." On Charles's death the volume seems to have passed into the library of his successor, Louis XII. Folio 2 bears a librarian's notation: "This book of noëls belongs to King Louis XII [Charles's successor]."¹

Made of paper throughout, the source contains the following watermark:



This soleil figure usually without foliage was common in paper made ca. 1500.² In the first six and last eight folios of the work a variant of this watermark with the initials of Louis XII (LR for Louis Roi or Ludovicus Rex) appears:



¹"Cest livre de noëlz est au roy Loÿs XII^{me}."

²Charles Moise Briquet, Les Filigranes, 2nd ed., Leipzig, K. W. Hiersemann, 1923. 4 Vols., Vol. 4, nos. 13903 to 13928.

In the companion volume, 2506, from folio three to six and from folio 74 to 82, appear a number of notes by a "Monsieur Danfray" or "Marin Danfré" with regard to an "imprimerie." For the most part these seem to be notes about publishers' addresses or Danfré's family, especially his brother François. On folio 82', however, there appears the note: "Christmas songs printed by Marin Danfré on the last day of October 1500."¹ There is another note on folio 6: "Livre de Noël fable [?] font . . . [?] nouvelles songée en dormant [?] Le premier est Conditor Alma siderum esterna Lux Credenantion [sic; recte: Credentium] Redemptor omni siderom [sic; recte: siderum] esterna lux credeanctio [sic]" followed by another attempt at the first three lines of the Conditor Noël, this time written sideways.

In the later sixteenth century, there was a family of printers by the name of Danfrie² of which Marin might have been an ancestor. But beyond this, nothing is known of the copyist. His scribbles do show that printed collections of noëls were made in 1500, and it seems that the source as a whole was in its present state when Marin got hold of it from the royal library in order to prepare a printed collection of

¹"Chansons de Noël Imprimé par marin danfré Le dernier jour d'octobre l'an mil cinq cent."

²August Jal, Dictionnaire critique de biographie et d'histoire, Paris, H. Plon, 1867, pp. 466-68. A Phillipe was born ca. 1531-35 in Basse-Bretagne and moved to Paris where he first engraved printing characters and then became a printer. See also Ferdinand Hoefer, Nouvelle biographie générale, Paris, Firmin-Didot frères, 1853-66, 46 Vols., Vol. XII, p. 926, who spells the surname "Danfrit" rather than "Danfrie."

noëls. One result of his efforts was probably BN 2506, in which are hastily scribbled much of the contents of BN 2368 beginning with "Conditor alma siderum," the first noël of his printed collection. BN 2506 would then represent the exemplar which Danfré used for his publication.¹ Thus it would seem that BN 2368 was compiled for Charles VIII, passed into the library of Louis XII, and became the basis for a collection of noëls printed in 1500 by Marin Danfré.

The bulk of BN 2368 (folios 9 to 63') is in the same caractères bâtarde and has the capital letters filled in. From folio 64 to the end appear five different hands and shades of ink. Unlike BA 3653, BN 2368 was not a single compilation, but a major compilation to which other items were later added.

In BA 3653, fifteen songs are completely in Latin,² twelve are half in Latin and half in French, ten are predominantly in French with a few Latin phrases or words, and only

¹Not the exemplar for 2368 as Gastoué concludes. 2506 is foliated by the printer's alphabetical system: ai, aii, aiii, . . . aviii, with four gatherings marked by the letters a to d.

²Of these, two (nos. 7 and 31) are liturgical songs of the Christmas season. See Cyr Ulysse Chevalier, Repertorium hymnologicum, Louvain, Lefever, 1892-1921, 6 Vols. Vol. II, p. 726, no. 21374, and p. 725, no. 21347, respectively. The former was used as a text for an English carol. See no. 67 in John Stevens (ed.), Mediaeval carols (Musica Britannica, Vol. IV), London, Stainer and Bell, 1952, p. 54. The majority seem to have been newly composed or at least used only locally. "Conditor alma siderum" is glossed macaronically in number 22. Many of the Latin phrases used in the noëls are by no means a sign of liturgical erudition on the part of the writer. Such simple quotes as "Benedicamus Domino," "Ecce ancilla," or sections of the prayer "Ave Maria, gracia plena" would not require the knowledge of a liturgical expert, but rather only a fairly attentive church-goer to insert them into the songs.

nineteen are entirely in French. In BN 2368, three are completely in Latin, four are half in Latin and half in French, thirteen are predominantly in French and thirty-two are completely in French. Between the two collections, then, one can discern a difference in the proportions of Latin and French used in the texts: BA 3653 is the more Latin of the two. Correlative with this is a tendency toward the citation of timbres¹ in BN 2368. None of the songs of BA 3653 is supplied with a timbre, whereas timbres are provided for songs 29 to 31, 34 to 36, 40, 48, and 51 of BN 2368. This correlation holds as well for the earliest printed collections of noëls. These are almost exclusively in French, and in most cases a timbre is cited.

Printed collections of noëls and cantiques

(Dated precisely)

The first extant printed collection of noëls is S'en-suivent les noëls tres excelens published by Guillaume Guerson. Since Guerson's publishing career extends from 1495 to 1502,² the book can be dated roughly within that period. According to the title-page these are noëls "which the Redeemed Girls

¹Rubrics indicating the song or songs on which the following text is based, or of which it is a contrafactum.

²He died sometime between August 9, 1502 and January 31, 1503. See Philippe Rénouard, Documents. sur les imprimeurs, Paris, H. Champion, 1901, pp. 97, 108, 117; "Guillaume Guerson de Villelongue," Bulletin du bibliophile, 1897, pp. 219-21; "Guillaume Guerson, musicien," Revue des livres anciens, I (1914), pp. 449-51.

sing in their devotions."¹ According to Gastoué,² the author is probably Jehan Tisserant. In 1492, Tisserant, Anne of Brittany's confessor, founded the refuge of Ste. Madeleine for the "Filles Repenties" who were known as the Madelonnettes. He died in 1501.³ In the Dévote contemplation, also published by Guerson, the "Filles Rendues" are equated with the "Filles Repenties à Paris." Two other books of devotional song and poetry by Tisserant, S'ensuit le dicté and S'ensuyt une très belle salutation, were also published, but their publisher is not identified. Thus Guerson's collection of noëls was published sometime between 1495 and 1502 and was written between 1492 and 1502 for the Madelonnettes. Since Tisserant is known as a writer of devotional literature connected with the Madelonnettes, it is quite probable that he wrote the book between 1492 and his death in 1501. This brief work begins like the lost printed collection of Danfré with the "Conditor" hymn. This is followed by "A la venue," a frequently printed noël, and the collection concludes with two new contrafacts for which timbres are provided.

¹"Lesquelz chantent les filles Rendues par dévotion." The colophon specifies "les filles rendues à paris."

²Op. cit., p. 235.

³Henry Poulaille, La Grande et belle bible des noels anciens, p. 260, asserts, however, that Tisserant died in 1494. Unfortunately, he provides no documentation to support his claim. The reference to Tisserant's death on September 8, 1501, is to be found in the Troisième volume des chroniques of Enguerrand de Monstrelet (Paris, Pierre L'Huillier, 1572), p. 234: "En cestuy an [1501] le jour de nostre Dame de Septembre [Sept. 8] au soir, . . . trespasa frère Iean Tisserant Observantin dont est parlé devant."

The Dévote contemplation has a similar background to that of the noël collection¹ and was acquired with it by the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris.² Rather than noëls it contains a single long poem on carnal temptations and the necessity for "the girls of Paris all dressed in white" (probably the Madelonnettes) to repent.

The date of the publication of S'ensuit le dicté by Tisserant cannot be determined precisely. The work is interesting for the light it sheds on the use of song in sermons of the time. The title-page asserts that Tisserant "had it sung during his sermon."³ Rather than provide a timbre for the text, Tisserant has reproduced an entire melody. This tune is notated in a variant of the standard white notation of the time. A breve (■) is represented by a black oblong rectangle (■), and a semibreve (◊) is notated as a black diagonal rectangle (◊). These are the only durations employed. Bar lines of half the modern length appear after the altered breves, suggesting an iambic grouping: ◊ ■ ◊ ■ ◊ ■ etc.⁴

The Chanson piteuse by Olivier Maillard also illustrates

¹Gastoué, loc. cit., however, dates the work less precisely between 1489 and 1503.

²Their acquisition numbers are 154968 and 154967 respectively.

³"Fait chanter [le dicté] à son sermon."

⁴The tune would appear to be original with Tisserand. The liturgical melody closest to it is that of the hymn "Tibi Christe, splendor Patris." This is found in two versions in Bruno Stäblein (ed.), Hymnen (Monumenta Monodica Medii Aevi, Vol. I), Kassel and Basel, Bärenreiter, 1956, pp. 399 and 461. Cf. John R. Bryden and David G. Hughes, An Index of Gregorian chant, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 1969, 2 Vols., Vol. I, p. 414.

the use of song in sermons. Maillard's composition seems to have been an improvised contrafact made up while he was preaching. The title-page asserts that it was "composed in the midst of a sermon, to the tune of the song called 'Bergeronnette savoisiennne.'"¹ The date of the composition is given as "around Pentecost . . . 1502." The only indication of its date of publication is that it was after June 13 of the same year when Maillard died, for the title-page says that "he died quite soon after" its composition.²

Printed collections of Noël's (imprecisely dated)

The final group of noël collections: BA 10649², BA 10650¹, and BA 10650² can be assigned to the period 1480-1520 only with great uncertainty. In these, timbres are provided for almost all of the songs.³ Among the timbres in BA 10650¹ and BA 10650² are such monophonic songs as "L'Amour de moy," "Allégez-moy," "Mon seul plaisir," "Il fait bon aymer," "En douleur et tristesse," "La Péronnelle," "C'est simplement donné congé," and "A qui direlle sa pensée." Each of these songs appears in one or both of the large monophonic chansonniers of the time: Paris, B.N. f. fr. 12744 and f. fr. 9346. This leads one to suspect that both these collections of noëls date from the

¹"Composée en pleine prédication, au son de la chanson nommée 'Bergeronnette savoisiennne.'"

²"Et bien tost après trépasa."

³In BA 10650, no. 1, the tune for the first phrase of "Conditor alma siderum" is printed in the same notation as was used in S'ensuit le dicté. (The half-bar lines which appear in S'ensuit are, however, missing.) The tune is a mensural version of the Conditor melody found in Stäblein, op. cit., pp. 215 and 255.

period of the chansonniers, that is, ca. 1500-1510.¹ However, just as retrospective editions of secular songs from the turn of the century appear around 1540, so too were noëls from ca. 1500 reprinted later. Thus, it is difficult to determine whether these collections represent booklets published around 1500 or later. Indeed, the first mentioned collection BA 10 649² appears to have been compiled in the 1540's. One of its songs uses as its timbre "Da Nobis, Tu es bon compaignon." This song contains references to events which Emile Picot has dated 1544. Furthermore, several other timbres in the collection, such as "Vous perdez temps de mesdire mal d'elle," "Les Bourguignons ont mis le camp," "Marseille la jolye," "Puis que j'ay perdu mon amy," "Ayguemort en Provence," "La chanson de l'entreprinse de Monsieur de Vendosme," and "Adieu m^e amye, adieu ma rose," are found in collections dating from 1535 to 1548. Finally, with the exception of four songs, none of the noëls or timbres in this collection correspond to pieces in precisely dateable sources from the period 1480-1520. The four exceptions: "Noël, Noël, disons trois fois Noël," "A la venue de Noël," "Noël nouvellet, Noël chantons icy," and "Celle digne acouchée," are found in collections throughout the late fifteenth and entire sixteenth century.

A number of songs (including those just cited) in these three collections are not provided with timbres. Most of these

¹The timbre "Au feu, au feu venez moy secourir" in BA 10649² is the only one of the collection which corresponds to a song in the monophonic chansonniers. However, it is probably not a parody of B: 50, which begins "Au feu, au feu qui mon cuer art."

appear in BA 3653 or BN 2368. They thus represent either noëls composed before the custom of indicating timbres had been fully established or songs whose tunes need not have been indicated since they would have been well known to all readers. Other cases involve special songs such as a noël "en escossoys" ("in Scottish") in BA 10650¹ and an aguillanneuf in BA 10650².

None of the printed collections is luxurious. They are all small¹ and lack covers. Typographical errors such as inversions of n's and u's occur frequently. No space is wasted for the sake of legibility or beauty of format. The few typographical embellishments, such as capitals, are used inconsistently rather than uniformly.² These, then, are products of the popular press, much like the text collections of secular songs described above.

A comparison of noëls which recur in different sources reveals that there is great discrepancy among the textual versions. In some cases only the opening lines are similar, the versions thereupon branching in different directions. Thus, although noëls are preserved in written form, the tradition must largely have been oral. A few basic schemes and motives are preserved, but the remainder is reworked in a process

¹BA 10649² is 12 x 8 cm., upright; BA 10650¹ and BA 10650² are 12 x 8.7 cm., upright. See above, note 68, for the similar sizes of BA 3653 and the printed collections of secular texts.

²In BA 10649², at least eight types of capitals can be discerned. For the most part, they are square rather than cursive in shape. The backgrounds are dotted or black; they contain figures such as a flower, rabbit, or man; the border of the square enclosing the initial is either solid or white, etc.

similar to that of "folklorization."¹

In provenance, the sources of noëls point in two directions: toward Paris and toward the courts of Charles VIII and Louis XII. Noëls, especially Latin ones connected with the royal courts, seem to have been used both in public celebrations of the Christmas season and in private devotions. Cantiques appear to have been used in the sermons of preachers and for devotional purposes both among the members of religious orders and the general public. It seems probable that printed noëls were intended for a broad readership, their inexpensiveness making them accessible to many. Whether they were used for devotional purposes or for group celebrations has not been determined.

A number of circumstances indicate that the noëls were sung not only during Advent, but in the preceding weeks as well. Danfré dated his publication October 31. And BA 3653: 6 is a hymn to Saint Catherine, the Virgin Martyr whose saint's day is November 25.²

The contents and background of these sacred collections are quite in accord with general tendencies in Western European Christianity at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance. As scholars have noted,³ the fourteenth

¹On folklorization in French folk song, see Patrice Coirault, Notre chanson folklorique, Paris, 1942, passim.

²See Liber Usualis, 1939, p. 1762.

³E.g. Francis Rapp, L'Eglise et la vie religieuse en occident à la fin du Moyen Age, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1971, pp. 388 f.

and fifteenth centuries saw the emergence of Christianity as a "popular" religion. Mendicant orders such as the Franciscans to which Tisserand and Maillard belonged preached throughout the cities and countryside. Especially during Advent they would spend a week in a given village, town, or city delivering daily sermons of several hours' duration. To judge from Maillard's remarks, the congregations consisted overwhelmingly of women and children, and though his contemporary, Michel Menot, described his congregation as "poor and simple people" (pauper et simplex populus, le povre et simple peuple) there is some indication that many of them could read, for the preachers castigate their listeners for their attachment to French romances and their hypocritical flaunting of their books of hours.¹

What these men preached was the piety, morality, and individual spirituality evident in the songs of Maillard and Tisserand.² At the same time, the Annunciation and Nativity, the main topics of the noëls, became centers of devotion, and rosaries based on the Ave Maria (cf. Tisserand's "Ave, Mère du Rédempteur" in the Appendix) were introduced for domestic use.³ In this way, the sacred repertoire shares much with the sermons and religious currents of the time, just as the secular songs exploited cultural metaphors found in the plays.

¹See A. J. Krailsheimer, Rabelais and the Franciscans, Oxford, Clarendon, 1963, pp. 20, 31, 37, 52 f.

²See Rapp, loc. cit.

³See ibid., pp. 389-91, and Krailsheimer, op. cit., pp. 30, 41.

Monophonic chansonniers

The two monophonic chansonniers Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale f.fr. 12744 and MS 9346 of the same collection have been described briefly by Gaston Paris and Geneviève Thibault.¹ Following Gérold, these two sources will be referred to as A and B.²

Both A and B are upright in format. They are similarly large in both the size of each page and the numbers of folios they contain (100 and 106, respectively). A's folios are of parchment, sturdy and of fair quality. B's are of a rather thick vellum. Both contain an index of their songs. A's index is arranged alphabetically. Songs beginning with the same letter are grouped together and then arranged in order of their appearance in the manuscript. B's index is arranged solely by the order of the song's appearance in the manuscript. Bibliographically, B is strictly organized by openings. The text and music for the first stanza is placed on a verso ruled with seven five-line staves. The remainder of the text appears on the facing recto. In cases where more space is required, the next opening is used, the term "Residuum" appearing at the top of the verso. An ornamental border surrounds the top and left sides of each recto. The first two staves are short, allowing

¹Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., pp. x-xii, Geneviève Thibault, "Notes sur Quelques Chansons normandes du Manuscrit de Bayeux," La musique et les musiciens en Normandie (Etudes normandes, no. 83), 1954, pp. 4-6.

²Gérold, Le Manuscrit, passim.

room for an ornamental initial between them and the margins.¹

A is less rigidly organized, but the opening is still the unit. The music for the first stanza is written on two to four staves which appear at the bottoms of pages. Above these the text (including the first stanza again) is written. In some cases there are discrepancies between the versions of the first stanza which appear in the upper text portion and the lower musical portion.² Two formats are used. In the first, a single song, both text and music, is placed on an opening beginning on the verso and concluding on the facing recto. In the second, one song, both its text and music, is placed on each page of an opening. Because of its use of the second type of format, A contains 143 songs in about the same number of folios as are required for the 102 songs of B. Though less lavish than B, A does at least feature a gold capital at the beginning of each song and for each letter of the alphabetically arranged index.

In each source, a single scribe copied both the text and music, to judge from the colors of ink, strokes, and widths of characters both musical and textual.

In B, each song is numbered in lower-case Roman numerals in the top margin of a verso and in Arabic numerals at the bottom. In A, folios are numbered with lower case Roman numerals in the usual place for manuscripts of the time; the

¹For a facsimile of folios 25'-26 of B see Helen Hewitt (ed.), Canti B, Plate XVI, pp. 84 f.

²See Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., 1935 edition, Plate I for a black and white reproduction of a page from A.

upper right corner of each recto.

Generally, a line of text appears on a ruled line of parchment. This is especially true of A. In B, probably because of the greater restrictions of space in its format, sometimes two lines of text appear side by side on a ruled line. In both sources, stanzas are separated by blank ruled lines. In the musical portion, notes appear evenly spaced. The text is distributed unevenly either directly beneath or beneath and a little to the left of the notes to which it is to be sung.

The direction of stems (on longs, minims, semiminims and fusas) is upward for notes whose heads lie on or below the second space. Above this (from the third line) stems are either upward or downward.¹ The frequent erasures indicate that the sources represent final rather than preliminary copies. Most of the errors corrected were the result of simple slips of the pen. In some cases a visual skip from one line of the exemplar to another was the reason for such a mistake.

The folios of B are further organized into groups of eight. In the ornamental margins appear compartments or encadrements, either outlined, or filled in, with gold. These include geometrical designs such as ellipses, trapezoids, and rectangles; symbolic forms such as fleurs de lys, hearts, diamonds, and leaves; and other, less easily classifiable shapes. Similarly, the second and seventh, third and sixth, and fourth

¹This is a convention followed in the Petrucci publications ca. 1500.

and fifth share the same shapes in their margins. Four different sets of shapes are used in each group of eight folios.¹

Both sources can be dated with fair accuracy, A on the basis of internal evidence, B on the basis of external evidence. A contains a number of songs which refer to events of a military or political nature. These range from the capture of Brittany by the French in 1488 to the Italian expeditions of Charles VIII. Louis XII and René de Vaudemont are alluded to in a praiseful manner. Emperor Maximilian is depicted in an unfavorable light. And sympathy is extended to the Castilian royalty for the death of Prince Alfonso in 1492.² Therefore, the period 1498-1502 seems the most likely one for the compilation of the source, a time when these people, events, and issues were relatively recent or, indeed, current.

The initials of the first sixteen songs of B spell out the name Charles de Bourbon.³ Within the margins appears a winged hart whose neck is ringed with the motto "Espérance." Charles de Bourbon, the connétable, used the winged hart as a battle emblem and as an owner's mark on his tapestries as can

¹Folios 105 and 106, the last ones of the source, can, of course, not be arranged in this way. Within folios 1 to 8, the fourth and fifth correspond.

²See Paris and Gevaert, op. cit., nos. 100, 125, 126, 128, 137, 140, and 141.

³The bastard baron de Caudes-Aigues (d. 1502); the bastard comte de Rousillon et de Ligny (d. 1510); and the bishop of Clermont (d. 1504) are mentioned as persons who might be termed Charles de Bourbon in Etienne Louis, Généalogie de la maison de Bourbon, Paris, Lecoffre fils, 1869.

be seen in sources dating from 1515 and ca. 1516,¹ and "Espérance" was a motto of the Bourbon family.² The style of the margins is that of the atelier of Jean Bourdichon around 1510.³ Thus B appears to have been compiled for Charles the connétable of Bourbon ca. 1510.

A number of aspects of A and B point toward the uses to which they were put. First, they are both luxurious. No expense was spared in their compilation and embellishment. Obviously both were destined for the library of a wealthy patron. However, it seems unlikely that they were to moulder there without being put to use. Little effort was spared in assuring that they would be readily legible and completely notated. In polyphonic chanson sources of the time texts often appear incomplete, and musical signals such as the signum congruentiae are frequently missing. In A and B almost everything

¹Picot, Recueil, Les Croniqueurs, p. 232, ll 209 ff. See also pp. 204, 206 and note 1, p. 232 of the same edition. The hart is pictured in a number of poses: sitting, standing, from a hind view, and with its right paw lifted.

²Paulin Paris, Les Manuscrits françois de la bibliothèque du roi. Paris, Techener, 7 Vols., 1836-56, Vol. I, pp. 109 f. This had been the devise of Pierre II, father of Charles, the connétable. See MS Bibliothèque Nationale, f.fr. 6767, "Roman de masques de Rome." See also MS Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Lavallière, 44, fols. 138'-39'. These are discussed in Le Roux de Lincy, Catalogue de la bibliothèque des ducs de Bourbon en 1507 et en 1523, Paris, Crapelet, 1850, pp. 89 ff.

³Raymond Limousin, Jean Bourdichon, peintre et enlumineur, son atelier et son école, Lyon, Presses académiques, 1954; David MacGibbon, Jean Bourdichon, a court painter of the fifteenth century, Glasgow, R. MacLehose, 1933; Emile Mâle, Jean Bourdichon et son atelier, Paris, "Gazette des Beaux Arts," 1904 summarize the stages in Bourdichon's development.

necessary for a performance is explicitly noted. This would seem to indicate that the readers for which the monophonic sources were prepared were amateurs. While professional musicians could easily supply missing texts and adjust underlay, an amateur might not be expected to do so. The sources are also relatively complete and unified. They are finished, specialized products. This is quite a change from earlier and even contemporary chansonniers in which portions were added and different scribes were employed over a period of years.¹ Other chansonniers are also miscellanies, French songs appearing together with Italian² or Flemish³ songs. A tendency toward specialized collections is, however, evident in some sixteenth-century sources such as the MSS British Museum, Harley 5242, and Florence Basevi 2442 as well as Giunta's publication Chansons à troys, 1520.⁴

Chansonniers of the time tend slightly to be organized by content. In Cambridge 1760, chansons by Févin and Gascogne are kept in separate sections. In Paris 1597, three songs

¹Such as MS Dijon, Bibliothèque municipale, 517, described in S. Morelot, "Notice sur un manuscrit de musique ancienne de la Bibliothèque de Dijon," Mémoires de la Commission des Antiquités du Département de la Côte d'Or, IV, 1856, pp. 133-60.

²E.g. MS Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Codex Magliabecchi XIX.117.

³E.g. MS Cambridge University, Magdalene College, Pepysian Library 1760, which is roughly contemporary with A and B.

⁴Harley 5242 and the Giunta publication consist largely of monophonic songs in three-part arrangements; Basevi consists mostly of four-part arrangements of what Howard Brown terms "popular" songs. See Brown, "Chansons," . . .

whose first lines deal with "regretz" are placed together as are polyphonic arrangements of monophonic songs.¹ Similarities of composer and textual incipit are the bases for grouping songs in polyphonic chansonniers. Was this the result of planning prior to the copying? I think not. Most likely the songs of a given composer tended to travel from scriptorium to scriptorium as a group. Similarly songs belonging to the "regretz" cycle recur together and must have circulated together. Since arrangements of monophonic songs constituted a new type of composition, they were probably distributed together.² In order to compile a polyphonic chansonnier a set of exemplars was required, there being little question of copying from memory.

The case of monophonic chansonniers is quite different. Monophonic songs were probably transmitted in most cases orally rather than in written form. The wide divergencies between the variants of single songs in A and B indicate this,³ as can be seen in the following case:

¹See nos. 39, 40, 42, 48, 49, 50, 70, 71, 73, and 74. However, one "chanson de regretz" is separate from the other two and two settings of the "Fors seullement" text are not placed together.

²See Howard M. Brown, "Chansons for the Pleasure of a Florentine Patrician: Florence, Biblioteca del Conservatorio di Musica, MS Basevi 2442," in Aspects of medieval and Renaissance music: A Birthday offering to Gustave Reese, London, Melbourne, Cape Town, Oxford, 1967, pp. 56-66, on the novelty of popular arrangements.

³See below, pp. 119-22.

A Le bon es-poir que mon cœur a

B Le bon es-poir que mon cœur a

A Sus le temps qui est à ve-nir

B Sus le temps qui est ad-ve-nir

A Me fait sou-vent en joy' te-nir

B Me faict tous-jours en-joy' te-nir

A Ce qui doit ad-ve-nir ad-vien-dra

B Ce qui doit ad-ve-nir vien-dra

A J'ay en-du-ré peine et dou-leur
Qui bien m'ont fait chan-ger cou-leur

B Le vent qui ven-te d'u-ne part
Il faut qu'il chan-ge tost ou tard

A
Par mon ser-ment le temps pas-ser
Quant est de moy j'en suis las-sé.

B
Si ne peult pas tous-jours du-rer
Maiz trop il nous peult an-noy-er

Similarly, the order of appearance of songs seems to have been the product of a stream of the copyist's consciousness. Songs with similar textual openings appear together as do songs with similar tunes. Certain literary types such as songs dealing with Normandy or the Vau-de-Vire and wars or political events are also found in close proximity.¹ Rather than working with a set of copies of songs, progressing from one batch to another, the compilers of the monophonic chansonniers appear to have progressed in their memories from the recollection of one song to that of another. Thus the order of pieces in the monophonic sources might furnish a clue as to how a musician of the time grouped his repertoire.

Conclusions

From the written sources one can infer that French monophonic song reached a rather broad public. Wealthy patrons seem to have been responsible for the compilations of BA 3653, BN 2568, A, and B. Devotees of such preachers as Tisserant and Maillard constituted a segment of the public for monophonic religious song. Cantiques and noëls were written for members

¹See below, pp. 94-97.

of religious orders such as the Madelonnettes. And a general reading public was the target of printed noëls and secular text collections.

The sources also reveal that, though the repertoire comes down to us in written form, it was primarily transmitted without regard for a written original. Both the noëls, with their great divergencies of textual variants, and, to a lesser extent, the musical sources demonstrate that fidelity to a single version was not of paramount concern even to those who recorded them. Printed collections of popular song texts show at times a remarkable fidelity to a discoverable model and at times a cavalier attitude. This lack of fidelity could arise from the variability of an oral tradition or from calculated revision. On the one hand, the batelleurs can be cited as oral transmitters of popular songs. On the other hand, editors, especially those connected with printing houses, might have revised written texts. In either case the lack of fidelity to a model shows that such songs were considered to be "in the public domain," susceptible to alterations, deletions, and additions, with little regard for the original work.

That monophonic song was transmitted in part by special types of collections helps one to separate it from polyphonic song. Each monophonic source is uniform in content. Noëls and cantiques appear in separate collections. Special publications are devoted to secular song texts and monophonic versions of secular songs are found in distinctive manuscripts. Most importantly, the collections described above have several

songs in common. Many of the secular texts in the printed collections correspond to those found in the monophonic chansonniers. And songs from both these types of sources are cited as timbres for noëls or cantiques. By contrast, there are almost no known concordances between these sources and collections of poetry by professional writers such as Jean Molinet and Jean Lemaire de Belge or by anonymous courtiers.¹ At the same time works by celebrated professionals, anonymous courtiers, and the anonymous writers of monophonic songs are found in polyphonic arrangements of the time. Accordingly a clear distinction can be made between poetry which appears in the monophonic repertoire and that which appears in collections of courtly poetry to be sung polyphonically or read.

Other features of the songs such as the literary features they embody, their style and form must, of course, also be considered. However, the study of these aspects depends largely on first having isolated a basic corpus which can then be submitted to examination. And in this the distinctiveness and interrelatedness of the songs' sources and the apparently "public domain" nature of their transmission contribute to isolate this repertoire from others of the same period.

¹For a list of courtly sources see Françon, Poèmes de transition. General observations on the works of professional poets of the time appear in Guy, Histoire de la poésie française au XVI^e siècle, I.