

INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Sources of French monophonic songs survive from the Middle Ages onward. Among the creators of such songs, one can cite the troubadours and trouvères of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Jehannot de l'Escurel and Guillaume de Machaut of the fourteenth century, Clément Marot and Jean Calvin of the sixteenth century, as well as innumerable street singers (chanteurs publics) and authors of satiric plays (vaudevilles) in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹ The monophonic songs with which the present study deals survive from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, that is, about 1490-1520.

Throughout history, French monophonic songs have been closely associated with polyphony and court life. Not only are troubadour and trouvère songs preserved in courtly sources, but also Machaut was a courtly poet and polyphonist.

¹On the troubadours and trouvères, see Friedrich Gennrich, "Troubadours, Trouvères," Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, XIII (1966), cols. 829-45; on Jehan de l'Escurel, see Gilbert Reaney, "L'Escurel," op. cit., VIII (1960), cols. 666-67; on Guillaume de Machaut, see Armand Machabey, "Machaut," ibid., cols. 1392-99; on Marot and Calvin, see Pierre Pidoux, Le Psaltier huguenot du XVI^e siècle, Bâle, Bärenreiter, 1962; on the chanteurs publics, see Patrice Coirault, Formation de nos chansons folkloriques, Paris, Editions du Scarabée, 1953; on vaudevilles, see Daniel Hertz, "Vaudeville," Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, XIII (1966), cols. 1319-32.

Moreover, Marot wrote courtly poems which were also set polyphonically. Furthermore, noble poetasters of the seventeenth century turned out countless parodies of street songs, and eighteenth-century collections of monophony also include polyphonic arias from court operas.¹ Finally, many of the songs considered in this study were also set polyphonically and adhere to prosodic practices of court poetry ca. 1500. Thus, there has been considerable overlap between French monophonic song on the one hand and both courtly poetry and polyphony on the other.

Problems in French Monophonic Song around 1500

Scholars have argued that all or many of the songs dealt with in the present study were fairly independent of courtly and polyphonic practice around 1500. Gustave Reese and Theodore Karp have demonstrated that the songs were not merely extracted from polyphonic originals, but rather that the courtly polyphonic versions are settings of originally monophonic pieces.² Elisabeth Heldt describes a number of the songs as courtly (höflich) and others as non-courtly.³

¹On Machaut's career, see Armand Machabey, Guillaume de Machaut, 130-? - 1377, Paris, Richard-Masse, 1955; on Marot's courtly songs, see Jean Rollin, Les Chansons de Clément Marot, Paris, Fischbacher, 1951; an instance of a source which mixes polyphony and monophony in the eighteenth century is Nouveau recueil de chansons choisies, 4th ed., La Haye, Jean Neaulme, 1735, 4 v.

²Gustave Reese and Theodore Karp, "Monophony in a Group of Renaissance Chansonniers," Journal of the American Musicological Society, V (1952), pp. 4-15.

³Elisabeth Heldt, Französische Virelais aus dem 15. Jahrhundert, Halle, M. Niemayer, 1916.

Finally, Howard Brown has argued that the songs considered here are part of a single monophonic tradition extending throughout the Renaissance.¹ The relationships among monophonic song, court life, and polyphony of the time, then, are quite complex.

From this complexity the central questions of the present study arise. To what extent are the songs similar to or different from contemporary courtly poems and polyphonic songs? And to what extent do they constitute a single genre?

In order to answer these questions, close attention is paid to features which are a) idiosyncratic to monophonic songs, courtly poems, or polyphonic songs of the period, b) shared by these categories, c) indicative of unity or diversity within the monophonic repertoire itself. An evaluation of these three types of features requires, in turn, the solution of a number of methodological problems.

Methodology

The problems of method which arise can be grouped under the following headings:

- 1) The analysis of the sources of monophonic songs,
- 2) The examination of the historical context of the songs,
- 3) The analysis of the songs themselves and the specifi-

¹Howard Mayer Brown, "The Chanson Rustique: Popular Elements in the 15th- and 16th-Century Chanson," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XII (1959), pp. 16-26.

cation of their interrelationships with a view to determining the extent to which they constitute a unit,

- 4) The evaluation of the testimony of musical and literary theorists of the time and the assessment of its relevance for the monophonic songs,
- 5) The comparison of aspects of the monophonic songs with features of court poetry and polyphony of the period,

These will be dealt with in order.

Analysis of Sources

In analyzing the sources of monophonic songs, one is most concerned with determining the dates, provenances, and destinations of the sources themselves apart from their contents. In the past, problems of chronology have been dismissed as insoluble or irrelevant. The principal argument advanced in favour of this position has been the fact that certain of the monophonic songs appear in sources a century or more apart.¹ However, such songs are relatively rare. The majority of monophonic songs considered here survived for a much shorter time, being found in the sources of one generation and missing from those of the next. Furthermore, Brian Jeffery has recently demonstrated a close correlation between the dates of the sources in which some early

¹E.g., Brown, op. cit., p. 20.

sixteenth-century monophonic chansons are found and the styles of their texts.¹ Jeffery showed that songs from sources before 1525 were quite different textually from those in the immediately following period. That the songs' style might vary in time is thus adopted as a working hypothesis throughout the present study, and will be tested with respect to both prosodic and melodic criteria.

In order to date the songs, non-stylistic evidence is employed, so that any correlations between style and chronology are not arrived at by circular logic. The type of evidence employed includes data on the compilers and publishers of sources, and references to identifiable historical events in the songs themselves. The latter must be handled with great care, because certain songs with historical references, namely, those having to do with the Norman resistance to English occupation around 1450, are found in sources which can be dated by other means about a generation apart: around 1510 to 1535.² However, other historical songs, that is, ones not concerned with the Norman resistance, were more short-lived and, in fact, are rarely found in more than a single source.³

¹Brian Jeffery (ed.), Chanson verse of the early Renaissance, II, London, Tecla, c 1976, pp. 13-21.

²For example, Helas, Olivier Basselin is found in both Paris, BN, f. fr. 12744 and the Bayeux manuscript from ca. 1500 and 1510 and appears in S'Ensuyvent plusieurs belles Chansons nouvelles (1535).

³For example, the song on the death of King René d'Anjou (1480) which appears in the Bayeux manuscript (no. 88) and the historical songs discussed by Gaston Paris in

Another treacherous type of evidence is the appearance of a song in a source which can be dated precisely and also in a source which cannot. Although one might regard such recurrences as indications of a similar date for both sources, they must be interpreted with care, for as Jeffery has shown, songs first appearing ca. 1500-20 were later republished in retrospective editions during the 1530's.¹ On the title-pages of such editions, the songs are described as old (vieilles) and are found to occupy discrete sections clearly separated from the newer material.²

The provenance and destinations of monophonic sources are important for any indication they might provide of courtly involvement in the songs' composition and performance. Once again, non-stylistic data are to be preferred. These include information on the publishers, compilers, and composers of the songs. Also to be considered are physical aspects of the sources themselves such as the size, format, quality of paper or parchment, amount of decoration, typography or calligraphy, etc. In this regard, one can presume that a source consisting of many large pages on which much of the surface is systematically left blank was more expensive to produce--and consequently, to purchase--than a smaller source that is crammed with writing or type. Simi-

his edition (with Auguste Gevaert) of Chansons du XVe siècle, Paris, 1875 and by Brian Jeffery in his edition of Chanson verse of the early Renaissance, I, London, the author, 1971.

¹Jeffery, op. cit., II.

²Jeffery, loc. cit.

larly, sources consisting of vellum decorated in gold and silver were presumably dearer than unadorned sources of mere parchment or paper. Such features can help one determine the relative wealth of those who used the sources and, hence, how many people might have had access to them.

Finally, the appearance of the same piece in different sources is taken into account. A most important consideration in this regard is the extent to which the "same" songs appear in different sources. Determining the identity of songs is made difficult by the fact that one frequently finds two or more texts that have the same or similar first lines, but which diverge soon after the beginning.¹ This in turn is probably related to the widespread practice of writing several texts to a given first line and a tendency throughout the monophonic songs for stock phrases to recur in several poems, especially in the first lines of texts. Given the prevalence of these practices, it seems better to err on the side of discounting genetic relationships than on the side of positing them on flimsy grounds. Accordingly, one insists on agreement not only in the first lines but also in the semantic content, rhymes, rhyme schemes, and meters.² The main hypothesis to be tested by compiling such concordances is that the texts of monophonic songs tend to occur in different sources than those in which texts of courtly poetry are found.

¹See the index in Appendix.

²Cf. the index.

Examination of the Historical Context of the Songs

Examining the historical context of monophonic song is fraught with difficulties. One would like to know as much as possible about the composers, performers, and consumers of the songs. However, information concerning composers is scanty, and our knowledge of the performers and consumers of songs is only indirect. Jean Tisserand, Olivier Maillard, Guillaume Guerson, François Briand and Jean Marot are the only known authors of monophonic songs ca. 1500, and only a handful of the surviving pieces can be attributed to them.¹ It would be incautious to presume that all of the remaining songs were composed by them.

With regard to performance and reception, it is known that the songs were performed by law clerks (serving as actors), preachers, and street-musicians for the general public. But very little is known of specific performers or members of the audiences. From documents connected with the Basoche, it is known where law clerks staged their plays, from records of royal expenses and references in plays, one can discern where street-singers performed, and from the uses of the vocative case in sermons much is known about the composition of their audiences.² But not much is known of those who heard, for example, Olivier Maillard perform his

¹See Appendix, and Jeffery, op. cit., I, pp. 74 f.

²See below, Chapter II.

"Chanson piteuse" (Pious Song) in Toulouse in May of 1502. The best one can do is assume that the audiences for plays, street-songs, and sermons were each fairly uniform, especially in the absence of contrary or complementary evidence. With respect to the readership for printed collections, one can only offer estimates of the expenses involved in purchasing such collections and the extent of literacy at the time.

With regard to the songs' social context, one can observe that around 1500, both polyphonic and monophonic songs are grouped under the rubric chanson.¹ Nevertheless, as will be seen, there is a distinction between the two kinds of song that goes much deeper than their textural differences, for the two types of chanson were treated in different ways at the time. First, their respective collections are different in kind: in monophonic sources more space is devoted to the texts than in polyphonic collections, and the texts--as well as the music--vary more widely from copy to copy. Secondly, the audience for monophonic songs seems to have been larger and more heterogeneous than that for the polyphonic chanson. Although both varieties appear to have been patronized by the nobility--to judge from dedicatory acrostics and marks of ownership alone--monophonic songs were also performed for the general public by amateur theatrical troupes, itinerant preachers, and street musicians, and were

¹"Chanson" at this time has several referents including monophonic and polyphonic songs, and poetry without music. In its Italian form (canzona) it can refer to instrumental works based on French polyphonic songs, and in its Latin form (cantus) it means simply a piece of music.

published in cheap editions by the emerging "popular press."¹ On these criteria alone, then, the monophonic songs can be considered to constitute a fairly distinctive branch of music in French culture around 1500. But the question arises whether the songs form a unit in any deeper sense. In order to solve this problem it is useful to distinguish between a "repertoire" of pieces and a "genre".

Analysis of the Songs

A repertoire can be considered any set of works no matter how diverse they might be in musical terms. A genre, on the other hand, can imply a collection of pieces which forms a musical unit. In order to test for such a unity one can suggest a number of criteria that might be invoked. First among these is uniformity.

The criterion of uniformity insures that one is dealing with a class of pieces, which, however different they may be, share at least one feature. Such a feature might be texture. For example, the songs dealt with here differ from much other music of the period by being usually monophonic and occasionally in two voices.² Thus, a defining feature might be "two or fewer voices". However, this

¹On the popular press in the early sixteenth century, see Jean-Pierre Seguin, L'Information en France avant le périodique, Paris, G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1964.

²See Henri Chardon (ed.), Noëls de 1512 de François Briand, Paris, H. Champion, 1904, nos. 2, 3, 12, and 19, and Gaston Paris and Auguste Gevaert (eds.), Chansons du XV^e siècle, nos. 109 and 109 bis for examples of two-part settings in otherwise monophonic sources.

does not distinguish the songs from ecclesiastical chants and their elaborations by discant. To distinguish the present genre further, then, one might specify that each song has a hierarchical metrical organization at the level of a semibreve or lower, a French text, and so forth.

Although some features might be shared by all pieces, they cannot be identical, since by definition, a genre is made up of different pieces. Thus, any piece in a genre must have at least one feature not shared by any other member of the group. For example, in the present body of songs, no two are alike with respect to pitch succession.

Between the variables (e.g., texture, meter, language) which have one value throughout the repertoire and those (e.g., pitch succession) whose values vary from piece to piece, there is a vast middle ground. For example, pieces in a repertoire might share some of features A, B, C, and D with regard to a single variable. If the repertoire is a genre, one can expect such features to be arranged "continuously". Individual songs would have features A and B, B and C, and C and D. If they had only features A and B, and C and D, there would be a disjunction. Perhaps the sample was too small for intervening types to appear or maybe what seemed to be a single genre should have been considered two genres. In such instances, one must rely on other features of the repertoire such as its class features, or extra-musical criteria (e.g., the vocabulary used to describe it), if one is to describe it as a genre.

One should also note that the continuous model is of extreme flexibility. For example, pieces which do not share even a single feature can belong to the continuum. This has two consequences. First, the cut-off point for the continuum can be quite arbitrary. Secondly, the continuum for one genre can be extended to include others. In the present study, this is an advantage, since one is concerned not only with monophonic song but also with courtly poetry and polyphonic song which share features with monophony.

In French monophonic song ca. 1500 it will be seen that there is a considerable amount of continuity. For example, there are pieces in which strophes conclude their first and last phrases on the finalis (A), and strophes which conclude their first and second halves on the finalis (B), according to the following scheme where l stands for the finalis and w, x, and y represent other degrees:

1) $\underbrace{l \ w \ x \ l}_{A} / \underbrace{y \ l \ y \ l}_{B} / \underbrace{l \ w \ x \ l}_{A} / \underbrace{l \ w \ x \ l}_{A} / \text{etc.}$

The musical score consists of four strophes of music, each with a line of lyrics. The strophes are grouped by a bracket on the right labeled 'A'. The lyrics are: 'L'a-mour de moy si est en-clo-se', 'En ung jo-li jar-di-net,', 'Où croist la rose et le mu-guet,', and 'Et aus-si faict la pas-se-ro-se.'.

Je la vis l'au-tre jour flou-ris

La vi-o-lette en ung vert pré

La plus bel-le qu'on-ques je vis,

Et la plus plai-sante à mon gré

Je la re-gar-de u-ne pou-se

Elle es-toit blan-che com-me let

Plus douce es-toit q'un ai-gne-let

ver-meil-let-te comme u-ne ro-se.

L'a-mour de moy si est en-clo-se

En ung jo-li jar-di-net,

Où croist la rose et le mu-quet

Et aus-si faict la pas-se-ro-se.

1 x y 1 A

There are also pieces in which only one of these features appears:

2) $\underbrace{w \ 1 \ w \ 1}_{B} / x \ y \ z \ 1 / \text{etc.}$

Dieu gard cel-le de des-hon-neur

Que j'ay long-temps ay-mé-

Je l'ay ay-mé de tout mon cuer

Ma jeu-nesse est pas-sé-

w 1 w 1 B

Or voy-je bien que c'est fo-li-e

Dy-mec-tre sa pen-cé-e

Quant el-le m'a dit en plo-rant

Nos a-mours sont fi-né-es

3) $\underbrace{1 \quad w \quad x \quad 1}_{A}$

Hel-las, il est pic de ma vi-e et hye et hy-e

Mes-nage a prins sus moy ri-gour

A-dieu com-mant joye et bau-dour

Es-ba-te-mant et chan-te-ri-e et hy-e et hy-e

Had only the two latter types (2 and 3) appeared and had ^{been} there been no other continuously ordered values, one might have doubted whether the corpus of songs represented a single unit rather than two genres. As it stands, however, the continuity of values argues strongly that one is dealing with one rather than two genres.

A third feature one can expect of a genre is "normality". By this one means that if there are certain musical variables which take different quantitative values (e.g., 1, 2, 3, etc.), the most frequent value should appear near the center of the range and the frequencies decrease from this center to the high and low extremes. In the songs considered here, for example, the ambituses range from a fourth to an eleventh: the most frequent value is an octave, less frequent are pieces having an ambitus of a sixth, seventh, or ninth, less frequent still are pieces having an ambitus of a fifth or tenth, and least frequent of all are ambituses of a fourth or eleventh.

Ambituses of French monophonic songs ca. 1500.

ambitus:	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
frequency:	1	9	50	48	77	46	9	2

If ambituses of a fourth and tenth had been most frequent and those of a seventh or octave least frequent, one might have considered the corpus to represent two repertoires rather than one, since according to the laws of probability, it is much more likely that a bimodal distribution has been

selected from a bimodal universe rather than a normal universe.¹

A final feature which one might expect is "consistency" of what is often referred to as "style". Traits which are arranged uniformly, continuously, or normally might be found in a corpus of songs but their claim to definitiveness is weak unless they are interrelated. If they are, one can consider the repertoire to embody a musical "system", and the observed uniformities, continuities, and normalities will appear to be coherent rather than isolated or fortuitous. For example, in the songs considered here, those with scheme 2 (above) range in length from 5 to 11 phrases: the distribution of lengths is approximately normal, eight phrases being the most frequent value. If one inquires what is special about eight-phrase stanzas, one finds that the prevailing system of prosody is hierarchical and binary: units of two, four, eight, and sixteen lines dominate the repertoire, and other numbers of lines can be considered contractions or expansions thereof. Thus it is not surprising that eight-line stanzas prevail. Similarly, the frequencies of various phrase finals can be related to the musical modes which dominate in the repertoire, and these in turn can be related to the types of cadences most often used. The latter feature is consistent with the prevailing metri-

¹The assumptions underlying normal distributions are discussed in texts such as Wilfrid J. Dixon and Frank J. Massey, Jr., Introduction to Statistical Analysis, 2nd ed., New York, McGraw-Hill, 1957, pp. 48-69. See also ibid., pp. 231, 351-54, on Poisson distributions.

cal organization and the apparent system of text underlay, which agrees with the hierarchical organization of prosodic meters, bringing one back to the point of origin. Thus, one can assert that these features are systematically related to one another. Indeed, as is shown in chapter 7, the bulk of regularities--tonal, metrical, and formal--can be explained in terms of a few basic concepts and relationships such as interval, adjacency, and bisection.

In order to describe the songs' features, one must, of course, analyze them. Three ideals are sought: consistency, completeness, and comparability. Since there is no a priori basis for selecting some songs for analysis and rejecting others, two avenues are open. First, one could analyze a random sample of the songs. However, this would tend to cause features which occur only in a small minority of the songs to be overlooked. Accordingly, it would be quite probable that, for example, songs by known authors would be neglected. These, however, constitute an important part of this study since they might shed light on the relationships between monophonic song and courtly poetry. Similarly, the few instances of two-voice counterpoint which might provide clues about the relationships between monophony and more complex textures at the time, would probably also be overlooked. The only recourse, then, is to analyze the entire repertoire.

If the results of analysis are to be comparable, that is, if the relationships among songs are to be describable in determinate terms, the same procedures of analysis

have to be applied to all the songs. In order to do this, the methods of analysis employed are defined operationally, so that all the pieces can be analyzed in the same way. It is also desirable for the analytic methods to yield quantitative values wherever possible, so that the findings from individual songs can be compared. Failing this, the findings can be compared according to a continuous scale as described above. Moreover, in both cases, the values should refer to a meaningful unit of analysis. For example, comparisons of numbers of lines are made between the numbers of lines in specific units such as individual songs, stanzas, strophes, etc., not undefined parts thereof. Similarly, qualitative accounts of the patterns of phrase finals refer to the phrase finals in a stanza, strophe, etc., not arbitrarily selected successions of phrase finals.

Before analyzing the songs, one must establish a text. By and large, the songs are rather determinately notated. Only two exceptions are worthy of note. First, the words of the few Poitevin Christmas songs--especially when they come down to us in manuscript copies--are quite difficult to decipher, for a dictionary of Renaissance Poitevin has not yet been compiled. With regard to textual style, however, the present study is mostly concerned with matters of prosody. Thus the problem of what the words mean is of little importance: the meters, rhymes, and rhyme schemes can all be discerned; only the referents of a number of terms are in doubt. Secondly, because of the nature of

Renaissance notation, it is not always clear which syllables are to be assigned to which notes. As will be shown, theoretical treatises on text underlay are of little help here. However, if one assumes that the relations between musical durations and syllables of text should be similar in both syllabic and melismatic settings, a solution can be reached, for these relationships are patterned in syllabic passages and similar patterns can be found in by far the majority of melismatic sections.

In summary, the present group of pieces is defined in two ways: extra-musically and musically. Fortunately, both approaches are possible to a certain extent, and turn out to be highly compatible. Cultural data of the time point toward a special corpus of songs, and this corpus turns out to be a unified genre. Unfortunately, though, not enough is known to discern whether and if so, how the songs should be divided into smaller groups. On the one hand, various songs are described, for example, as Christmas songs (noëls), begging songs for the Christmas season (aguillanneufs), or songs from the Vire valley in Normandy (vaux-de-vire), but these distinctions do not appear to correspond to any specifically musical features. On the other hand, some terms such as chanson rurale, virelai, etc. refer to the structures of certain songs, but these structures do not appear to be associated with any particular uses to which the songs might have been put. Accordingly, it seems appropriate to view the entire group as a single genre within French musi-

cal culture around 1500.

What this genre might be termed is an open question. Though several features of the songs distinguish them from other French songs of the period, one knows of no term which was employed then to designate them as a distinct group. The best candidate would appear to be rural song (chanson rurale), a term used by literary theorists which seems to mean "strophic song", and indeed most of the monophonic songs are strophic. As will be seen later, this term might have had extra-musical connotations as well. However, since its usage seems to have been restricted to a small segment of the population which cultivated the songs, namely, rhetorical theorists and their readers, it must be viewed as a minority term for the genre.

Evaluation of Literary and Musical Theory

There is a further problem if one applies the writings of literary theorists of the time to the monophonic songs, for the main focus of their remarks is on courtly and especially professional poetry. Thus, it is not surprising that their discussions of certain forms which appear in the monophonic repertoire are somewhat confusing, for these seem not to have been their main concern. Nevertheless, their writings are of considerable value, for the overall approach to poetry which they represent is consistent with prosodic practices found in the monophonic songs. Versification schemes in the monophonic repertoire are either exactly the same as those discussed in the treatises or close variants

thereof, so that there is no great gulf between the prosody of the treatises and that of the monophonic songs. Indeed, many of the pieces might have been written by professionals or courtiers as exercises in light verse, for the only writers whose names have survived were highly educated people.

The application of notions articulated by music theorists is also somewhat problematical. In the first place, the organization of their treatises observes a traditional dichotomy between unmeasured monophony and measured polyphony, and the songs dealt with here are both measured and monophonic. However, it is just at this time that theorists attempt to bridge the gap between their accounts of chant and complex polyphony. Tinctoris, for example, insists that the material in his book on the modes is applicable not only to plainsong but to measured music as well. Furthermore, the style of the monophonic songs appears not to have precluded polyphonic treatment. They seem to have been used as the basis for two-part improvisations, and composers of the time set several of them in complex arrangements for three or more voices. Finally, it should be added that the very notation of the songs presupposes a knowledge of musical theory on the part of both compiler and reader. This might have resulted in alterations of the tunes to fit the format of Renaissance notation. If this were the case, the theoretical writings would be even more appropriate in discussing the songs, for both the treatises and the songs as preserved could be considered to reflect the same approach to

tonality and rhythm. If it were not the case, the original forms of the songs could be considered a faithful record of the style.

The theoretical writings considered in the present study are contemporary with or slightly later or earlier than the compilation of the sources. Music theorists from Johannes Tinctoris (1476) to Heinrich Glareanus (1546) are cited as well as prosodic writers from Henri de Croy (ca. 1490) to Pierre Fabri (1521). The inclusion of Italian and German music theorists might seem odd, but one must remember that music theory at this time was a highly international affair. Indeed, French theorists of ca. 1500, such as Nicolaus Wollick and Guillaume Guerson, were much indebted to foreign writers such as Franchino Gaffurio.¹ Moreover the French writers' brief remarks are frequently clarified by the more detailed accounts provided by their Italian counterparts.

Comparison of the Songs with Courtly Poetry and Polyphony

In comparing the monophonic songs with courtly poetry and polyphonic settings thereof a number of problems arise. First, in contrast with the number of items that have survived, there are few modern editions of polyphonic songs or courtly poems from the period. However, those there are reveal a high degree of uniformity in matters of style. Poly-

¹Cf. Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller, Nicolaus Wollick, 1480-1541 und sein Musiktraktat, Köln, Arno Volk-Verlag, 1956, and Hans Haase, "Guerson," Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, V (1956), cols. 1047-50.

phonic settings can be characterized by a few recurrent types, and courtly poetry was highly standardized at the time.¹ Furthermore, the modern editions which have been produced are not biased in favour of discerned stylistic types. Rather the bases for inclusion in such editions have been relatively "style-free:" for the most part pieces have been selected for editions because they are all found in one source or were all composed by a single writer.² Since several styles are found among those in a given source or by a given author, one would expect stylistic features to be generally randomly distributed in the modern editions. This, however, will not be known for sure until the monumental task of editing all the surviving works has been completed. In the meantime, one can be fairly confident of generalizations made about the monophonic songs per se, since all the extant pieces were edited or re-edited for the present work.³

Since the same basic principles of prosody (e.g.,

¹On the standardization of texture in the polyphonic chanson at this time, see Howard Mayer Brown, op. cit. pp. 20-26, and the same author's Music in the French secular theater 1400-1550, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 1963, pp. 119-29. On the standardization of courtly poetry, see Henry Guy, Histoire de la poésie française au XVI^e siècle, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1910 (repr. 1968), vol. I (L'Ecole des rhétoriciens), passim.

²These include editions of works by composers such as Agricola, Compère, and Josquin and by poets such as Jean Lemaire de Belges, and editions of sources such as Petrucci's Odhecaton and Canti B as well as Le Jardin de Plaisance and MS. Lille 402. See note 1, p. 25, below.

³See Appendix.

division of the text into stanzas, strophes, lines, half-lines, etc.) underlie the monophonic and courtly texts, there is little difficulty in comparing the two corpora. On the other hand, there is an obvious difference between polyphony and monophony in that there are more melodic lines in the former. However, the polyphonic songs with which the present study is concerned are built around the tenor voice, and the monophonic songs are also in tenor-style, cadences tending overwhelmingly to be of the 2-1 or "tenor" type.¹ Accordingly, comparisons of melodic structure are made between

¹Settings of rondeaux in the following editions were considered: Edward R. Lerner (ed.), Alexandri Agricola (1446-1506) opera omnia (Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 22), Rome, American Institute of Musicology, 1970, vol. 5, nos. 9-16, 18-24, 27, 32, and 33; Ludwig Finscher (ed.), Loyset Compère opera omnia (Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 15), Rome, American Institute of Musicology, 1961, vol. 5, nos. 11, 14, 16, 17, 20, 23, 30, 37, 43, 44, 50, 51, 58, 62 plus nos. 51, 53, 58, 77, 87 and 89 in Odhecaton which are also by Compère; A. Smijers (ed.), Werken van Josquin des Prez: Wereldlijke werken, Amsterdam, Vereeniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis, 1922, nos. 1-8, 8a, 9, 10, 16, and 17; Helen Hewitt (ed.), Harmonice musices odhecaton A, Cambridge, Mass., The Medieval Academy of America, 1946; nos. 8, 9, 20, 21, 33, 35, 42, 57, 60, 71, 83, 84, 86, and 93; Helen Hewitt (ed.), Canti B (Monuments of Renaissance music, 2), Chicago, University of Chicago, c 1967, nos. 7, 22, 28, and 48. The following collections of rondeau poetry were also considered: Marcel Françon (ed.), Poèmes de transition (XV^e-XVI^e siècles): Rondeaux du MS. 402 de Lille, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 1938, 2 vols.; Kathleen Chesney, More 'Poèmes de transition; Notes on the rondeaux of a Taylorian manuscript, Oxford, Blackwell, 1965; Nigel Wilkins (ed.), One hundred ballades, rondeaux, and virelais from the late Middle Ages, London, Cambridge University, 1969; Eugénie Droz (ed.), Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de rethorique, Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1910-25; E. M. Bancel, Cent quarante-cinq rondeaux d'amours publiés d'après un manuscrit autographe de la fin du XV^e siècle, Paris, 1875; M. Françon, Albums poétiques de Marguerite d'Autriche, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 1934.

the monophonic tunes and the tenor parts of polyphonic songs. Questions which are not restricted to melodic successions such as general matters of modality and rhythm are treated in terms of both the tenor part and the texture as a whole.

Basic Assumptions

The methodological decisions made here ultimately rest on a number of basic assumptions. Among these are the following:

1) In the absence of other evidence, chronicles are considered to be faithful records of vital statistics, such as the dates of battles, births, and deaths. Although the estimated number of soldiers in a battle or the wisdom of a given person who was born or died might be reported with an eye to propaganda or some other, less than altruistic end, facts which could easily be falsified at the time (such as the battle's having taken place or the person's having been born or died) are probably recorded accurately.

2) One presupposes the notational conventions of the time for music and language, and the possibility of intersubjectivity in this regard.

3) The laws of chance and probability which underlie statistical methods are also presumed. Thus, for example, one assumes that it is unlikely that a bimodal universe would give rise to samples that are normally distributed. It should be noted, however, that one does not take for granted that the surviving sources constitute a representative sample of the universe. Rather such an assertion is an hy-

pothesis which can be tested.

4) One assumes that interpretations of data differ in quality. Better interpretations account for more of the data, and invoke fewer assumptions.

5) In the absence of evidence to the contrary, one assumes that literary conventions reflect reality at some level. For example, certain types of behavior are often associated in literature of the time with children, page-boys, young girls, or women in general. Although it might be rash to presume that such conventions represent a dispassionate social commentary, there must be some sense in which these statements were true. Perhaps not merely page-boys, but people--including adults--of relatively low social status, are being referred to. Were there no residue of truth in such literary stereotypes, the passages would have been meaningless.

6) Finally, one assumes that in the absence of contrary evidence, similar cultural phenomena tend to be close in provenance. For example, watermarks of a given design probably originated close together in time and space.

Summary

In summary, the approach adopted here differs somewhat from previous treatments. In matters of style analysis, comprehensive statements are selected over impressionistic remarks based on the idiosyncrasies of a few items. The analytic results are arrived at by determinate operational methods rather than by mere intuition. And the findings are

inter-related in a systematic fashion rather than presented as a mere list of descriptive features or traits.

The use of historical theoretical writings also varies from previous treatments, where theory is studied as a literature in itself with little regard for the music of the time, or is used as the sole conceptual basis for describing pieces.¹ Theoretical writings are here exploited as sources of clues as to how the music of the time might best be approached. Further, they are considered to constitute adjunct data which might be accounted for by the same models which explain regularities in the music.

Finally, that there is a good fit between extra-musical and musical values in a given genre is not assumed a priori, but rather tested as an hypothesis. Configurations of extra-musical and musical phenomena are arrived at independently of one another and then compared. This is in contrast with the extreme assumption of cultural determinism whereby extra-musical factors (processes) are assumed to cause musical observables (products), or the circular argument that music (which is considered to be a part of culture) is determined by culture (i.e., that culture determines culture, or music determines music). Until one can specify the causes which determine the musical observables of a piece (such as the quarter note e in the third measure of "L'amour de

¹Cf., however, Putnam Aldrich, "An Approach to the Analysis of Renaissance Music," Music Review, XXX (1969), pp. 1-21, and Leo Treitler, "Tone System in the Secular Works of Guillaume Dufay," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XVIII (1965), pp. 131-69.

moy" above) such deterministic biases cannot serve as a methodological basis for studies of the relationships between music and culture. Rather they can only be introduced as suggestive explanations of isolated aspects of pieces.

Overview

Problems relating to the sources of French monophonic song ca. 1500 are dealt with in the second chapter under the heading of transmission. The historical context of the songs is treated in the same chapter, as well as chapter three. Analysis of the songs, evaluation of the theorists' testimony, and comparisons of the songs with polyphonic and courtly productions appear in chapters four to seven. Finally, conclusions are drawn and possible explanations offered in chapter eight.