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TRACES OF PERFORMANCE IN EARLY FIFTEENTH-CENTURY MUSICAL ATTRIBUTIONS

ABSTRACT

Il codice Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, ms. 564 presenta alcuni interessanti casi di attribuzioni in posizioni inconsuete – per esempio in una delle voci o nel *residuum*. Partendo da una rivalutazione dell'ipotesi di Allan Atlas secondo cui le doppie attribuzioni indicano una responsabilità condivisa nella composizione, questo contributo suggerisce che uno dei nomi indicati non sia quello dell'autore, ma dell'*esecutore* del pezzo. Fonti con tracce di esecuzione sono note in tempi successivi – per esempio l'autografo di Palestrina (Roma, Archivio di San Giovanni in Laterano, cod. 59) in cui i nomi dei cantori sono notati all'inizio delle voci. Il codice di Chantilly può dunque fornirci uno sguardo inconsueto sull'esecuzione del repertorio tardo trecentesco e sulla complessa relazione tra compositori ed interpreti. Il manoscritto contiene il repertorio dell'*Ars subtilior*, uno stile caratterizzato da complessità ritmiche e melodiche, normalmente associato con una cultura scritta. La possibilità che la sua circolazione sia legata ai *jongleurs* tardomedievali getta una nuova luce sulla comprensione di questo repertorio.

PAROLE CHIAVE doppie attribuzioni, codice di Chantilly, esecuzione, *jongleurs*, *Ars subtilior*

SUMMARY

The manuscript Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, ms. 564 presents some intriguing cases of unusually-placed attributions – either in one of the voices, or in the text residuum. Re-evaluating Allan Atlas' hypothesis that double attributions could indicate a shared responsibility, I suggest that one of the preserved names indicates not the composer, but the *performer* of the pieces. Sources with traces of performances are known in later times – for example the Palestrina autograph (Rome, Archivio di San Giovanni in Laterano, cod. 59) in which the singers' names are marked at the beginning of each voice. Thus, the Chantilly manuscript could give a unique glimpse at the performance of late fourteenth-century repertory, and the complex relationship between composers and performers. The codex contains the quintessential repertory of the so-called *Ars subtilior*, a style of rhythmic and melodic complexity normally associated with written culture. The possibility that its circulation could be associated with *jongleurs* sheds a different light on our understanding of this music.

KEYWORDS double attributions, Chantilly codex, performance, *jongleurs*, *Ars subtilior*



In a seminal article from 1981, Allan Atlas proposed that conflicting attributions in the Franco-Netherlandish chanson repertory resulted not from the scribe's confusion, but rather from the existence of different versions of the pieces.¹ Instead of dismissing as incorrect one of the two names transmitted by the sources, Atlas suggested that both musicians could have been responsible for the piece, one as the original composer and the other as the author of its revised version. As fascinating as this hypothesis might be, some questions remain unanswered; for example, how to explain conflicting attributions where different versions do not survive, or why the second musician would have created a different reading, especially in cases where the discrepancy is not particularly significant.

Despite these open questions, what I find particularly intriguing in Atlas' hypothesis is the idea that a piece, once created, could be appropriated by another musician to the point of being attributed to him. Atlas explained the double attributions mostly as an act of re-composition, but he was also open to the idea that the revision could have been done by a performer.² All the composers involved – among them Isaac, Martini, Obrecht, Ockeghem, Busnois, Josquin – had careers that required them not only to compose, but to perform as well. Engaging with the music of other composers was for them a routine act. In certain cases, this simple operation could have induced changes due to stylistic taste, time constraints or ensemble requirements. This possibility explains one of the unanswered questions of Atlas' hypothesis: why create a different version, and why transmit it? Composers would have selected a piece, adapted it to their particular circumstances, and recorded the new version in writing for future performances. In some instances, though, the performance would have not required any modification, thus the possibility of conflicting attributions in the absence of multiple versions. But this last scenario implies a further step: that a performer would become so strongly associated with a piece to be recorded in a written source.

The idea of performers leaving their trace in a written source is somewhat foreign to classical music, saturated with the Romantic concept of a 'strong' composer's authorship. It is quite familiar, however, to pop-music listeners, who routinely hear covers by different singers, and associate a song not necessarily with its author, but with whoever sung their most beloved version. Could this centrality of the performer have a parallel in the late-medieval repertory? In other words: could the performance of a medieval jongleur leave a trace in a written source? Closer in time to the repertory discussed in this essay, Abū Faraj Al-Isbahānī's *Book of Songs* (10th century) describes the creation of early Arabic songs while noting their poet, composer and performer. It also provides information on the reworking of a song done by «a later composer or singer».³

The historiography of the Western medieval repertory has dedicated primary attention to two of the three figures named in the *Book of Songs*: the composer,

¹ ATLAS, *Conflicting Attributions*.

² «As for the possibility that the revisions were wrought by performers, again we may speculate that the inventive performer was also one of the composers named» (ATLAS, *Conflicting Attributions*, p. 264, n. 22).

³ REYNOLDS, *Jews, Muslims and Christians*, pp. 15-16.

the poet and their sometimes complex relationship. The artistic value and independent transmission of the so-called *poesia per musica* has been recently re-evaluated.⁴ Frequently, words set to music remain anonymous, but in several instances we tend to attribute them to the same poet-composer (for example in the case of Machaut and Landini). Other times the two figures are clearly separate, as we can infer by the numerous instances of poets requesting musicians to create a musical setting for their verses.⁵

Recent studies, though, have also stressed the importance of the performers, shedding light on their artistic and social status.⁶ The act of reciting verses for an audience, with or without a musical setting, was a common occurrence in the late Middle Ages, one that, despite its ephemeral nature, left its marks in written records. Some performers became famous and wealthy: the Florentine Dolcibene de' Tori was received at the Visconti court for his ability to set verses to music, and crowned King of all jesters by Emperor Charles IV in 1355.⁷ Elena Abramov-van Rijk narrates the story of the buffone Malizia, sent to Petrarch by the poet Giano da Colle with the task of delivering a sonnet that urged him to leave the Visconti's service. After listening to the poetic message, Petrarch did not answer directly to the sender, but wrote his reply in a Latin letter (preserved among the *Epistolae extravagantes*, Misc. 3) addressed to Malizia. In light of the identification of Malizia with ser Giovanni da Firenze, author of the novel *Il Pecorone*, Petrarch could have been sure that the buffone was able to translate his answer in good verses and deliver it back to Giano.⁸

In this episode, particularly relevant for the scope of this essay is the conflation between the original author of the poem (Giano da Colle) and its deliverer (Malizia). Certainly, Petrarch was not confused about who was who, but only playing cleverly with the situation. In other cases, though, the performance could have caused a more blurred line between author and deliverer. Anne Stone has called attention to the frequency of self-referential pieces in the *Ars subtilior* repertory, i.e. compositions that use the poetic first persona (singular or plural) and/or refer to the same act of composing, singing or making music.⁹ In these pieces, the reader is tempted to identify the poetic *I* with the poet or the composer, i.e. reading them as true autobiographies. Moreover, the situation is complicated by the performance, by which the audience of a song «is inclined to attribute to the singer the feelings communicated by the poem, thereby conflating the flesh-and-blood and the abstract poetic speaker in a single persona».¹⁰ Stone had cautioned us from the danger of conflation among performer, author and poetic persona. If

⁴ For example in JENNINGS, *Senza vestimenta*.

⁵ For example Dante and Casella, or Sacchetti and Landini. See ABRAMOV-VAN RIJK, *Parlar cantando*, pp. 34-40.

⁶ See for example GÓMEZ, *Music et Musiciens*; WEGMAN, *The Minstrel Schools* and ABRAMOV-VAN RIJK, *Parlar cantando*.

⁷ ABRAMOV-VAN RIJK, *Parlar cantando*, pp. 52-53.

⁸ ABRAMOV-VAN RIJK, *Parlar cantando*, pp. 15-20.

⁹ STONE, *The Composer's Voice in the Late-Medieval Song* and STONE, *Self-Reflective Songs*.

¹⁰ STONE, *Self-Reflective Songs*, p. 181.

modern scholars can resist such a risk, the same was not necessarily true for a medieval audience or for a medieval copyist, who could have easily overlapped the performer with the author of the piece.

Unusually-placed attributions in the Chantilly manuscript, and a new hypothesis

The codex Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Château, 564 (Ch) is one of the most important sources of late fourteenth-century and early fifteenth-century French music, and scholars have long speculated on its provenance.¹¹ It contains 99 French chansons and 13 Latin motets. The main corpus, copied by the same hand with few other interventions, is preceded by an index and a bifolio with two beautifully-shaped rondeaux by Baude Cordier, one as a heart (*Belle, bonne, sage*) and one as a circle (*Tout par compas*). The foliation after the two rondeaux start at f. 13, a fact that had suggested a missing first gathering, later substituted with Cordier's pieces. Their special shape and the sheer accuracy of the copy induced scholars to speculate that they were autograph.¹² As for the main corpus, it seems now accepted that the scribe was an Italian with an imperfect understanding of the French texts he was copying.¹³

In their introduction to the facsimile of the codex, Stone and Yolanda Plumley suggest that Ch was compiled in Florence around 1410-1420, also on the basis of some close readings with Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Panciatichi 26.¹⁴ More recently, two studies have shifted the date a little earlier, towards 1410. Francesca Manzari's analysis of Ch's marginal drawings identifies their hand with an artist working for Pope Boniface IX in Rome around 1404.¹⁵ Thus, the codex could have originated in Rome, and the papal curia would have been the place where the Alberti family, its owner in the later 15th century, acquired it around 1430.¹⁶ Margaret Bent has postulated a close relationship between the first bifolio and the main corpus of Ch on the basis of codicological considerations; in her opinion, the entire copying and assembling of Ch happened in a relatively short time around 1410.¹⁷

¹¹ For a complete bibliography on the manuscript see the Introduction to the facsimile of the codex (STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*). After 2008, the following significant contributions have appeared: STONE – PLUMLEY, eds., *A Late Medieval Songbook*; MANZARI, *The International Context* and BENT, *The Absent First Gathering*.

¹² On the issue see BENT, *The Absent First Gathering*, pp. 30-32.

¹³ On the poetic language of the Ch repertory and its copyist see DULONG – SULTAN, *Nouvelles lectures*.

¹⁴ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, pp. 181-182.

¹⁵ MANZARI, *The International Context*.

¹⁶ A possession note names Francesco d'Altobianco degli Alberti as the owner in 1461. See STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, pp. 181-182; MANZARI, *The International Context*, p. 18 and D'AGOSTINO, *Gli Alberti e la musica*, pp. 191-192.

¹⁷ BENT, *The Absent First Gathering*.

Scholars agree that the manuscript is not the faithful copy of an exemplar, but rather a collation of multiple sources of different provenance.¹⁸ Stone and Plumley support this hypothesis via a thorough observation of unusual text underlay, layout patterns, revisions and erasures, demonstrating how the scribe could pick and choose among the different exemplars at his disposal.¹⁹ In their opinion, this multiplicity of sources is also responsible for an idiosyncratic phenomenon in Ch: a series of double attributions. This situation is quite different from the one studied by Atlas. Here, we are not dealing with conflicting attributions in multiple sources, nor with distinct versions, but rather with the presence of two conflicting names in the same Ch.

Attributions on top of the page are quite frequent in the manuscript, and only about a quarter of the repertory remains anonymous. Three of them, though, are added by a different hand, most likely the same one responsible for the beautifully notated two rondeaux by Cordier in the initial bifolio (sometimes called the ‘Cordier’ hand).²⁰ But Ch contains also a number of unusually-placed attributions. They appear at the beginning of a lower voice, as for example in *Laus detur multipharia* (f. 16v) at the Triplum (*Triplum Laus detur Petrus Fabri*) or in *Robin, muse, muse, muse* (f. 25v) at the Tenor (*Tenor Guido*). See Figure 1).



Figure 1. Ch, f. 25v: *Robin, muse, muse, muse* with «Guido» at the beginning of the Tenor

In other cases, unusually-placed attributions can be found either at the end or in the middle of the text residuum, as in *Fuions de ci* at f. 17 (Senleches iacob – see Figure 2), *Puisque je sui fumeux* at f. 34v (Jo. Simon de haspre / Ja. denoyon), *En attendant, Esperance conforte* at f. 44 (Jacob de Senleches) and *Je me merveil/J’ay plusieurs fois* at f. 44v (Jacob de Senleches). In one case, the name is placed after the canon clarifying the notation of the piece (*Ma douce amour*, f. 34).

¹⁸ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, pp. 129-130 and *Nouvelles lectures*, p. 100: «le scribe du manuscrit de Chantilly [...] aura pu, ainsi, prendre modèle sur des feuillets isolés destinés aux interprètes, or sur plusieurs sources éparées, de différentes provenances».

¹⁹ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, pp. 143 and ff.

²⁰ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 121 and BENT, *The Absent First Gathering*, p. 31.



Figure 2. Ch, f. 17: *Fuions de ci* with «Senleches iacob» after the text residuum

The following table summarizes all the cases of unusually-placed attributions in Ch. They are not listed in the order of appearance; rather, they are grouped in three categories. The first three pieces (*Laus detur multipharia*, *Fuions de ci* and *La dieus d'amours*) are not attributed at the top of the page, and thus the unusually-placed name is the only one in Ch. The second group (nn. 4-7) includes the compositions whose attribution at the top of the page matches the unusually-placed name. *Robin, muse, muse, muse* (n. 4) is copied as the second piece on the bottom of f. 25v after *Or voit tout en adventure*; thus we cannot be sure that the top-page attribution to Guido refers to both pieces. In any case, the attribution is matched by the one in the Tenor. In *Je me merveil/J'ay plusieurs fois* (n. 7) the top-page «Jacomi» could or could not be the same as Jacob de Senleches in the text residuum.²¹ The last group of compositions (nn. 8-10) presents unusually-placed names that do not match the attributions on top of the page; only for this last group can we talk about real double attributions.

Table 1. *Pieces with unusually-placed attributions in Ch*

	FOLIO	TITLE	ATTRIBUTION ON TOP OF THE PAGE	UNUSUALLY-PLACED ATTRIBUTION	ATTRIBUTION IN OTHER SOURCES
1	16v	Laus detur multipharia	None	Petrus Fabri at the Triplum (bottom of the page)	Unicum
2	17	Fuions de ci	None	Senleches iacob (after text residuum)	ModA, 14v-15 (Selesses); PR, 61v (anon.); SL, 88
3	46v	La dieus d'amours	None	Johannes Cesaris at the Tenor	Unicum

²¹ For a more detailed discussion of this possibility see below.

4	25v	Robin, muse, muse, muse	Guido on top of the page before the preceding piece	Guido at the Tenor	Unicum
5	26	Pour ce que je ne say gairez	Johannes Vaillant	Johannes Vaillant at the Tenor	Unicum
6	34	Ma douce amour	Jo[hannes] Simonis de Haspre	Jo. Simonis de Haspre (after canon)	Unicum
7	44v	Je me merveil/J'ay plusieurs fois	Jacomi = Jacomin de Sanleches? Another Jacomi?	Jacob de Senleches (in the middle of the text residuum, after the second strophe)	Unicum
8	34v	Puisque je sui fumeux	Hasprois [in the 'Cordier' hand]	Jo. simon de haspre composuyt dictum .Ja. denoyon (after text residuum)	Text only in Pn6221, f. 30 («Balade de maistre fumeux»); TCC, no. 17 («Balade de bone sentence fait pour la meystrye»)
9	44	En attendant, Esperance confort	Galiot	Jacob de Senlechos (or Senlethos) [sic] (after text residuum)	ModA, 39v-40 (Jacopinus Sesses)
10	46	En la saison	Hymbert de Salinis	Jo. Cunelier/Cuneliev at the Tenor	Unicum

ModA = Modena, Biblioteca Estense, α.M.5.24

PR = Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, n.a.fr. 6771 (Codex Reina)

SL = Florence, Archivio Capitolare di San Lorenzo, 2211

Pn6221 = Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, n.a.f. 6221

TCC = Cambridge, Trinity College, Wren Library, MS R.3.20

Stone and Plumley observe how the attributions attached to only one of the voices (nn. 1, 3, 4, 5, 10) suggest some kind of collaborative work where one part is by a different composer.²² This is a likely explanation for added or substituted voices, normally Contratenores, in the late Trecento and early Quattrocento repertory. In our cases, though, four out of the five attributions attached to a voice are in the Tenor (nn. 3, 4, 5, 10), a voice structural enough to exclude a later addition, unless we think about a borrowed Tenor as a basis of a new composition. The only candidate for an added voice could be the Triplum given to Petrus Fabri in *Laus detur multipharia* (n. 1). Alternatively, Stone and Plumley suggest that the unusually-placed attributions are «a method used by the scribe to keep track

²² STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 150.

of his material».²³ The copyist would have worked from more than one source, and marked a particular portion copied from the exemplar that bore it via the attribution. Indeed, one of the ballades with conflicting attributions, *En la saison* (n. 10), had long been identified by Ursula Günther as a piece with a complex transmission.²⁴ Its second and third poetic stanzas are copied underneath the lower voices, an incongruence that could be explained by their provenance from a different exemplar. From this second source the scribe would have also copied the unusually-placed attribution at the Tenor (Cunelier/Cuvelier), which conflicts with the one on top of the page (Hymbert de Salinis).

Stone and Plumley's hypothesis is compelling in explaining the provenance of the conflicting attributions, but it ultimately fails to evaluate their meaning, as the two scholars advocate for the correctness of only one of them. As Atlas suggested, I believe that the problem is not to decide which attribution is accurate, but to understand why it came to be attached to a piece in the first place. Of course, I cannot exclude the possibility of an error, but this is too simple a solution for all the cases.

The most interesting and puzzling case of double attribution is the ballade *Puisque je sui fumeux* (n. 8). Here, an added attribution on top of the page reads «Hasprois», while the following note appears after the text residuum: *Jo. simon de haspre co[m]posuyt dictu[m] .Ja. denoyon*

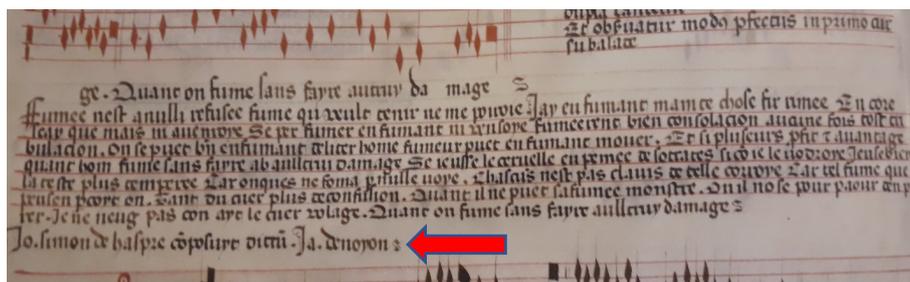


Figure 3. Ch, f. 34v: *Puisque je suis fumeux* with the attribution note after the text residuum

In his edition of the Ch manuscript, Gordon Greene interpreted the authorship of the piece as Johannis Simonis de Haspre (or Hasprois) as the composer and Ja. de Noyon as the poet.²⁵ As previously noted, the attribution to Hasprois on top of the page is not by the main copyist of the codex, but by the so-called 'Cordier' hand.²⁶ Whether or not Cordier himself was the scribe here, this hand would have confirmed – perhaps on the basis of another source – the musical attribution to Johannis Symonis de Haspre/Hasprois already in the note.

²³ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 150.

²⁴ GÜNTHER, *Unusual Phenomena*, pp. 95-96 and STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 143.

²⁵ GREENE, *French Secular Music*, p. 160.

²⁶ BENT, *The Absent First Gathering*, p. 31.

Stone and Plumley point out that a dot follows the word *dictum*: *Jo. simon de haspre composuyt dictum .Ja. denoyon* (See Figure 3). Read as a period, the dot seems to keep together the words *Jo. simon de haspre composuyt dictum* (Johannes Simonis de Haspre wrote the poem) and separate them from the name of Ja. de Noyon.²⁷ Thus, for Stone and Plumley, Hasprois is the poet and Ja. de Noyon the composer.

In my opinion, the main evidence of Stone and Plumley's reading – the presence of a dot after *dictum* – is not compelling. A paleographical survey of the use of dots by the main hand of Ch reveals both a lack of consistency and some idiosyncratic habits. The copyist has at least two different signs indicating division or ending: the dot and a curved sign resembling an 's', visible in Figure 3 at the end of the last line of text before the residuum. As a divider of verses (or couples of verses), the dot is inconsistently used by the scribe, as evident in the residuum of the same ballade *Puisque je sui fumeux* (Figure 3). Here, the first added stanza has dots after the second, seventh and ninth verse (and not at the end), while the second stanza has them after the fourth, sixth and every successive line. Another idiosyncratic use of both 's' and dot signs is the framing of names, part of names or abbreviations. At f. 44, the name of the composer at the end of the residuum reads *Jacob .de. Senlechos* (or *Senlethos*), with a characteristic framing of the middle *de*. At f. 39v, all the numbers (1, 2 and 3) are framed by dots, and frequently the abbreviation *et cetera* is written as *.7 c.* (for example at f. 42v), where the two symbols are enclosed by two dots (Figure 4). Thus, the dot in the note of *Puisque je sui fumeux* could simply represent a way of framing the abbreviation of the first name of the composer, a possibility reinforced by the equal distance of the two dots from the word they enclose (.Ja.).

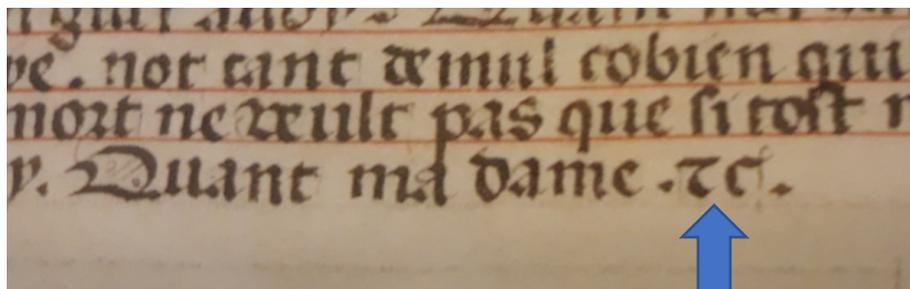


Figure 4. Ch, f. 42v: the *et cetera* abbreviation enclosed by two dots

Having weakened the importance of the dot as a clear mark of meaning, another interpretation of the sentence can be suggested. The word *dictum* could be read not as a noun ('text'), but as the past participle of the Latin verb *dicere*, supported by the implied helping verb *fuit*.

²⁷ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 151.

Jo. simon de haspre composuyt dictum [fuit] .Ja. denoyon

Jo. simon de haspre composed it. It was said/performed by .Ja. denoyon

This reading implies that Johannes Symonis de Haspre is the composer, an authorship confirmed by the attribution on top of the page. The piece, though, was *performed* by Ja. de Noyon. The following table synthesizes the three possible readings of the passage: an added slash indicates the logical subdivision of the sentence in the different interpretations.

Table 2. *Attributions of Puisque je sui fumeux (Ch, f. 34v)*

Hasprois (on top of the page, added by a different hand)

Jo. simon de haspre co[m]posuyt dictu[m] .Ja. denoyon

Previous readings:

1. *Jo. simon de haspre / composuyt dictum .Ja. denoyon* = Johannes Symonis de Haspre is the composer and Ja. de Noyon is the poet. (Greene)
2. *Jo. simon de haspre composuyt dictum / .Ja. denoyon* = Johannes Symonis de Haspre is the poet and Ja. de Noyon is the composer. (Stone and Plumley)

New reading:

3. *Jo. simon de haspre composuyt / dictum [fuit] .Ja. denoyon* = Johannes Symonis de Haspre is the composer and Ja. de Noyon is the performer of the piece.
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In this new reading, I interpret the Latin verb *dicere* as ‘to sing, to perform’; thus its past passive *dictum [fuit]* as ‘it was sung, it was performed’. This meaning of the verb is attested in classical Latin, and remained so in the Middle Ages.²⁸ Chant rubrics, for example, routinely use *dicere* and not *canere*.²⁹ The same interchangeable meaning between *dire* and *cantare* can be found in vernacular Italian.³⁰

If my interpretation of the enigmatic note of *Puisque je sui fumeux* stands, the sources from which it was copied contained not only the attribution to the composer, but also a reference to a performer of the piece. In a wider sense, the mention of an interpreter for *Puisque je sui fumeux* opens the possibility that medieval jongleurs could leave a written trace of their performance. Even without creating a different version, their interpretation could have been attached to a piece through repeated performance, creating the kind of conflation between author and performer described by Stone. Thus, ‘performed by Ja. de Noyon’ (*dictu[m] [fuit] .Ja. denoyon*) could mean ‘in the repertory of Ja. de Noyon’, or ‘that we know from the repertory of Ja. de Noyon’.

²⁸ For the classical meaning see GLARE, ed., *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. I, s.v.: «To sing, recite (a song)». For the medieval use of *dicere*, see FORCELLINI, *Lexicon*, vol. II, s.v.; «Quemadmodum *canere* et similia».

²⁹ KARP, *Aspects of Orality*, p. 24. My thanks to Luisa Nardini for pointing out this use to me.

³⁰ ABRAMOV-VAN RIJK, *Parlar cantando*, pp. 54-55.

Sources that include the name of the performer are not common in the 14th and 15th century, or at least are not recognized as such. Yet they are known in later times: the most famous example is the autograph by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (Rome, Archivio di San Giovanni in Laterano, cod. 59). On the first page of the codex, the three upper voices in the same register are marked «Thomas», «Petrus» and «Nicholaus», i.e. with the names of the singers employed in S. Peter in the year 1574.³¹ Could a source with similar performing marks have made its way into the copying of the Ch manuscript? In the rest of this essay I will reflect on the implications of my hypothesis. I do not intend to suggest a one-fits-all interpretation, and certainly do not exclude the possibility that some attributions could refer to the author of the text. I would like simply to consider how a performer's written record could change our understanding of the repertory.

The hypothesis at work

The ballade *Puisque je sui fumeux* describes the lifestyle of the *fumeur*, members of a 14th-century society characterized by melancholy and quick-temper, known through a series of ironic poems by Eustache Deschamps.³² We do not know if the society was real or imaginary – Deschamps declares himself the king of different groups defined by physiology or behavior. If it did indeed exist in reality, its meetings would have generated multiple performances of the ballade, and multiple interpreters as well. The performer Ja. de Noyon could be identified with a Jaquet de Noyon, a fiddle player (vielle and rota) documented in the service of the Duke of Anjou in 1374, King John of Aragon in the 1370s and again in 1393, and Giangaleazzo Visconti in the 1380s.³³ He had an itinerant career, and various documents record his trips to minstrel fairs in the North in 1374, 1377 and 1378. These elements make him a good candidate for the performance of *Puisque je sui fumeux* north of the Alps and its transmission to the Italian peninsula.³⁴

³¹ ROSTIROLLA, *Il Codice* 59, p. 53. The names probably appear as a practical way to distinguish the voices in the same range: in fact, the only bass is labeled «Bassus». The complete names of the singers are Thomas Benignus, Petrus Ferreius and Nicolaus Fiammingo.

³² The music is transmitted only by Ch; the text alone appears anonymously in two other manuscripts, but with a clear link to the *fumeur* society (see Table 1). On the *fumeur* see UNRUH, "Fumeur" Poetry and SINGER, *Lyrical Humor(s)*.

³³ Documents on the career of Jaquet de Noyon are in PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*, pp. 336-337; GÜNTHER, *Zur Biographie*, p. 196, n. 173; GÓMEZ, *Music et Musiciens*, p. 72, n. 17; UNRUH, "Fumeur" Poetry, pp. 60-61.

³⁴ See PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*, p. 337: «Jaquet de Noyon, or minstrels like him, may certainly have provided a channel through which works by French composers such as Senleches or Hasprois were carried to Italy». More recently, Plumley suggested that «details emerging from the Aragon court documents and elsewhere now shed new light on the minstrel's itinerant career that strengthens the plausibility of this musician's involvement in the crafting of this song [*Puisque je sui fumeux*]». See PLUMLEY, *Virtuoso Musicians*. Although Plumley seems to suggest Jaquet de Noyon as an author, I believe that his involvement could have been as a performer.

Could a minstrel such as Jaquet de Noyon play French and Italian polyphonic music? According to Howard Mayer Brown, the performances in *Il Paradiso degli Alberti* by Giovanni Gherardi da Prato testify to the practice of performing polyphony with voices and instruments and on instruments alone. For example, the aristocratic Bonifazio, a very learned musician, serenaded his beloved most likely in counterpoint, accompanying himself on the lute.³⁵

The Trecento five-string fiddle had different possible tunings, and could play both melodies and chordal accompaniments according to the requirements of the repertory.³⁶ *Puisque je sui fumeux* is a two-voice ballade with a relatively simple Tenor and a more ornate upper voice. Jaquet could have sung the top part, while playing the Tenor on the fiddle.

The three-voice ballade *En attendant, Esperance conforte* (n. 9) is part of a cycle with two other songs (*En attendant d'amer la douce vie* and *En attendant souffrir m'estuet*, see Table 3), also preserved in Ch, that use a network of citations ultimately deriving from Machaut's rondeau *Esperance qui en mon cuer s'embat*.³⁷

Table 3. *En attendant cycle*

(from Machaut's *Esperance que en mon cuer s'embat*)

En attendant, Esperance conforte (Galiot / Senleches in Ch, Senleches in ModA)

En attendant d'amer la douce vie (Galiot in Ch / anonymous in ModA)

En attendant souffrir m'estuet (Galiot in Ch / Filippotto da Caserta in ModA / anonymous in two other sources)

Plumley suggested that the three songs could have been composed around the same time to celebrate the 1382 betrothal of the regent of France Louis d'Anjou's eldest son and Lucia, daughter of Barnabò Visconti. The engagement was part of a larger scheme of alliances to assure the success of a military campaign to put Louis d'Anjou on the throne of Naples and Sicily and to reinstate the Avignon Pope Clement VII in Rome.³⁸ In Ch, *En attendant, Esperance conforte* is attributed to Galiot on top of the page, whereas Jacob de Senleches appears after the text residuum. The two names could represent both the author and the performer. Jacob de Senleches was a composer and harp player from Northern France documented in Castille, Navarre and Avignon in the 1380s.³⁹ In *Il Sol-lazzo*, Simone Prudenzi d'Orvieto describes the expert performances of French and Italian polyphonic music by a harp player.⁴⁰ A 14th-century harp with 13/14

³⁵ BROWN, *The Trecento Harp*, pp. 191-192.

³⁶ On the fiddle see BROWN, *The Trecento Fiddle* and MCGEE, *The Medieval Fiddle*.

³⁷ PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*.

³⁸ PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*, p. 353.

³⁹ PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*, p. 335.

⁴⁰ BROWN, *The Trecento Harp*, p. 188.

strings could easily cover the range required by polyphonic music, which does not normally exceed two octaves. The harpist could either perform one or two lower voices and sing the upper one, or play a tablature of the entire composition.⁴¹ Of Galiot nothing is known, but Reinhard Strohm suspects that this could be a pen name for Giangaleazzo Visconti, playing on the similarity of the French form of his name (Galeas) and the hero of the Arthurian cycle Galehot.⁴² We do not have direct evidence of Giangaleazzo's musical abilities, but his court was a very artistic one, and his daughter Valentina was an accomplished harpist.⁴³ Interestingly, all three songs of the cycle bear the name of Galiot in Ch, although they have different attributions in other sources. Regardless of his identity, the Duke of Milan or a simple minstrel, the three pieces seem to have arrived to Ch in a source linked to Galiot's name.⁴⁴ If he really were the Duke of Milan, a cycle celebrating the Anjou-Visconti political connection could have been a fitting part of his performing repertory.

En la saison (n. 10) bears the two names of Hymbert de Salinis on the top of the page and Jo. Cunelier/Cuvelier at the Tenor. Ursula Günther had dated the ballade to the early 1390s because of its praise of Olivier du Guesclin, brother of the constable of France Bertrand du Guesclin.⁴⁵ A minstrel by the name of Jacquemart le Cuvelier appears in the 1380s in the accounts of the King of France and is cited in the *Règles de la Seconde Réthorique* (ca 1411) as an author of «diz et balades».⁴⁶ In the musicological literature, this minstrel is often identified with a Cuvelier (no first name) author of a long poem honoring Bertrand du Guesclin (the *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*).⁴⁷ Given his links to the aristocratic family, it is tempting to assume that this Cuvelier would have either written or performed *En la saison*. Nevertheless, this identification is seriously questioned by the editor of the *Chanson*, who despairs of the possibility of distinguishing among at the least three different Cuvelier, some with an uncertain first name.⁴⁸

The other name mentioned in Ch is Hymbert de Salinis. A composer of northern origin, Salinis received benefices in Portugal starting in 1403 from the Roman pope Boniface IX, a circumstance that suggests a birthdate of around 1378-84. He seemed to have remained in the same orbit of obedience, and in 1409 he is listed as a familiar and singer in the chapel of the newly-elected Alexander V at the

⁴¹ BROWN, *The Trecento Harp*, p. 184.

⁴² STROHM, *Diplomatic Relationships*, p. 239.

⁴³ MARCHI, *Music and University Culture*, pp. 158-160.

⁴⁴ Another piece in Ch transmitted under Galiot's name, *Le sault perilleux*, has also textual and thematic links to *En attendant souffrir m'estuet*. See PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*, p. 340.

⁴⁵ GÜNTHER, *Zwei Balladen*, p. 36.

⁴⁶ FAUCON, *La chanson de Bertrand*, pp. 32-33. According to Faucon, the abbreviation «Jo.» of the first name in Ch could be an incorrect reading of «Ja.», i.e. Jacobus or Jacquemart. Given the misspelling of the last name (Cunelier), it is clear that the scribe was not familiar with the musician's name.

⁴⁷ For example in GÜNTHER, *Cuvelier*.

⁴⁸ FAUCON, *La chanson de Bertrand*.

Council of Pisa.⁴⁹ His preserved work consists mostly of Mass movements and motets, and the Gloria *Jubilatio* can be connected with the efforts for the solution of the Schism. The ballade *En la saison* appeared quite exceptional in his output, at least until the discovery of other secular songs by the composer in the San Lorenzo palimpsest, a source that links Salinis more strongly with the Florentine musical circles.⁵⁰

Stone and Plumley advocated for Cuvelier (and not Salinis) as the author of *En la saison*, also on the basis its musical style, similar to the other piece given to the composer in Ch, *Se Gaalas*.⁵¹ I would add that the suggested birthdate of Salinis (1378-84) seems incompatible with Günther's dating of the *ballade* (early 1390s). Stone and Plumley concluded that the attribution to Salinis on top of the page remains unexplained. I suggest that Salinis could be the performer responsible for its transmission into Ch. His northern origin and his presence in Italy at the time of the Council of Pisa (1409) support this hypothesis, especially in light of a Roman/Florentine compilation of Ch around the same time.

The last piece with a double attribution in Ch is *Je me merveil/J'ay plusieurs fois* (n. 7). The name «Jacomi» appears on top of the page, and «Jacob de Senleches» in the middle of the text residuum. The two names could indicate the same person, since Senleches is called «Jacomin de Sanleches» in a payment of 1383 by King Carl II of Navarra.⁵² On the other hand, «Jacomi» is a common name, and could for example refer to Iacomi Capeta or Iacomi lo Bègue, other minstrels associated with the Aragonese court.⁵³ The identification of the harpist and composer Senleches with «Jacomi» remains uncertain. Nonetheless, it is evident that Senleches was close to some of the alternative sources used by the Ch scribe: indeed, three out of the four unusually-placed attributions in the text residuum are to him (nn. 2, 7 and 9), including the already-discussed *En attendant, Esperance conforte*. Senleches was a composer «particularly engaged with the question of his poetic identity for [...] 5 out of 6 of [his] chansons thematize music in some way». ⁵⁴ *Je me merveil/J'ay plusieurs fois*, for example, criticizes amateurs trying to imitate the craft of professional musicians, and ironically comments on it by creating two imitating upper voices notated with different figures. Thus, Senleches' works seem to encourage the conflation between performer and author in the *Ars subtilior* repertory, a circumstance that could explain his strong presence among the double attributions in the Ch manuscript.

In pieces with attribution next to a given voice (nn. 1, 3-5 and 10), the named musician could have either been the performer of a part, as in Palestrina's autograph, or the interpreter of the whole piece. In *Robin, muse, muse, muse* (n. 4) the name Guido is found at the Tenor and also on the top margin of the folio; but

⁴⁹ On Salinis see NOSOW, *Hymbert ... de Salinis*, BENT, *Early Papal Motets* and BENT, *Continuity and Transformation*, p. 236.

⁵⁰ JANKE –NÁDAS, *Florence, Archivio del Capitolo di San Lorenzo*, ms. 2211, p. 86.

⁵¹ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 150.

⁵² GÜNTHER, *Zur Biographie*, p. 195.

⁵³ PLUMLEY, *Citation and Allusion*, n. 63.

⁵⁴ STONE, *The Composer's Voice in the Late-Medieval Song*, pp. 179-180.

since *Robin, muse* is the second piece copied into the page, this last attribution might refer only to the previous piece (*On voit tout en adventure*). Although it does not muddy the authorship as in other cases, the name at the Tenor could be still interpreted as a residue of performance. Little is known of Guido, possibly a singer in the Avignon papal chapel in the 1370s. Ch transmits two other pieces attributed to him, *Dieux gart qui bien le chantera* (at f. 25) and *On voit tout en adventure* (at f. 25v). This second composition was considered by Ursula Günther as a kind of manifesto of the *Ars subtilior*, because of its unstable value of the minim and the new ways of representing it.⁵⁵ But *On voit tout* is also a self-referential, ironic piece that makes fun of certain notational devices while using them, as Stone has pointed out.⁵⁶ In addition to *On voit tout en adventure*, Guido's rondeau *Dieux gart qui bien le chantera* uses a similar literary fiction by invoking God's protection for the performer. With such confusion of poetic, authorial and performing personae, it becomes hard to distinguish among Guido's possible functions. Together with Senleches, Guido and his pieces are likely candidates for the perceived overlap between performer and author.

A similar case is *Pour ce que je ne say* (n. 5): here, Johannes Vaillant could be the performer or the composer of the ballade, since his name appears both at the Tenor and on top of the page. Jehan/Johannes Vaillant is a relatively common name, but the *Règles de la seconde rhétorique* name a Jehan Vaillant immediately after Machaut as a «maistre [...] lequel tenoit à Paris escolle de musique».⁵⁷ Thus, Vaillant was a (perhaps younger) contemporary of Machaut, whose qualification as a teacher who ran a music school in Paris – normally stated in the musicological literature – needs to be reconsidered.⁵⁸ The title «maistre» identifies him not necessarily as a teacher, but as member of a guild of professional minstrels; moreover, the Middle French expression «tenire escolle» did not mean to run a school in the modern sense, but to organize an annual assembly for minstrels, the kind of trade fair so important in the musical life of the later Middle Ages, and on which I shall return.⁵⁹ Another piece by him in Ch, *Dame doucement/Doulz amis*, is said to have been compiled in Paris in 1369, a date compatible with a Machaut contemporary. If the identification with the Vaillant named by the *Règles* stands, his activity as a minstrel in Paris could be historically substantiated.

Johannes Cesaris, named in Ch at the Tenor of *La dieus d'amours*, is also known as a performer, active at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris in 1407-9 and possibly earlier in the entourage of the Duke of Berry.⁶⁰ His fame is immortalized by Martin Le Franc's *Champion des Dames*, a source that, according to Bent, is primarily concerned with the performative aspect of music. Le Franc names him in

⁵⁵ GÜNTHER, *Die Ende der Ars Nova*.

⁵⁶ STONE, *The Composer's Voice in the Late-Medieval Song*.

⁵⁷ GÜNTHER, *Vaillant*.

⁵⁸ For example in STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 138.

⁵⁹ WEGMAN, *The Minstrel Schools*, pp. 11 and 17.

⁶⁰ STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, p. 137.

stanza 2033 together with Carmen and Tapissier for their singing ability that amazed «all Paris / and all those who frequented them».⁶¹

Besides the unusual attributions in the Ch manuscript, traces of performance in fifteenth-century repertory might be seen in Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ms Chigiano L. VII. 266, a laudario copied around 1450. Next to some *cantasi come* a note appears: «di Vanni» (by Vanni), «Fatta da Vanni / Fecie Vanni» (made by Vanni) or «Fatta per Vanni» (made for/by? Vanni).⁶² The musical models for the laude are otherwise attributed for text and music: for example, *La bionda treza* and *Né tte ne altro giamai amar* have music by Landini, and the text of the second one is by Franco Sacchetti. Blake Wilson identified «Vanni» with Vanni di Martino, a Florentine lauda singer born in 1351 and active for the companies of San Pietro Martire and Orsanmichele in the early Quattrocento. Thus, the notes do not indicate an author, but an arranger of the new laude, and certainly their performer: «made by Vanni» means «performed by Vanni», «in Vanni's repertory» or even «sung by Vanni in his own style». How a style or a melody could be associated with a particular performer is clear from two other notes in the same manuscript: an *Ave Maris Stella* and a *Te Deum* could be sung «in sul modo di Benotto cantore» («with the melody and/or style of the singer Benotto») or «nel modo di Piero di Mariano laudese» («with the melody and/or style of the lauda singer Piero di Mariano»)⁶³ In a letter from 1388, John of Aragon asked if it was true that the jongleur Jaquet de Paris could perform «in the manner of Stefan, a German shawm player then in the service of Gaston de Foix».⁶⁴

Another puzzling double attribution can be found in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Panciatichi 26, a manuscript that also presents intriguing connections with Ch.⁶⁵ At f. 95, copyist D added the note «musicha mia» («my music») at the end of the Contratenor of *Sì chome al canto* by Jacopo da Bologna. Kurt von Fischer and Michael Long thought that this Contratenor – present in some but not in all the sources – should be attributed to copyist D. John Nadas believes instead that the scribe wanted to mark a series of compositions of limited circulation in gathering 10, copied from a small collection owned by himself. For Stefano Campagnolo, «musicha mia» is a simple invocation to music («oh, my music!») to capture the benevolence of the reader.⁶⁶ I suggest that the note indicates neither the authorship of the music nor the ownership of the source, but an appropriation of the piece by mean of performance. Thus, «musicha mia» would mean «music performed by me, part of my repertory».

⁶¹ BENT, *The Musical Stanzas*.

⁶² WILSON, *Song Collections*, pp. 76-77 and FIORI, *Francesco Landini*, pp. 150-151.

⁶³ NOSOW, *Du Fay and the Cultures*, p. 120, n. 36. Benotto is to be identified with Benedetto Sirede, a composer and singer active in the new cappella of S. Maria del Fiore in Florence. On his career see HAAR – NADAS, *The Medici, the Signoria, the Pope*.

⁶⁴ GÓMEZ, *Music et Musiciens*, p. 215.

⁶⁵ See above, note 14.

⁶⁶ NADAS, *The Transmission of Trecento Secular Polyphony*, pp. 88-90 and CAMPAGNOLO, *Il codice Panciatichi 26*, p. 92.

The minstrels and the *Ars subtilior*

The Chantilly codex contains the quintessential repertory of the so-called *Ars subtilior*, a development of the *Ars nova* marked by greater rhythmic, harmonic and melodic complexity. Since its beginning in the 1960s, the historiography of the *Ars subtilior* has sought to define a corpus of songs that do not conform to the norms of the *Ars nova*, but seems to always have coexisted with it, even in the same Ch.⁶⁷

If the complex compositional structures and frequent play with notational devices mostly associate the *Ars subtilior* with written culture, other elements «point unambiguously to a virtuosic unwritten performance tradition».⁶⁸ Stone has convincingly argued that the complex note-shapes of some pieces could derive from the attempt to put into writing improvised ornamentation made by performers.⁶⁹ My hypothesis that jongleurs could not only have performed the pieces, but also immortalized their names in a written source helps to fill the gap between two traditions apparently quite distant.

The work of Mariacarmen Gómez and Rob Wegman has shed light to the activity of minstrels in the Late Middle Ages.⁷⁰ In particular, the two scholars have stressed the importance of the annual trips that jongleurs took to minstrel fairs in Franco-Flemish and German towns and their close connection with composers, musical chapels and courts. As I have already pointed out, some of the names that appear in Ch's double attributions are part of this network of musicians: Jaquet the Noyon was a traveling minstrel, and Jehan Vaillant was possibly the organizer of the annual fair in the city of Paris. The long and dangerous trip was taken in Spring of each year in order to buy instruments, find a new employer, but mostly to learn new repertory and new fashionable styles. How well the minstrels learned new ways of playing, ornamenting, singing or composing is testified by a 1377 letter from John of Aragon. The king praises the ability of the shawm player Iacomi Capeta, writing that he can perform «in the manner of Sist if he wishes [...] and he has also learned the manner of Flanders; thus he plays either in the one manner or in the other, in whichever manner should please us the most».⁷¹ Such versatility is well in tune with the complex rhythmic lines of the *Ars subtilior*. The minstrels were not mere entertainers: the mention of Jehan Vaillant immediately after Machaut in the *Règles de la seconde rhétorique* is a testimony to the esteem that a master of the trade could reach in the literate circles of the time.

The relationship of Ch with the world of the jongleurs raises the issue of how close the codex could have been to everyday practice. Because of its textual

⁶⁷ Ursula Günther first defined the style in GÜNTHER, *Die Ende der Ars Nova*. On the historiography of the *Ars subtilior* see STONE, *Ars Subtilior*. Stone and Plumley define Cordier's two songs in Ch as «Ars Subtilior Lite», since their style has «surface similarity to the complex notational use of *Ars subtilior* style while acknowledging that it doesn't quite deliver what it promises». STONE – PLUMLEY, *Cordier's Picture-Songs*, p. 314.

⁶⁸ STONE, *Ars Subtilior*, p. 1128.

⁶⁹ STONE, *Glimpses of the Unwritten Tradition*.

⁷⁰ GÓMEZ, *Music et Musiciens* and WEGMAN, *The Minstrel Schools*.

⁷¹ GÓMEZ, *Music et Musiciens*, p. 215.

misspellings and some problematic notational readings, Ch has never been considered a likely candidate for performance. My hypothesis does not necessarily imply that Ch was made for practical use, but simply that some of its exemplars bore traces of it. However, it is perhaps time to rethink the role of Ch's main scribe. A close analysis of the manuscript's language shows that the corruption of the French text derives from a complex linguistic stratification, and not simply from the mistakes of the copyist.⁷² As far as the musical readings are concerned, the scribe was certainly preoccupied with picking and choosing his text among the different sources at his disposal; many corrections are indeed present, mostly in the form of erasures.⁷³

According to Bent's most recent hypothesis, the initial bifolio of the manuscript with Cordier's two pieces had close links to the compilation of the main codex. In particular, 'Cordier' hand appears to have a direct relationship with Ch's double attributions, since it added the name Hasprois on top of the page for *Puisque je sui fumeux*.⁷⁴ According to Gómez, the beauty of these two pages suggests their origin as presentation copies made for one of the musical competitions that took place in France (*puys*) and Catalogna (the *Gaya Sciència* in Barcelona).⁷⁵ Thus, Cordier's rondeaux could have a close link to musical practice. Their presence in Ch, together with traces of performance in the manuscript's attributions, embodies the link between the extrovert displays of late medieval minstrels and the written transmission of their musical texts.

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⁷² DULONG – SULTAN, *Nouvelles lectures des chansons notées*, p. 99.

⁷³ On erasures and corrections see STONE – PLUMLEY, *Codex Chantilly*, pp. 145-146 and YOUNG, *Antiphon of the Angels*.

⁷⁴ The two folios could have been originally a bifolio, or could have been joined together when they were added to Ch. Bent thinks that the rondeaux were copied *in situ* right before being included in Ch. My hypothesis implies that they originated in a performance context and remained in the hands of their copyist, who then inserted them in the manuscript. This does not contradict the proximity of their scribe to the main corpus of Ch. On the two folios see UPTON, *Music and Performance*, pp. 92-93 and BENT, *The Absent First Gathering*, p. 36.

⁷⁵ GÓMEZ, *French Songs in Aragon*, pp. 258-259. A similar idea is in UPTON, *Music and Performance*, p. 93.

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