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Text and Music as 'Spiel' - Humour in Ockeghem's Chanson "L'aultre d'antan"¹*To Michael v. Albrecht for his 60th birthday*

Zusammenfassung: Noch bis in die letzten Jahre galten die Texte der Rhetoriqueurs des 15. Jahrhunderts und noch mehr die poetischen Texte von Chansons dieser Zeit als bestenfalls mittelmäßig. Daher wurden sie fast nie in die Analyse von Chansons selbst der bedeutendsten Meister wie Dufay und Ockeghem mit einbezogen. Da auf den Text mit Strophen und Refrain nur ein- und dieselbe Musik entfällt, scheint es unsinnig, den Text mit seiner zeitlich entfalteteten Entwicklung und das Verständnispotential der identischen Musik zu vergleichen. In diesem Aufsatz soll gezeigt werden, wie die Texte ihre künstlerische Qualität in einer zeitlich entwickelten Rezitation und in einem Spiel von Topoi mit einem nur scheinbar logischen Diskurs gewinnen. Die Humor-Theorie von Arthur Koestler bildet die Grundlage für eine Analyse von Ockeghems Chanson "L'aultre d'antan", bei der das Verhältnis von Text und Musik als ein Spiel von Assoziation und Bisoziation dargestellt wird. Dieses Spiel lässt weder Musik noch Text intakt, es führt zu einer neuen Bedeutung im Prozess 'Chanson'.

"Dufay the Reader"² is the title of Don M. Randel's important paper about several of Dufay's Chansons. Randel has convincingly shown that Dufay must have been a careful reader of his chanson texts. The forms of these texts are in no way only rigid schemata, limiting the composer where he could have expressed himself more musically. On the contrary, they provided an ideal frame for a rich variety of sound games, syntax, grammar, rhythm, etc. The contents, too, are only at first sight unvaried or presented in poetically restricted ways. The seeming rigidity of the poetic forms is the very precondition for the variability of the presentation of the contents. In light of this variability, the formal structures acquire a meaning far beyond their outward schemes of rhyme and rhythm. The criteria in Randel's analysis, such as "tension, relaxation, climax

1 For a detailed theory of music and text in the chansons of the 15th century and an analysis and edition of all of Ockeghem's chansons (except *L'aultre d'antan*) cf. by this author *Die Chansons Johannes Ockeghems - Ästhetik des musikalischen Raumes (Neue Heidelberger Schriften zur Musikwissenschaft Bd. 19)*, Laaber 1992.

2 In: *Studies in the History of Music 1*, ("Music and Language"), New York 1983, p. 38seq.

density, focus, texture, pace, contrast, articulation, tone, register"³ are valuable not only for Dufay's secular music but for Ockeghem's, too. Another of Randel's observations should be emphasized as well: Any expectation of a direct depiction of the contents or a "romantic" representation of a general mood will be mostly disappointed. To counter this view, Randel offers that of "Dufay the reader", who explored "the poetry of grammar and the grammar of poetry"⁴ and transposed that poetical grammar to his chansons. As a consequence, Randel seeks parallels of this subtle relation between music and text. Although I agree with Randel's sensitive approach to the poetical structure of text and music, I cannot follow him in his analysis of parallels between them.

In the following presentation, text and music are above all understood as independent units. I shall try to show how the text has a tendency to represent temporally developing qualities while the music contributes to the perception of the temporal process as *one*. The text presents the changing conceptions of an event in time, whereas the music provides the process in time with identity, with a space where it takes place. Naturally neither unit is purely temporal or purely spatial, time and space being abstract metaphysical extremes. In any perception there is a mixture of different experiences of time and space. In the combination of text and music, a *game* takes place between these different structures. The perception of a chanson may thus be called a "Spiel"⁵.

In many chansons, especially in those with a refrain structure, music and text are not only combined in parallel, e.g., the music imitating the climax of the text or vice versa, or the changing syntax of the text being represented through a change of melos or tonal space. These parallels between music and text are rare moments of simultaneity within a free temporal process which has the character of a 'Spiel' between two a priori independent units. Furthermore, these can change their meaning in the next moment, because they are suddenly understood as belonging to a different system of reference. The very experience of momentary simultaneity can be totally reinterpreted through new elements in the process and through memory. They themselves become memory, creating new expectations. The memory-expectation-structure is not so much created in simultaneous moments as in a freely floating game of relations between the two units and within the units themselves.

The following analysis will stress the temporal development in the game between text and music. The game between independence and simultaneity, identity and difference, time and space, will be represented through an "ideal"

3 loc. cit., p. 42.

4 loc. cit., p. 41; Randel borrows this notion from a paper by R. Jacobson.

5 I use a term of the German aesthetic tradition in cases where I want to point out the character of the work of art as a *whole* with all its internal games.

perceptor, through a "representative" perception of the temporal process called 'Chanson'.

Ockeghem's chansons represent an open structure of 'Spiel', within which games of the independent temporal and spatial units provide the rules for the process, for ever new listeners in ever new processes of perception. The rigidity of the formal structures, which can be observed in both music and text, should not be understood as a limitation of the 'Spiel' but as a temporal and spatial rule system for these ever new processes. It is a pivot for the expectation and the memory of the listener. He expects the poetical forms of *rondeau* or *ballade* with their fixed rhyme structure, parallel phrases in music and text, an equal number of syllables in each verse, etc. A game is played with those expectations in the 'Chanson' process: they are confirmed, modified or disappointed, they become memory themselves, creating new expectations. A technique such as imitation, for example, appearing at first as a musical device of connection, may appear in the repetitions of the refrain or the strophes, respectively, as an element of disunity between the meaning of the text and the music, or even within the musical meaning itself. It is normally a condition of the 'Spiel' that the singular units are not perceived in conscious, conceptual experience: only in exceptional cases is explicitness required.

This theoretical approach displays another difference from Randel's conception. For him, the chanson is essentially a setting in music of the refrain. In that conception, the repetitions of the refrain (e.g., in the *rondeau*) are perceived as mere formal devices of arrangement, pure structures of order for the memory. The reason for Randel's argument is clear. On the one hand, he claims an intimate relation between music and text. On the other hand, he must meet the criticism that such a relation would not be possible because there is only one setting of music for all strophes, or at least (as in the *bergerette*) two settings for several textual units. Randel's solution is a reduction of the text to the refrain and a parallel between refrain and music. I conceive text and music as independent units with different tasks, the units being realized only in the listener himself in the process of perception.

Thus the strophes of the *rondeau*, for instance, are not at all "explanations" of the refrain. They can totally change the original meaning of the refrain. There is a dialectic in the text itself between temporal elements which are forward moving and structures of identification (in the difference between the original sense of the refrain and the new meaning in the repetitions). The refrain has a function similar to that of the rhetorical *memoria*. *Memoria* brings the point of departure back to the mind of the listener, but above all it leads to the final argument, the solution of the "juridical case", by recalling the whole chain of arguments up to the point of *memoria* and giving it its final interpretation. Repetition is only the means by which to lead to something new. Repetition

is not a static element of space; it evokes only the impression of architectural order, of structural security. As architecture has to be experienced by moving through it⁶, the spatial aspect of repetition is experienced in a temporal process; musical architecture is temporalized space. The final argument of this rhetorical work of art, which is perhaps not convincing in itself, becomes convincing through the logical and affirmative aspect of repetition. Moreover, the repetition structure of the refrain is part of the identity beyond the single experience of the process 'Chanson'. It is an essential intersubjective element of identity, part of the rules of the game. But this intersubjective identity is only a first step, the precondition for the process. The essential identity of the process can only be achieved in the experience of the 'Spiel' of repetition and changing meaning. It is a game of static spatial experience and the flow of time, of expectation and memory, of identity and difference.

In this conception of the text, the music plays a very specific and independent role as partner in the 'Spiel'. Indeed, music is not able to "follow" or "imitate" the text. It is music's task to supply a framework of independent relations to the 'Spiel'. It is the non-semantic quality of music which keeps the 'Spiel' at the same time specific and flexible. The intimate relation between text and music does not consist in determining the game of text and music, but rather in keeping it open. Nevertheless, music provides an important part of the necessary elements for the listener to close the frame of the 'Spiel', although the closure is always new. Like the text, music has static spatial elements and elements developing in time. Certainly every chanson can have its own *pointe* or momentum, but this does not necessarily occur at a specific moment in time; rather it occurs through a process of understanding on the part of the listener.

The great originality of many chansons of the 15th century consists in the suggestion of a *kaleidoscopic space* where music and text, listener and work of art enter into a free game. Paradoxically, the external rigidity of the form (rhyme scheme, syllables, etc.) is the condition for the experience of a kaleidoscopic space of independent players. Paradoxically, the identity of the process 'Chanson' is reached through a temporal development of the ever new. The variability of the individual elements creates a sense of identical space.

Thus the "lax" underpinning of the text in many sources may be seen in the light of the variability of the 'Spiel'. The connection between text and music was part of an interpretational level of the game, it did not even have to be alike in every repetition of the refrain. For the copyist the connection between

6 In fact, a crucial means of rhetorical memoria is the idea of moving through an imagined house and connecting the different points of an argument with the respective parts of the house (cf. e.g. Quintilian, *Instituto oratoria* 11,2, especially § 18).

text and music was certainly not casual, but it was not the copyist who determined the connection once and for all. The kaleidoscopic character of the musical work of art in the 15th century gives a clue to the understanding of the various ways of interpretation (music and text, instrumental interpretation, recitation of the text alone, etc.), too. The work of art has no preconceived identity, it is not necessary to experience every single element of the abounding *varietas* which is offered in the rules for the 'Spiel'. In fact, the process of borrowing, so familiar in all musical genres of the 15th century, gets a special meaning in this context: the kaleidoscopic character of perception is not only valid in the singular work of art, it comprises the whole area of musical creation. Elements like models for cantus firmi do not have a meaning of their own, their meaning is only established in the specific kaleidoscopic context and is open to redefinition.

The choice of the chanson *L'aultre d'antan* may be surprising, considering that this chanson seems to be a representation of a chain of events. In addition, the many instances of apparent "Lautmalerei"⁷ seem to point to a parallel connection between text and music, to a linear temporal experience. However, the analysis shall demonstrate that the very momentum of *L'aultre d'antan* lies in creating humour. The elements of seeming parallelism are funny or witty per se (if sometimes crudely so), but they do not create humour. How can we define humour as opposed to wit, especially in music, an art to which we rarely attribute more than a witty presentation of *Lautmalerei*? I use the term humour in its original sense as 'mood', although a very particular one. What differentiates humour from other specific moods (such as happiness, sadness, melancholy, etc.)?

Humour has a claim to truth, going beyond specific subjective moods. Humour connects objects of the external world of the subject to his temporal perception such that these objects appear in uncommon relation, both to other objects and to the subject himself. The common relations are replaced by a temporal process of perceiving those relations; they lose their character of object-relations. Relations are experienced through their *being* relations, free of the interest-oriented meaning of everyday-experience. The genuine sign of humour is smiling at oneself. Humour leads to an increased sense of one's own identity by showing the problematic sides of this identity. Paradoxically, we have to forget ourselves for a moment in order to recognize ourselves in a new light. Humour results from a "disinterested pleasure in the free game of the capacities of perception"⁸. In that free game the objects lose their object-character and the subject forgets itself. A new time and a new space are created,

7 I use here the more fitting German term for "sound imitation".

8 Freely quoting Kant in *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Analytik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft).

the space-time of the 'Spiel', transgressing both space and time of object and subject.

All art, but music especially, has the potential to transform interest-relations in a way that enables the creation of a greater (or more intense) self identity through truth. This effect is not always reached through humour; humour is one way (if an especially effective way) to reach it. Arthur Koestler in his theory of bisociation, has noted the relation-changing aspect of humour⁹. The sudden bisociation of a mental event with two habitually incompatible matrices results in an abrupt transfer of the train of thought from one associative context to the other.

In the case of *L'aultre d'antan*, we find in the text at least two matrices, notably that of the love of a man for his adored mistress and the presentation of this love in a series of events described in metaphors of war and the battlefield. But the text goes far beyond the presentation of two different matrices. It questions the very essence of metaphors; and it plays with the role of metaphors in a text. The music has different matrices, too, notably the plane of musical techniques and the musical logical development in time on the one hand, and the plane of the paraphrase of the well known chant *L'homme armé* (his paraphrase being a kind of pendant to the metaphors of war in the text) on the other. But - as with the metaphors - the paraphrase is not only an independent matrix, it questions its own role in the development of the process 'Chanson'. The interaction between the matrices of text and music are even more complicated. There is no simple parallel, but a constant back and forth; there are understandings in hermeneutical circles and the creation of different subjective moments of simultaneity, a simultaneity of the unequal and unsimultaneous.

In what follows, I hope to clarify the potential of the 'Spiel', not its realization, always new from performance to performance and listener to listener. In describing this potential it will hopefully intensify the games of association, bisociation, dissociation and questioning about the moment-to-moment relations in the process of the single perceptions.

Koestler's recognition of the temporal aspects of relationships in humour is important for understanding relational aspects in the artistic process. He stresses the difference in pace between intellectual understanding and nonverbal emotion. The disruptions in these units of perception lead, over the course of the experiential duration, to the tension of a 'not yet understanding', which can be resolved through laughter. The tensions of the different matrices in *L'aultre d'antan* create the above-mentioned kaleidoscopic space, whose inner tensions in the temporal flux are resolved, at the end of the process, in the identity of

9 in: *The Art of Creation*, New York 1964, p. 51 seq.

space as one: in a moment of self identity. The means by which the chanson achieves this effect is humour.

The analysis of *L'aultre d'antan* is based on the version of the chanson as it appears in the Mellon Chansonnier¹⁰

Unfortunately, the rendering of the text of the chanson in volume I (transcription of the music) and in volume II (commentary) of the edition are not consistent. The following text is based on the version in volume II, but with the repetition of the first verse, which is omitted in the edition (for further commentary see below).

L'aultre d'antan l'autrier passa,
Et en passant me trespercha
D'ung regard forgie a Melan
Qui me mist en l'arriere ban
Tant malvais brassin me brassa
L'aultre d'antan l'autrier passa.

Par tel fachon me fricassa
Que de ses gaiges me cassa
Mais par Dieu elle fist son dan
L'aultre d'antan l'autrier passa
Et en passant me trespercha
D'ung regard forgie a Melan.

Puis apres nostre amour cessa
Car oncques puis qu'elle dansa
L'autre d'antan l'autre d'antan ...
Je n'eus ne bon jour ne bon an
Tant de mal enuy amassa
L'aultre d'antan, l'autrier passa.

L'aultre d'antan l'autrier passa
Et en passant me trespercha
D'ung regard forgie a Melan
Qui me mist en l'amere ban
Tant malvais brassin me brassa
L'aultre d'antan, l'autrier passa.

¹⁰ *The Mellon Chansonnier*, L. Perkins and H. Garey ed., New Haven and London, 1979, vol. I and II.

Points of difference from the edition or the transcription of the music will be discussed as they arise.

The transcription of this paper is the author's.

In my own translation:

The other yester-year, the other yesterday (...) passéd by
 And passing by pierced me through
 With a glance forged in Milan
 Which threw me in the last ranks (of troops)
 (...) put me in such a mess -
 The other yester-year, the other yesterday / (...) passéd by.

In such a way (...) made fricassé of me
 That (...) (had to) dismiss me from her wages
 But God, she had done her damage.
 The other yesteryear ...

Then, when our love ended,
 That was because, after she had 'danced',
 The other yester-year, the other yester-year ...
 I had neither good day nor good year,
 Such bad ennui piled up,
 The other yester-year, the other yesterday (...) passéd by.

The other yester-year, the other ...

The text of *L'autre d'antan* is by no means a *rondeau cinquain*, as is asserted in the edition of the Mellon Chansonnier¹. The repetition of the first verse is not a mere "formal device" - as such it must certainly have a sense, too - and it is not true that it is "never integrated well, semantically or syntactically with the strophe that precedes it": it has a stringent meaning for the poetical grammar. On the other hand, the editors admit that the repetition is necessary for the musical setting of the text, which means that the composer himself considered the repetition important. The seeming non-integration in the syntactical context is the very pivot not only of the text, but of the pendant-phrase in the music as well. This pivot-function of the repetition of the first verse as sixth verse of the strophe can only be understood through a temporal analysis, not through an analysis based on abstract formal schemes. The fascinating point in most of the chanson-texts of this time is a dialectic between the formal expectations (the spatial architectural frame) and the process of temporal, successive understanding of the text. The abstract formal schemes have only an existence in the genre expectation of the listener, and as a dialectic starting

11 op. cit., vol II, p. 269.

point for the author and the composer of the chanson. The analysis has to show the potential of this dialectic for the 'Spiel' of perception.

I shall try to show in the following how the very repetition of the first verse (and this not only in the refrain but in the middle of the second strophe as well) is essential for the bisociation in humour, how this provides, on the one hand, identity and on the other, keeps the frame open to the next strophes. The repetition is not "fitting" because it is part of the bisociative temporal development of the text.

L'aultre d'antan can be considered formally as a *rondeau sixain*, but the repetition structure of the sixth verse is reminiscent of the *ballade*, if not formally, at least in tone and mood. There is a popular touch throughout the whole text. But the very ambiguity of the poetical form hints at the superficiality of the popular tune. In this context, it is interesting that the text is the only one in the Mellon Chansonnier (and the only one of Ockeghem's chansons) which presents a kind of frame story in the *passé simple*. Events of the past are normally put in the *passé composé* (which refers to the present tense) in the other texts of the Mellon Chansonnier¹². Normally, texts point from a present state of mood or project to the future (the hope of attaining the beloved, etc.). Thus, the setting of the tale in the *passé simple* puts the listener already in a very special atmosphere. But the impression is even more peculiar considering the context of the first *passé simple* "passa" in the first verse. The *passé simple* refers to exactly located, finished actions in the past without reference to the present tense¹³. Nizia asserts that the temporal adverb "hier" requires the *passé simple*; however, in our case "hier" is obscured through the indefinite "autre" and the connection with "l'aultre d'antan"; there is a game between exact time and generalized situation. The grammatical time is part of the story telling tune and the suggestion of a concrete event. The tension of bisociation inherent in the first verse, will probably not be realized immediately, but successively, in the course of the development of the text and in the

12 Concerning the use of the tenses in the 15th century, cf. Christiane Marchello-Nizia, *Histoire de la langue française aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, Paris 1979, p. 346seq. The *passé simple* occurs quite often in the texts of the *rhétoriciens*, which by their nature deal more often with historical events. Nizia notes, however, that the use of the tenses in this époque is still much more vague than in modern French. That does not mean that the tenses had no specific implications. The meaning is more dependent on the context. Thus it is not only the tense which defines the temporal context of a text. It would be an interesting topic for a vaster paper to find out why the *passé simple* is so rare in texts used in poetry. One of the reasons may be that the *passé simple* is mainly a *narrative* tense (cf. H. Weinrich, *Tempus. Besprochene und erzählte Welt*, Stuttgart 1964).

13 cf. Marchello-Nizia, op. cit., p. 347seq.

repetitions of the verse. It becomes increasingly evident during the development of the text that there is a general tension between many levels of the text: the grammatical and syntactical level, the contents of a superficially told story (providing an almost ironic background for the essential meaning of the text), the presentation of the contents in metaphors which are themselves questioned in the course of the game. None of those levels remains unquestioned, and the very meaning is neither the one nor the other level, but the game between the suggested levels and the always changing listeners.

In the light of the ambiguous time-level of the first verse, it is striking that the verb "passa" is not specified as to gender until the first half strophe. Although for the experienced listener it is clear from the beginning that the subject is a "she", the context in which the gender is revealed later will be all the more astonishing. At the same time, the first verse has something both specific and unspecific. Its impression is made through a slight unease which, however, is never explicit enough to be truly disturbing. The significance of this bisociative unease will be felt in the next strophes.

In the second verse the verb is in the continuous form "en passant", both marking a difference from the first verse and opening the frame of the game and the story.

The next "disturbance" of normalcy is the word "trespercha", (he or she) pierced (me) through. Only in the third verse are we told that it is a glance (and not a sword) which is doing the piercing, and it is there that the gender of the verb becomes more obvious. The series of metaphors culminates in the verb "forgier" (to forge) and "Milan", a city famous for its sword makers. It is important for the significance of the metaphors that their effect is achieved successively and cumulatively, and that there is still something essential lacking - the gender of the subject for the metaphors. Cumulatively, the metaphors are strongly exaggerated. Their exaggeration *per se* is perhaps witty (if somewhat grossly so), but their accumulation questions their metaphorical quality, opens the temporal frame of their singular language games and puts them in a broader context - in the ideal space of the 'Spiel'. The accumulation is continued in the fourth verse with "arriere ban", a military expression which will find its bisociative context in the next strophe.

On the sound-level there are many games as well. "Brassin brassa", a connection of verb and subject of the same root (and thus already exaggerated) is only the last in a series of *Lautmalerei-effects*. Even the first verse has, in addition to its grammatical tensions, a kind of military onomatopoeia: the rhythms of the language "ram-ta-dam-tam" (and the double-s as hiss sound) are easily recognizable as the battlefield drum roll, an allusion found in the music as well. The other verses are full of hissing and rolling belligerent

sounds, too, e.g., in the second verse the p-, r- and s-sounds (very effective because of the short vowels), in the third verse, the r-sounds.

The war-allusions of the second half of the refrain are less explicit. Instead, the tempo of language is stepped up, the half verses losing their caesuras. The drive of the tempo toward "brassin brassa" has its real goal in the repetition of the first verse as sixth verse, since the connection between the drum roll of the first verse and the rolling r-sound of "brassin brassa" is very clear. Moreover, the rhyme "brassa - passa" connects the metaphorical level with the bisociation of the first verse. Naturally, the repetition has its "formal" or "structural" meaning, but it is not just the normal closing effect of a formal repetition which is intended, but a double-faced effect of the closure of a poetic unit through a verse which is still ambiguous, especially as the gender of the verb has not yet been disclosed. The text as a whole is not yet humorous, rather merely witty. The level of humour is reserved for the development of the next strophes.

At first sight, the following half strophe only emphasizes the metaphors of battlefield of the refrain. The beloved, preparing out of her "victim" a French national dish, "fricassé", has consequently let him leave "her" troops. But in the third verse we are finally presented with the gender of the "aggressor". The metaphors of battlefield have a strange reality in the expression of "ses gaiges" (her wages), because it is rather unusual that a woman is the chief of an army, even being a queen or a duchess. Exactly at the moment when the gender - which is rather obvious already - is disclosed, it is done in a context in which the realistic part of the metaphor does not fit. And who would damage a soldier of her own if there were no other reason behind it? Was it really to her damage, was it a damage for her lover, was there any damage at all? The whole affair is apparently constructed voluntarily by both sides, quite to the contrary of a real battlefield. The metaphors of this verse are not only amassed exaggeratedly, but are set in a light of question, appearing in unusual contexts and relations. The departure from a blunt metaphorical level to a much more differentiated insight is expressed in the logically unnecessary "mais". "Mais" does not express a logical antithesis in the half strophe, but a turn in the whole process 'Rondeau'. In this context, the repetition of the half refrain is not a formal stereotype at all. It sheds light on the changed context and the questioned relations of the "aggressor" and the "attacked". It stresses the character of bisociation. The sound of the drum roll is suddenly hollow.

At first sight, the second strophe seems to indicate that this Rondeau is one more example of the kind "cruel mistress betraying her faithful lover". The lover is betrayed, an act expressed in drastic metaphorical language, but this time the event is all too real. "Elle dansa" - she slept with somebody else. What appears to be a clear metaphor is introduced, however, by a very short

but cruel phrase which sounds almost casual and unimportant. This is the first phrase without a metaphorical implication: "Then, when our love ended". Suddenly, it is evident that all of the "damages" of the preceding verses fabricated on purpose: to find time for the game of love, and this through finding a way for the lover to quit the troops. The metaphors of the preceding verses can now be understood as a description of reality, of a real event. But what is reality and what is invention, and which of them is the *pointe* of the text?

The illumination of the metaphors through "reality", the top of the bisociative effects, is condensed in "dansa", metaphorically describing the cruel reality. The mistress, having obviously put the situation "on stage", looks upon the whole affair as a joke, a meaningless adventure. Bored after the successful outcome, she looks for the next pleasure. In this moment of seeming reality, the first verse appears in a significantly changed form¹⁴: "L'aultre d'antan, l'aultre d'antan ..." The moments of tension, "autrier" and its attendant *passé simple*, have disappeared. But in this form, the repetition of "l'aultre d'antan" seems to be meaningless, perhaps even a mistake of the copyist. It is nothing less than the culmination of the temporal development in the very moment of leaving it. The drum roll of the sound level appears independently, and only the frame of the tale is left. The verse *suggests* that in life it always happens like this: first women attract, then they dance. It is evident that the ambiguity of the temporal structure of the first verse of the refrain is intended. It serves the principle of bisociation. The fact of leaving it out after the metaphor "dansa" leads to understanding through absence.

It is not incidental for the understanding of the whole text that the listener (or reader) is no longer able to differentiate what is reality from what is not. But the purpose is only partially *suggested popular wisdom*. The text is not one sided, sexist or cruel, nor is it a statement about the nature of woman. The game is much subtler than that. The relations in the game reflect the relations between man and woman, relations between both sides with their own weapons. The presentation of the roles of man and woman in a game of reality and fiction is the goal of the 'Spiel', reached through the use of humour.

When the lover tells us (in the last verse of the strophe) what bad luck he especially has, how bad life has become for him, with the cruel circle of life being always alike, one more circle of the text is closed. "Ne bon jour ne bon an" is an explicit relation to the first verse of the refrain, where day and year have been connected in peculiar ways. The repetition of the first verse of the

14 As noted in the edition of the Mellon Chansonnier, this version is only found in Ms Dijon 517, folios XVII^o-XVIII^o, whereas the whole second strophe is lacking in the version of the Mellon Chansonnier. Thus, the interpretation is made only in regard to the version of the above cited source.

refrain as the sixth verse of the second strophe immediately brings this to mind. The omission of the verse would destroy the entire effect of the text. With the repetition of the whole refrain, we finally leave the level of narrative. We now know how ambiguous the metaphors are: we sense the temporal tensions and understand them. In this repetition the listener has time to draw his own conclusions. This is much more than a simple recapitulation: here is the moment of closing the frame of the 'Spiel'. While the poetic form is closed, the closure of the 'Spiel' means an opening. The impact on the time and space of the listener is understood. This understanding is reached in an opening of the horizon which is only possible by leaving the borders of the process 'Chanson'. The *passé simple* no longer has a historical sense, and the text leads us to the present tense of one space, the space of our own 'Spiel'.

A most unusual proportional sign paralleling the unusual tense in the text is found in the music. A comment of this sign can be found in Tinctoris' *Proportionale musices*, chapter IIIIS. The intended measure is probably a *proportio tripla*, in which three semibreves correspond to one "normal" semibrevis in *tempus perfectum*. It is likely that the measure is linked to a rather fast tempo. As a result the different levels of music and text are never fully explicit. None of the elements can attain their own significance. With only strong characteristic elements (metaphors, *Lautmalerei* etc.) the chanson would merely be witty, not humorous, since the characteristics of wit are exact location and explicitness. The rapid tempo helps prevent an early identification in favour of a spatial identity of a successively developed image.

It has been long noted that there is a form of paraphrase of *L'homme armé* in *L'aultre d'antan*¹⁶. Essential elements of *L'homme armé* can be found in

15 in E. Caussemaker, *Scriptores*, Vo. IV, p. 156.

16 Cf. Dragan Plamenac, "Miszelle", *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 11 (1928/29), p. 38seq; Plamenac does not deal with *L'aultre d'antan* but with the question whether *L'homme armé* was a monophonic song or the tenor of a three-part chanson. Another intriguing hint for the connection between *L'homme armé* and *L'aultre d'antan* is to be found in Molinet's "Debat du viel Gendarmé et du viel amoureux", part of "Les faitz et dictz de Jean Molinet", ed. Ncel Dupire, Paris 1936. The "Gendarmé" is named "L'homme armé" in this dialogue which is a true compendium of song citations. Thus we find (p. 621):

"L'homme armé:
Lautre dantan par la passa
Mais oncques je n'y entendy,
Car en dansant tout me lassa
Que ma muse ce bruyant cassa
Et me nacquaires pourfendy:
Oncques puis corde ne tendy
Sus tamburin ne sus rebelle."

both cantus and tenor of *L'aultre d'antan*. The contratenor vaguely cites only some elements. In addition, it differs considerably in the sources¹⁷; consequently the version in the Mellon Chansonnier has to be interpreted carefully. At any rate, the contratenor provides partly a supportive function for the other voices. Sometimes it acts as a kind of commentary, and sometimes it intensifies the effects of the other voices. In analyzing the relation between the parts of *L'homme armé* and *L'aultre d'antan* it is important to note that only a part of the material of *L'homme armé* is used, and that the repetition of the first verse connected with a seeming repetition of the first musical phrase is inspired by *L'homme armé* (where a similar repetition is found), but that the function of the repetition is quite different from that in *L'homme armé*. In *L'aultre d'antan* the repetition is not a simple closure of a musical form (e.g., A B A'). It expresses, in the very repetition of the verse and in the changes of the repetition of the musical phrase, the whole complexity of music and text. What appears to be a closure in the music opens the frame for the temporal development of the text and the changing meaning of the chain of events in the cumulative repetitions of the refrain.

It seems natural to see a similarity between the use of elements of *L'homme armé* in the music and the metaphors of war in the text. But there is a significant difference in use between music and text. Music is never able to imitate the effect of metaphor in a language structure. The effect of metaphor is based on the interrelation of two independent language-levels, one designating a direct sense of the word, the other designating the intended meaning. The very effect of metaphor is due not to the difference between two levels, but rather to a third level of understanding as a result of a dialectic process. The main effect of the 'third level' is an opening, the poetic process of metaphor leading beyond the language-level of the first two levels. But the two first levels are needed to attain the third. As music does not contain direct language-levels (because of its lack of verbal conceptuality), it cannot cause the dialectic process of metaphor which is dependant on verbal conceptuality. Nevertheless, music aims at a third level of understanding as well, and thus comes close to the non-verbal understanding level of language. The

16 Not only is this the only chanson which is cited with more than one verse, it is, too, full of allusions to music and especially to the sound of the tamburin, providing a strong support for the impression of a drum roll in the beginning of the chanson *L'aultre d'antan*. Moreover, the musical instruments are metaphors for sexual potency. It seems to be obvious that the "Debat" has been as a whole inspired by the chanson *L'aultre d'antan*. Cf. by this author "*Militat omnis amans* - Zitat und Zitieren in Molinets *Debat du viel Gendarmé et du viel Amaureux* und Ockeghems Chanson *L'aultre d'antan*, *Die Musikforschung* 42/4 (1989), S. 341-49.

17 cf. the comment in the edition, op. cit., vol. II, p. 265.

correlation of music and language-metaphor is to some degree a double dialectic: on the one hand between the two levels of language of the metaphor, leading to a third level, on the other hand between this third level and the 'language'-level of music. This double dialectic appears to be even enriched through the linguistic implication of *L'homme armé* introducing a linguistic level to *L'autre d'antan* and creating a dialectic between both text and music of the two chansons. But as paraphrase itself is not the main subject in *L'autre d'antan* - it is only the means to another end - the conceptuality of *L'homme armé* is never explicit, the process 'Chanson' is a vague conceptual intensification, an allusion on the linguistic level which is neither verbal nor non-verbal. All of the levels of paraphrase and metaphor are introduced so as to give birth to bisociative experience, and thus to humour. The metaphorical level of the text is enriched with a temporal dimension, through the paraphrase of *L'homme armé*, preventing the immediate effect of metaphor and setting it in correlation to the bisociation of the process. *L'homme armé* is part of a universal frame of the 'Spiel' which keeps the music flexible enough to incorporate the temporal development of the meaning of the text.

What are the elements of *L'homme armé* used in the Rondeau? First there is the rising fourth of *L'homme armé* which is quoted only vaguely (in scale form); moreover, it is a standardized opening motive. The relation of this opening motive and its contextual meaning for the Rondeau is clarified progressively. In general, although the elements of *L'homme armé* become clearer in the course of time, they are still recognized as mere allusions. A game takes place between more or less explicit references to *L'homme armé*. The associative manner of quotation is closely related to the bisociative manner of the experience of humour.

Both cantus and tenor include associative elements of the first phrase of *L'homme armé*, the cantus is closer to the melody but leads it to b' instead of to g' as in *L'homme armé*. The expected g' is presented through an extension of the phrase in the tenor:

The image shows a musical score for three voices: Superius, Tenor, and Contratenor. The music is in 4/4 time. The Superius part has the lyrics: "L'autre d'antan l'autrier passa Et en passant". The Tenor part has the lyrics: "L'autre d'antan l'autrier pas- sa". The Contratenor part has the lyrics: "L'autre d'antan". The score is labeled "Example I" at the bottom.

The phrase extension is interesting in several respects. It is generated by the initial motive, but this time with a peculiar contrary effect. The motive has been stated at the beginning in imitation, first in the contratenor, then, successively, in the tenor and cantus. Not only is this imitation left abruptly, but the restatement of the motive is as much of a surprise, as it is not part of an imitation pattern. Moreover, the motive breaks a hemiola structure, which is itself startling enough. The motive deflects a cadence on b' to the *L'homme armé*-cadence on g' in a fifth-fall formula which is not regular in the tenor. The rest in the cantus highlights this by exposing it. This fifth-fall is indeed the second element of *L'homme armé*, but instead of being exposed afterwards in the other voices it is altered to a fourth-fall. The effect is clearly that of allusion and bisociation: the original element is hidden and exposed at the same time, exposed because of the wrong place of the element as a cadence formula and because of the startling rhythmical implication of the phrase extension, hidden just because it is presented as a cadence formula and not restated in the following context. The fourth-fall states the allusion and bisociates the musical structure of the chanson from *L'homme armé*. Thus, the purpose of the reference to *L'homme armé* is not a witty paraphrase of this song but an interaction in the open game of the chanson. The allusions are obvious enough to be recognized as such but woven in a very complex net of correlations.

The third element of *L'homme armé* a syncopated descending melody line, is clearly cited in the cantus m. 8 seq. But the citation is balanced in its explicitness. The characteristic syncopation of the original melody is not very explicit at all, because it is perceived as an element of *memoria*.

Example 2

Finally, the citation of m. 8 is re-evaluated through the imitation in the tenor m. 10/11 seq.; this imitation is presented in the interval of a seventh and thus has several implications. First, it changes the citation to a second citation, a parody of the parody which is witty by itself. Second, it extends once more a seemingly

concluded phrase and leads a clear cadence on g' to a (once more the interval is a seventh), a moment of tension which is resolved and understood only in the following phrase. Third, the imitation at the seventh-distance both illuminates the technique of imitation itself and re-evaluates the preceding imitations. To understand this, we must return to the beginning of the chanson - rather like the potential listener re-evaluating certain elements in the repetitions of the refrain and intensifying their relations in comparison with the development of the text. The relations between the phrases, the musical techniques, the "misleading" cadences are not in the end interpreted each by a single function. One moment they can be taken as wit, but in the repetition of the refrain and in the evaluation of them in correlation with the text they can be experienced as reflective or questioning as well. The very character of the 'Spiel' consists of, first, variability between a momentary understanding coming partly from expectation and the interpretation of the memory, and, second, the potential those interpretations of the momentary experiences have for new expectation, new memory and renewed understanding.

As has been noted above, the rising fourth of *L'homme armé* is presented in a standardized beginning motive. This motive appears in all the voices but continues differently in each. Given the fast tempo, it is difficult to realize this because the voices are still rather similar, especially cantus and tenor. Once more we find the typical allusive character of the voices. Aside from its function as an identifying pattern between the voices, the first motive takes the role of a nucleus which is often cited, e.g., in the "wrong" cadence with the fifth-fall in m. 6/7, in the phrase extension in m. 17 or in the tenor in m. 28/ 29, where the "wrong" cadence is integrated as hemiola, etc. In all of those places, the motive has a strong referential character.

The third verse of the chanson begins with a kind of imitation as well, with the fourth-fall at the interval of an octave in cantus and tenor¹⁸. It is important that the characteristic fifth-fall of *L'homme armé* is changed to a fourth-fall, leaving both vague. Thus the imitation at the seventh balances the preceding imitation at the "regular" octave, leaving the whole technique of imitation in a curious light. Imitation of the source and imitation as musical technique are connected and bisociated at the same time. There is a game between identity (simultaneity of the paraphrase and its source), association (differences between simultaneously cited music) and dissociation (questioning of the understood). The conditions for the creation of humour are perfect.

18 L. Perkins pointed out the great resemblance of paraphrase source and paraphrase and cites the imitations as one of his main arguments. I consider the imitations not as moments of closeness but of dissociation. Cf. "The l'homme armé Masses of Busnois and Ockeghem", *Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 111,4 (Fall 1984), p. 366seq.

The musical phrase ends in a Phrygian cadence on e', but tenor and contratenor once more extend the phrase to a cadence on d', an interval of a whole tone as reference to the seventh distance of the preceding imitation⁹.

Through the tension of the tonality, a special momentum lies at the end of the half strophe. The character of bisociation is sensed very strongly. *L'homme armé* and its paraphrase are in a clear mixolydian tonality. The correlation of the cadences obscures this clear tonality. On the one hand, the cadence on D seems to be "natural" for a mixolydian mode at the end of the half strophe, and indeed, it is stressed through the preceding cadence on A in m. 13. But on the other hand, this very cadence is the result of an artificial phrase extension and of the imitation at the seventh. The cadence on E is possible as well in relation to the cadence on A, but it is only in the cantus that the phrygian character of the cadence is strongly suggested, whereas it is the cantus which adds the third (c') to the otherwise clear cadence on A in m. 13. This c" is connected to the deflected cadence on G in m. 11. The melodic pendant to this tension is in the cantus in mm. 15 to 17: Whether a musica ficta b-flat is added or not (which I would recommend, in contrast to the edition of the Mellon Chansonnier, since the frame interval would thus avoid the tritone and the phrygian space would be emphasized), there will always be a tritone.

In the second half of the music, some of the tendencies are emphasized on the one hand, but treated more freely and associated loosely on the other. The paraphrase of *L'homme armé* is not extended to its subsequent phrase. It is only through the repetition of the beginning that there appears a close connection to it. The free connection of the fragmentary elements of *L'homme armé* is what leads to a new experience in the repetition at the end. The closing of the circle is not a return to the source of the paraphrase but an opening to the temporal developments of the following strophes.

Here are some of the devices in handling the paraphrase fragments:

1. The falling fifth appears as a scale in the cantus phrase m. 19seq. This time we find the fifth of *L'homme armé* but made allusive (as in the beginning

¹⁹ My interpretation differs in this point from the interpretation in the edition of the Mellon Chansonnier, and also from the interpretation of Perkins in the aforementioned paper on the *L'homme armé* masses. Perkins sees a tension between the prevailing tonality (mixolydian) and dorian, whereas I stress the cadence on E and do not think of it as a cadence on A. Above all, I cannot agree with the transcription in volume I of the edition where all voices end on an "a-minor"-chord, but suggest rather that the contratenor and tenor extend the phrase to m. 19 and a cadence on D, an example of the above-mentioned tonal tension. This interpretation is especially plausible in view of the underlaying of the text. There is not, as suggested in the edition, an extra syllable for the contratenor (and therefore "forgie-a" must not be contracted on the semibrevis) but the text fits all strophes perfectly if the phrase is extended as suggested.

of the chanson) by the filling with a scale. The falling fifth is an imitation of the tenor in m. 17, the "wrong" phrase extension. Thus the "right" interval is correlated to the "artificial" extension of the phrase.

2. The element of phrase extension appears intensified in the fourth verse, which is subdivided into two halves with different tonal spaces, first in the cantus d'-a, then, after the caesura of the text verse, the mixolydian g'-d" (e" is only an neighbouring top note). This heightens the momentary tonal tension at the end of the half strophe.

3. The imitation from the beginning of the piece (with the characteristic rhythmic motive ! " ! !) is integrated in the fifth verse. The contratenor in the version of the Mellon Chansonnier starts in m. 31, where the other voices are concluding their phrases. The following imitations are identical with the opening in motive and pitch but are placed in another context and changed in the following one. It is especially noteworthy that the cantus is introduced after a cadence on h', since it is thus that the unusual ending of the first phrase appears as the introduction to the repetition in the sixth verse. The reinforcement of the mixolydian tonality should not be understood as a return but as an association, a result of the bisociational context. This result is neither a return nor a closure, but an opening to a new space, the space of the 'Spiel'.

4. The dialectical relation between groups of three semibreves and hemiola becomes increasingly complicated from m. 28 onward. The hemiola appears with an upbeat in the tenor to be led in a syncopated three-grouping in a fifth

The image shows a musical score for three voices (Cantus, Tenor, and Contratenor) in mensural notation. The lyrics are: "a Meian Qui ne mist en" for the top voice, "for- gie a Meian Qui ne mist en" for the middle voice, and "a Meian Qui ne mist en" for the bottom voice. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* and *f* (*mf*).

fall (*L'homme armé*) imitating the cantus in a *fuga ad minimam*. This *fuga* has a hoquet like character and questions once more the essence of imitation itself. But this time the rhythmical self-questioning is put at the "right" interval of an octave, and leads directly to the imitation of the sixth verse. The "repetition" of the first phrase is introduced in a fifth-fall (sic) in the tenor, which in turn introduces the g' to the cadence on b' in the cantus. This reinterprets the heretofore

fore "right" imitation and the "wrong" interpretations of the process. After this passage, the return is no return but the pivot for the frame of the 'Spiel', as the repetition of the first verse as the sixth in the text was its pivot. Here all bisociations come together, the solution is not achieved through the phrase itself but from now on in the 'Spiel' of the listener, which is always new, never repeated.

5. The fifth and the fourth are handled variably: rising or falling, as phrase link, at phrase midpoints, etc. It becomes successively clear that the opening phrase of the contratenor (about which all sources are in agreement) contains the fifth and fourth as synthesis: first the rising fourth, then the falling fifth, as in *L'homme armé*, but presented allusively as scales.

Compared to the first phrase the changes in the last are especially significant. It has already been observed that the relation to the preceding phrase sets the last phrase in the context of the preceding bisociations. This context is kept alive especially by the rhythm of the contratenor against the cantus. In mm. 32/33, the rhythm of the contratenor floats between a hemiola and a syncopation. In mm. 34/35 the contratenor does not (as in mm. 4/5) support the hemiola of the cantus, but counters it with an ostinato-like version of the head motive. The last phrase has enough synthesizing elements potentially to close the frame of the game at the very end of the whole chanson. But it includes all the antinomies of the music in order to keep the frame open after the first refrain.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of three staves: a vocal line (soprano), a contratenor line (bass), and a lute line (treble). The lyrics are in French and are written below the vocal and contratenor staves. The first system covers measures 32-35, and the second system covers measures 36-39. The music is in a 3/4 time signature and features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some syncopation and hemiola patterns as described in the text.

l'ar- rie - re ban Tant mauvais brassin
l'ar - rie - re ban Tant mauvais brassin me

me brassa L'aultre d'antan l'aultrier pas - sa
brassa L'aultre d'an - tan l'au- trier pas - sa

Example 4

The following remarks about the combinations of music and text may appear somewhat understated. They are merely intended to point out the *potential* of combining them in the game so as to underline the thesis that the main 'Spiel' is not predetermined but takes place in the ever new processes with ever new listeners. It may be argued that the coincidences between text and music will be alike for every listener and can be demonstrated by analysis. However, this is only one part of the truth. What can be shown in analysis are the rules of the game, but they are not at all the 'Spiel' itself. The 'Spiel' is a temporal process with the purpose of self understanding and identification of the listener with the process. This can never be imitated by analytic language. Language is able to hint at possibilities and preconditions of understanding. It is not able and should not be able to imitate music. If it were to do so it would become itself a work of art, e.g., a poem, only inspired by the music but not dealing with it.

The preceding analysis has, hopefully, shown that music and text can exist and can be understood as totally independent units and that both of them contain structures of bisociation which can evoke humour. In the music it is the ambiguity of the tonal spaces, the "self-reflection" of the musical techniques, the paraphrase, and the questioning of the nature of paraphrase; in the text we found bisociation in supposed storytelling in metaphors. In both cases a merely witty overstatement of single elements has been avoided through the correlations in the frame of a 'Spiel', thus ensuring the possibility of humour in the single experience of the process.

If we look at the relations between music and text, we cannot do so by an analysis of parallels (even if our language tends to evoke such an impression) but in a consideration of the potential of association and bisociation in a 'Spiel'. It is only in rare instances that music and text are experienced simultaneously, creating a sort of leading system through the 'Spiel'. But those very moments of simultaneity must be interpreted in a temporal process. They lose the character of local coincidence by virtue of belonging to a system of correlations. As soon as their significance in this system is understood, music and text are once again separated and reunited at another level. The independence of both does not indicate that there is a constant separation in the mind, a kind of schizophrenic listening. But the listener's task is to create a new structure of understanding between ontologically different units. There are non-verbal structures in the text and quasi verbal structures in music. The interaction of those structures is not predetermined, it is different in every experience of the process. The coincidental points between music and text show how the composer was aware of the possibilities of interaction on a general poetic level, how he was a reader of his texts. But the experience of the entire process is far more than a second reading: it is not parallel to the reading of the composer.

Let us look at some moments of coincidence, forming a leading system through the process:

1. The drum roll sound of the text is emphasized in the rapid tempo, the rhythm of the head motive !. ~ ! ! ! and the imitation through all voices (as a running fire). There is evidence in the text both for this imagery and for its character as temporal leitmotiv, supporting the function of the head motive in the music. There is a game between the sound of war and the character of allusion in the music of *L'homme armé*. But almost as important is that the imitation is abandoned immediately after its appearance. This breaks the coincidental game and expands the condensed effect of correlation between music and text in time.

2. It is obvious that the ends of phrases in the cantus and sometimes in the tenor (the contratenor is likely to be executed instrumentally, and is therefore omitted from the present discussion) often contain two longer note values which help to bring out sound (and noise) effects of the text and, at the same time, give the music the implied meaning of the text: "passa" and "percha", and in the next strophes "fricassa" and "cessa". But there is the distinct possibility of reinterpretation in the course of the process. In the second strophe, the "sound" words are connected to the important "dansä", thus adding to the process the questioning of reality and metaphorical telling.

3. The phrase extensions, so important for the music, have a bearing on the text. Thus in the first phrase "passa" (passéd by), in the second "trespercha" (pierced through - the extension underlines almost ironically the movement of the "sword"). But there is a bisociative effect as well. The music points to a level of direct meaning of the metaphor and questions the language process, itself incited by a metaphor. The dubious character of the use of metaphors in the text is underscored by the music. This is especially striking in the long phrase extension at "en l'arriere ban". But the most striking effect is the correlation with "dansa". The movement of dancing and the cruel truth of the metaphor are intensified, the reality inexorably felt. In "ne bon an" one can experience that the time is endless.

4. Particularly interesting is the phrase extension in the middle of the refrain where the tonal ambiguity is very strong. The changing meaning of this extension may be sensed in the different words connected to it. In "Melan", the tonal tension is connected to clear metaphor. In "dan", the ambiguity is strong because it is difficult to locate the "real" damage. And finally we have seen that the phrase "l'aultre d'antan, l'aultre d'antan ..." opened the temporal development to timelessness in favour of a more spatial aspect of tonality in the music.

5. The hemiolae in the music add a special colour and witty sense to some words. They are mostly connected to phrase extensions as in "dansa".

6. The *fuga ad minimam* m. 28seq. connected to "brassin brassa" and "enuy amassa". In the first case the hoquet like character appears to highlight the "breaking" noise of the word. But here the direction is from text to music. The realistic meaning of the words are in sharp contrast to the complicated correlation of the *fuga*. The *fuga* is the last of dissociated imitations in the music, the strongest point of divergence. In the case of "brassin brassa", the text is only the last of a series of exaggerated metaphors, it does not yet fully call into question the metaphors themselves. This is achieved in the game with the music, where the technique of imitation is clearly linked to the linguistic technique of using metaphors. In the second strophe "enuy amassa" is clearly ironical and gives way to the listener's reflexion upon his own role. The coincidence with the music is perfect, and the new bisociation in the last repetition of the refrain opens the frame to an individual understanding of humour in the understanding of each listener.

7. Finally, there is the game between the text of *L'homme armé* and that of *L'aultre d'antan*. *L'homme armé* warns us, especially in the first half, against the arméd man. This is the part paraphrased in *L'aultre d'antan*. Perhaps this chanson, too, suggests that we should beware of the arméd man and beware of women as well. But there is the double sense of "doubter" ("L'homme armé doit on doubter") which can mean "to doubt" or "to beware of".

As has been said concerning the meaning of metaphors in *L'aultre d'antan* and the seemingly one sided guilt of the woman, the intention is not a joke played on one side. It is not the *mise en scene* of a simple popular truth. The purpose is the reflection on the part of all of us on our role in the game of love and life.