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## "The Neufiesme Livre, Thomas Crecquillon, and The Chanson-Response Tradition"

Like other volumes in the Du Chemin's Chansons nouvelles series, the Neufiesme livre offers some two dozen works for four voices, mainly by composers active in and around Paris during the middle years of the sixteenth century. But the Neufiesme livre also stands at the intersection of a number of important trends of change. As we shall discover, it embraces a surprisingly wide range of stylistic and literary elements, not only from mid-century Paris but also from the French provinces, the Low Countries, and even (indirectly) Italy. Among the chansons assembled here are examples that remind us of the self-conscious sense of play and dialogue that linked certain chansons, and through them, their makers and audiences. But before exploring these themes of style and dialogue, we should first pause to consider the general character of the Neufiesme livre in relation to Du Chemin's previous publications.

The Neufiesme livre was the first of three chansonniers in this series to be edited by Claude Goudimel, the young composer who took over editorial responsibility for Du Chemin's musical imprints starting in March of 1551, when Du Chemin and his first music editor, Nicolas Regnes, dissolved their partnership. Like the other books in this series, the Neufiesme livre includes some two dozen chansons for four voices (superius and tenor in one partbook; contratenor and bassus in another). As in the other books, too, a title page lists the contents alphabetically by incipit, and identifies the composer of each piece. However, unlike previous books in the series, the Neufiesme livre includes the name of each composer at the top of the appropriate page of the superius and contratenor parts. This was a small typographical difference, to be sure, but one that identified particular chansons with the names of individual composers. During the second half of the sixteenth century, printers such as Du Chemin and Le Roy et Ballard increasingly relied on the notoriety of individual composers as a way to promote their musical publications. In another departure from previous editorial practice, Goudimel discarded Regnes' old system of organizing each chansonnier according to musical mode. Whether Goudimel had a particular organizational scheme in mind as he compiled the Neuflesme livre is uncertain, but it seems significant that his own music appears both close to the outset of the volume, and at the very end. Should we understand the latter as intended to be a kind of musical signature to the book?

The bulk of the compositions that Goudimel selected for the *Neufiesme livre* were written by composers active in France (and especially in Paris) during the middle years of the sixteenth century. In this respect, the book is also very much like the volumes produced under Regnes' supervision. Goudimel contributed three chansons to the *Neufiesme livre*. He also included music by some of his Parisian colleagues, such as Clément Janequin, Etienne Du Tertre, Claude Gervaise, Maximillian Guilliaud, along with music by Pierre Certon and

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Jean Maillard, both of whom were associated with institutions sponsored by the Valois kings of France. During the second half of the sixteenth century, the French composer Jacques Arcadelt enjoyed a growing reputation in his native country, and eventually came to have a very prominent place in the publications of the Parisian printing firm of Le Roy et Ballard. In the early months of 1551, when Goudimel prepared the *Neufiesme livre*, Arcadelt was probably still in Italy, where he had worked (in Florence, and then at the Papal court in Rome) for over a decade. By late 1551, Arcadelt returned to France in the company of Cardinal Charles de Guise, through whom he maintained close ties to the French royal court during the next decade. The presence in Du Chemin's *Neufiesme livre* of a single work by him (the pastoral chanson, "Je ne suis pas") is thus important for the ways in which it anticipates his later prominence in French publications."

The four chansons by Thomas Crecquillon printed here in the *Neufiesme livre* ("Amour, et moy," "Si salamandre," "C'est à grand tort," and "Mon pouvre coeur") are doubly important from the standpoint of the series as a whole, for they embrace an especially rich set of literary and musical traditions through which we can begin to understand the full range of the chanson at mid-century. Crecquillon (b. ca. 1505, d. ca. 1557) served as choirmaster to the Netherlands-Habsburg court in Brussels under Emperor Charles V during the 1540's. He was also associated with churches in Antwerp, Namur, and Termonde. His career is notable among composers represented in the *Chansons nouvelles*, therefore, because of its apparent independence from French institutions of musical patronage (a distinction he shares only with Clemens non Papa, and Lasso in these books).<sup>2</sup>

A prolific composer of secular and sacred music alike, the bulk of his over 200 chansons were issued in Antwerp by Tielman Susato, whose *Tiers livre de chansons* of 1544 was devoted exclusively to Crecquillon's works. Through these imprints, as well as the various travels of the Habsburg court, Crecquillon's music enjoyed a particularly wide circulation in Imperial lands. It also seems possible that Crecquillon cultivated some sort of unofficial connection with French musical circles. Among his chansons (as we will discover) are settings of texts by royal poet Jean Marot (father of the famous Clément) and a poem in praise of the Salamander (emblem of King François Ier). He also reworked a four-voice Latin motet by French royal composer Jean Mouton, ("Quaeramus cum pastoribus") for six voice choir. It may also be worth noting that of the fourteen chansons by Crecquillon that Du Chemin's editors included in the *Chansons nouvelles*, several seem to be the earliest known printed copy. It is possible that in the case of music from beyond their immediate Parisian orbit, Du Chemin and his musical advisors depended as much on private manuscripts for their music as upon printed sources.<sup>3</sup>

In some respects, Crecquillon's chansons from the *Neufiesme livre* follow the stylistic model heard elsewhere in the volume, and in Du Chemin's chanson albums in general. His "Mon pouvre coeur" and "C'est à grand tort," like many of the chansons by his French contemporaries, are settings of eight-line stanzas (*huitains*) of decasyllabic verse. In these, as in

- On Arcadelt's life and work, see James Haar, «Jacques Arcadelt,» *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn., 29 vols, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Macmillan, 2001), I, 843-48.
- 2 · For recent perspectives on Crecquillon's life and works, see Beyond contemporary fame: reassessing the art of Clemens non Papa and Thomas Crecquillon: colloquium proceedings, Utrecht, April 24-26, 2003, ed. Eric Jas, Collection Epitome Musicale (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005).
- 3 The bulk of these fourteen compositions appear in books edited by Goudimel (the Neufiesme livre and Unziesme livre each contain four pieces by Crecquillon). Three chansons by Crecquillon appear in the Douziesme livre. One chanson appears in each of the Sixiesme, Huictiesme, and Trieziesme livres.



chansons by French composers, the superius part takes the melodic lead, opening with a clearly defined (and often triadic) profile, and culminating in a syncopated, melismatic climax just before the cadence. In other ways, however, Crecquillon's musical ideal is decidedly different from that of his French contemporaries. His textures, for instance, are contrapuntal rather than homorhythmic. What is more, Crecquillon's literary choices reveal his active engagement with older traditions, and a continuing attempt to extend them in creative ways. That Du Chemin's new editor Goudimel should have been drawn to these compositions in particular tells us much about his own receptiveness to this sort of dynamic relationship with tradition.

Consider, for instance, Crecquillon's setting of "Amour, et moy," which is remarkable for its special stanzaic design. The text consists of seven lines of poetry plus a half-line reprise (or *rentrement*). The form of this poem thus recalls that of a *rondeau cinquain* (AB aA ab AB) of which the verse is incomplete, since nominally it should have consisted of three lines of text rather than two.<sup>4</sup>

## REFRAIN:

Amour, et moy avons faict accoinctance En pourchassant la mienne affections, Et bon espoir de donne intention De pourhasser, et vivre en esperance Pour parvenir à consolation.

VERSE:

Si je voy cler, mes yeulx sont sans doubtance Et demeurons en paix, et union, Amour, et moy. Love, and I have made acquaintance, In purchasing my affections, And good hope has made the intention To purchase, and live in hope, In order to arrive at consolation.

If I see clearly, my eyes are without doubt, And remain in peace, and unity. Love, and I.

## EXAMPLE 6.1



For a modern edition of «Amour, et moy,» see Thomas Crecquillon: Opera omnia, ed. Susan Youens, Barton Hudson, and Mary Beth Winn, 15 vols., Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 4 (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1962), XIV, 33-36. For a commentary on the work and its form, see on pp. xliii-xliv of the same volume.

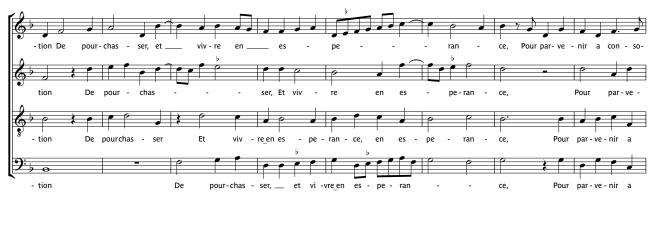
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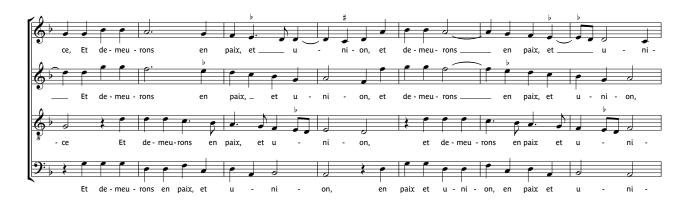
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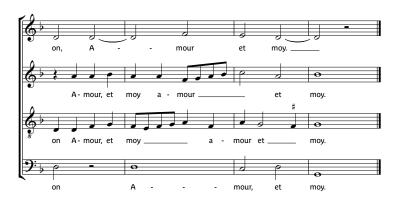
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It is unlikely that Crecquillon understood this poem as a rondeau. It lacks, for instance, a clear cadential articulation at the end of the third line of text (that is, the division for the initial half-verse and subsequent repetition of the first half of the refrain). On the other hand, Crecquillon clearly sought to highlight for the reader the presence of the rentrement and its cyclic implications, for the work concludes with a brooding recapitulation of the opening gesture of the composition just as the text returns to the opening phrase. A similar rentrement also figures in Crecquillon's setting of "A tout jamais," a five-line rondeau refrain by French court poet Jean







Marot. This chanson was originally printed in Teilman Susato's Second livre of 1544, but was later included in Du Chemin's Quart livre from the Chansons nouvelles series, too.<sup>5</sup>

Crecquillon's setting of "Si salamandre" is also remarkable in several respects. For Du Chemin's readers the "salamandre" mentioned at the outset of this poem could well have been taken as an allusion to a personal emblem used by King François Ier. However, as Bonnie Blackburn has recently shown, the poem is in fact a French translation of a *strambotto* by the fifteenth-century Italian writer Serafino Aquilano, notable in this context both for its form (the rhyme scheme, *abababcc*, is unlike that of the typical French *huitain*, *ababbcbc*) and for its rather Petrarchan language emphasizing striking oppositions of feeling. Here, the poet compares his love to the salamander, which lives on despite the fire it endures.

Aquilano:7

Se salmandra in fiamma vive e poco:
Non me stupisce quel che fa natura
Ma costei che e de ghiacco et io de foco
E in mezo del mio cor vive secura.
Chi la defende in cosi ardente loco
Che devendo squagliar diventa dura?
Solo amor de natura aspro adversario
Che a suo despecto unisce ogni contrario.

As set by Crecquillon:

Si Salamandre en flamme vit, c'est peu; Merveilles n'ay des oeuvres de nature. Celle qui est de glace, et moy de feu, Au droict milieu de mon coeur vit, et dure. Qui la defend en un si ardant lieu? Fondre debvroit, et si devient plus dure: Amour le faict, de nature adversaire, Qu'en despit d'elle vit, ce qu'est contraire.

Aquilano's *strambotti* and the imitations they inspired were frequently set to music by composers of the years around 1500 (notably by frottolists such as Bartolomeo Tromboncino and sometimes by polyphonists such as Josquin des Prez). In the works of Tromboncino and other poet-improvisers, such settings often repeat a declamatory melody for the first three couplets, followed by a new phrase for the final pair of verses, which frequently mark a turn to a clever, often epigrammatic conclusion. Crecquillon seems to have been unaware of these conventions, preferring instead to handle the eight-line much as he would an ordinary *huitain*. His chanson, like others we have encountered in Du Chemin's *chansonniers*, uses largely the same music for the first two couplets, a contrasting musical idea for the third pair of lines, and still another for the final verses of the poem. The florid melisma in the superius part stresses the parallelism (and even meaning) of the words "nature" and "dure" in lines 1 and 3. Another long melisma in line 5 produces a sequence of dissonant suspensions between superius and

- For a modern edition of Crecquillon's "A tout jamais," see his Opera omnia, XIV, 45-46. Jean Marot's rondeau was also set by a number of other composers of the early sixteenth century--an anonymous setting for three voices appears in Antico's Chansons à troy (Venice, 1520), while another three-voice setting, this one by Jacotin, appeared in Antico's La Couronne et fleur de chansons à troys (Venice, 1536). Each of these two settings offers only the refrain, although clearly the bipartite division of the music suggests that performance of the work with additional verses in the classic rondeau design was at least a possibility. Du Chemin's Les Meslanges de Pierre Certon, a retrospective volume brought out by the firm in 1570, also includes a six-voice setting of this poem, one that solved the problem of cohesion in the rondeau by simply replacing the fifth line of text with a return to the entire first verse--thus the first line of what had been a rondeau refrain here itself serves as a refrain. Further on "A tout jamais" and its rival settings in the sixteenth century, see Lawrence Bernstein, La Couronne et fleur des chansons à troys, 2 Pts., Master and Monuments of the Renaissance, 3 (New York: Broude Trust, 1984), Pt. 1, pp. 42-46 and Pt. 2, pp. 26-28; and Edward Kovarik, "The Parody Chansons of Certon's Meslanges," in Music and Context, Essays for John M. Ward, ed. A. D. Shapiro (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 317-51.
- 6 · Bonnie J. Blackburn, «Thomas Crecquillon's Salamander: an Italian Import,» *Musicologia humana: Studies in Honor of Warren and Ursula Kirkendale*, ed. S. Gmeinwieser, D. Hiley and J. Riedlbauer (Florence: L.S. Olschki: 1994), 125-38. This article includes a modern edition of *Si salamandre*.
- 7 · Text quoted in Blackburn, «Thomas Crecquillon's Salamander: an Italian Import,» p. 128.
- 3 · On the music of the frottolists and their relation to Italian poetic traditions, see William F. Prizer, Courtly Pastimes. The Frottole of Marchetto Cara (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980.)

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tenor that evoke another sense of "dure" (as in "hardening"). All of this leads to the final couplet, which neatly summarizes the poet's situation: how love (like the salamander) defies nature itself. Crecquillon's musical treatment of these lines is quite subtle: "adversaire" at the end of line 7 is joined to a musical gesture that implies but then avoids a clear cadence (just as the tenor comes to rest, the bassus drops out and the contratenor moves up instead of down). "Ce qu'est contraire" in the final line of the poem is set to a striking passage of syncopated counterpoint that nicely captures the "contradictory" qualities that characterize the subject of the poem.

Crecquillon's two remaining compositions from the Neufiesme livre, "C'est à grand tort" and "Mon pouvre coeur," are linked by a number of poetic and musical correspondences.9 Du Chemin's typesetter was doubtlessly aware of the connections between them: the two chansons appear on the same page and with the designation "response" on the leaves that contain the superius and tenor parts for these pieces. Settings of such chanson-response pairs, in which the closing line of one poem serves as the opening line of another (and vice versa), enjoyed a particular vogue during the period between about 1530 and 1560, especially in the Low Countries. Indeed, many of the these related pieces were published together by Tielman Susato during the 1540's and by Pierre Phalèse during the 1560's and 1570's. 10 Crecquillon, it seems, cultivated the genre with special intensity: 38 of his over 200 chansons belong to chanson-response pairs, sometimes joined by a third chanson, called the "réplique." Often, the chanson-response pairs involve more than one composer, but here in the Neufiesme livre we have an example of Crecquillon's response to his own chanson; in his output there are about a dozen such pairs in which both the chanson and the response were composed by him.11

For Susan Youens and Barton Hudson, modern editors of Crecquillon's complete chansons, the connection between "C'est à grand tort" and "Mon pouvre coeur" is tenuous, and certainly not as explicit as the musical and poetic correspondences found in Crecquillon's many other chanson-response pairs. There is, they note, a similarity between the fifth line of each text ("O doulx amour" and "O doulx penser"), but little else connects the two poems, which lack the usual direct borrowing of opening and closing verses:

Texts as Set by Crecquillon: Mon pouvre coeur, qui sans aulcun repos Pour un penser incessamment souspire Ne veult changer touteffois de propos Du souvenir ou tousjours il aspire O doulx amour qui cause mon martyre Ne me veulx tu autrement dispenser Considerant que mon coeur le desire. Car plus il pense, et plus il veult penser.

- 9 · I am indebted to two of my students, Katherine and Colleen Foarde, for many of the following insights about Crecquillon's "C'est à grand tort" and "Mon pouvre coeur," and for allowing me to include them here.
- 10 · The tradition is considered in A. Cutler Silliman, "'Responce' and 'replique' in Chansons Published by Tylman Susato, 1543-1550," Revue belge de musicologie 16 (1962), 30-42. In France, perhaps the most famous pair of such related pieces were Pierre Sandrin's "Doulce memoire," (to a poem attributed to François I) and Pierre Certon's "Finy le bien." The two works were frequently printed together in sixteenth-century musical anthologies. Concerning Sandrin's chanson and its many echoes, see his Opera omnia, ed. Albert Seay, Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 47 (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1968), p. xvi and pp. 5-7.
- 11 · For a complete list of sets that include Crecquillon's music, see his Opera omnia, Vol. XIV, pp. xi-xii.

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C'est à grand tort qu'on dict que le penser N'est que langueur d'une chose incertaine Car je soustiens qu'il ne peult offenser Celle qui est de loyal penser pleine O doulx penser, qui cause a autruy peine Et à mon coeur perfaict contentement Octroyez moy quelque joye certaine De ce penser, que j'ay incessamment.

Despite reservations of Youens and Hudson, however, there does seem to be some significant musical interplay between the two works. The connection is not between the similar poetic phrases, but instead between other parts of the two poems. The same music that appears at the end of the fifth line of "C'est à grand tort" (at the words "autruy peine" in the contratenor and tenor parts), for instance, is also heard at the end of the last line of "Mon pouvre coeur" (at the words "plus il veult penser" in the superius at bassus parts). It hardly seems coincidental that the figure found in the lowest sounding part of each of these contrapuntal pairs (a rising scale that outlines the musical interval of a fifth) closely resembles the opening melodic motive of Crecquillon's "C'est à grand tort." This gesture also links these compositions to a piece by the French royal composer Claudin de Sermisy that begins with the same words and with a very similar melodic idea (the compositions by Crecquillon and Sermisy are otherwise unrelated, either musically or textually).<sup>12</sup>

Goudimel also included two more pairs of chanson-response cycles in another of the volumes he edited for Du Chemin, the *Unziesme livre*: Crecquillon's L'ardant amour" and "Taire, et souffrir," (along with Goudimel's own "Amour long temps" and "Si l'on donnoit."). The last line of "L'ardant amour," for instance, returns as the very first line of "Taire et souffrir." Both pieces also follow the same poetic design (*huitain*) and basic musical form, with the first two phrases of melody repeated for each of the first two couplets of verse. Goudimel's two chansons, in contrast, are linked by a number of subtle correspondences that are hard to notice on first hearing. This is due, in part to Goudimel's characteristic habit of repeating lines of poetry in unusual ways (as he does in verse 2 and 4 of "Amour long temps" and verse 7 of "Si l'on donnoit"). In "Amour long temps," the superius part traces a long, cascading scale and tentative cadence at the words "souffrent douleur et peine" (verse 6). This same long melodic gesture appears in the bassus part at the end of Si l'on donnoit, (at the words "pour parvenir il fault que l'on endure").

In short, Goudimel's selections for the *Neufiesme livre* and *Unziesme livre* reveal his enduring taste for Crecquillon's music and its subtle literary sensibilties. But we can also sense the enduring interest in the chanson-response tradition among the earlier volumes of the *Chansons nouvelles*. In the *Quart livre*, for instance, Nicholas Pagnier's setting of "Plaisir, prouffit, honneur, advancement" and Jean Maillard's treatment of "Amour se doibt figurer une rose" exchange opening and closing lines in ways typical of the chanson-response tradition.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12 ·</sup> For the connections between Crecquillon's and Claudin's pieces, see Crecquillon, *Opera omnia*, Vol. XIV, p. lxii. For a modern edition of Claudin's piece, see Claudin de Sermisy, *Opera omnia*, ed. Gaston Allaire and Isabelle Cazeaux, Corpus mensurabilis musicae, 52 (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1970), III, 33-34.

<sup>13</sup> Like Crecquillon's pair of chansons from the Neufiesme livre, two pieces appear on the same page in the Quart livre. Maillard's chanson was re-issued without its companion chanson in the Lyonnaise printer Granjon's Premier trophee of 1559 and in Le Roy et Ballard's Tiers livre of 1561. For a modern edition of Maillard's chanson, see Jean Maillard, Complete Chansons, ed. Jane Bernstein, The Sixteenth-Century Chanson, 18 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990).



Claude Goudimel seems to have cultivated the response tradition with special intensity: in Du Chemin's Cinquiesme livre, the last line of his "Jamais amour" shares both text and music with the first line of his setting of "Telz menus plaidz." What is more, the last line of the latter poem ("Tel fol amour, sans guerre n'est parfaict") is very similar to the opening line of the former ("Jamais amour sans guerre n'est parfaict").14 Goudimel's setting of "Au moins mon Dieu" from Du Chemin's Huitiesme livre responds to a setting of "Hélas mon Dieu" ascribed either to Clément Janequin (in a chansonnier issued by Pierre Attaingnant in 1545) or to Jean Maillard (first credited to him in Du Chemin's Second livre du recueil of 1549).15 As in other chanson-response pairs, the relationship between the two pieces is both poetic and musical: the first line of the poem "Hélas mon Dieu" reappears as the last line of "Au moins mon Dieu." Goudimel's chanson echoes this correspondence, for its closing phrases quote all four polyphonic voices of the chanson by Janequin or Maillard in ways that point out the literary connection between the poems. Finally, Goudimel's "La volunté" and Nicolas De Marle's "Vive sera" were printed together in Du Chemin's Premier livre de chansons nouvelles. In addition to sharing first and last lines, they each seem to have been modeled directly upon the same pairs of chanson texts as set by Pierre Sandrin and Etienne De Tertre and printed together by Pierre Attaingnant in 1543.16

For Jean-Pierre Ouvrard, the chanson-response tradition was part of a system of "play" in which poets (and in turn, musicians) created new works partly by citing and amplifying old ones. "Such a repertory," he observed, "that develops through repeating in a sort of autogenesis, is really a form of cultural play in which (as in traditional cultures) a part of the pleasure comes from the recognition of a known heritage." According to this view, we should understand the recycling of old ideas, conventions, and even specific lines from particular chansons as the very source of creative activity itself. We would do well to adopt this same outlook as we return to study, to sing, and to enjoy the music of Du Chemin's chansonniers.



- 14 · For modern editions of these pieces, see Goudimel, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Pierre Pidoux, *et al.*, 14 vols. (New York: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1974), XIII, 92-99.
- 15 · For modern editions of "Hélas mon Dieu," see Janequin's Chansons polyphoniques, ed. A. Tillman Merritt and François Lesure, 6 vols. (Monaco: Editions de l'Oiseau lyre, 1965-71), III, 193-95 and Jean Maillard, Complete Chansons, pp. 128-31. Goudimel's chanson is transcribed in his Oeuvres complètes, XIII, 253-56. The relationships between the original chanson and its response are discussed in Máire Egan-Buffet, Les Chansons de Claude Goudimel: Analyses Modales et Stylistiques (Ottawa: Institute of Medieval Music, 1992), pp. 211-25 and 759-60. The ascription of the work to Maillard was subsequently repeated by Le Roy et Ballard and other publishers of the second half of the sixteenth century. There is, however, no reason to doubt the original attribution of the piece to Janequin. The text of "Hélas mon Dieu" is ascribed to the Protestant writer Guillaume Guéroult in Du Chemin's 1568 edition of Didier Lupi's Premier livre de chansons spirituelles. See Lesure and Thibault, "Bibliographie des éditions musicales publiées par Nicolas du Chemin," Item 95.
- 16 Du Chemin himself reprinted the Attaingnant volume in question in 1549 as the Premier livre du Receuil. For modern editions of Goudimel's chansons from the Premier livre, see his Oeuvres complètes, vol. XIII. For a modern edition of Sandrin's setting of La volunté, see his Opera Omnia, 44-46. Concerning Du Tertre's setting of Vive sera and its relationship to the Sandrin chanson, see Caroline M. Cunningham, "Estienne du Tertre and the Mid-Sixteenth Century Parisian Chanson," Musica disciplina, 25 (1971), 139.
- 17 · Jean-Pierre Ouvrard, «Jeu poétique, jeu musical, la chanson et sa 'responce'," Les jeux à la Renaissance: Actes du XXIII° Colloque internationale d'études humanistes Tours--Julliet 1980 (Paris: Librarie philosophique J. Vrin, 1982), 271-309. Ouvrard's original comment (pp. 285-86) reads: "Un tel corpus, qui se développe en se répétant, dans une sorte d'autogénèse, est bien l'objet d'un jeu culturel, dans lequel, comme dans les cultures traditionalles, une partie du plaisir vient de la reconnaissance d'un patrimoine connu."



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