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Machaut's balades with four voices

ELIZABETH EVA LEACH

ABSTRACT *Based on principles found in fourteenth-century counterpoint treatises, this study divides Machaut's balades with four voices into three groups according to their performance possibilities. The pieces of group 1 (*Se quanque amours, Il mest avis, De toutes flours, *and* Quant theseus/Ne quier*) can be performed either in all four parts or in three parts by omitting the triplum. Group 2 (*De petit po *and* De Fortune *plus* **Vg***'s redaction of* Se quanque amours*) includes those pieces that can be performed in three parts with either contratenor or triplum but not with all four parts. Pieces in this group are often found with all four parts copied together, thus highlighting the difference between the presentation of a piece in the sources and its performance options. The pieces in group 3 (*En amer *and* Dame de qui*) are less clearly delimited in their performance possibilities.*

Introduction

Machaut's four-part balades have been considered with regard to their performance possibilities by several scholars, most notably Ernst Apfel, Wolfgang Dömling and Gilbert Reaney.[1] Using an understanding of medieval counterpoint drawn from fourteenth-century counterpoint teachings, this article also considers them in terms of their performance possibilities and proposes a division into three groups, the first of which is subdivided. For the balades of group 1, I will argue that the counterpoint functions in a way that represents a standard arrangement for Machaut's four-part writing. Group 1a includes both those pieces generally transmitted in four parts but occasionally (in later sources) found reduced to three parts with contratenor (balades *Se quanque amours* (21) and *Il mest avis* (22)). It also includes a piece found mainly in the latter combination which was

[1] See Gilbert Reaney, 'Fourteenth-Century Harmony and the Ballades, Rondeaux and Virelais of Guillaume de Machaut', *Musica Disciplina*, 7 (1953), 129–46; 'The Ballades, Rondeaux and Virelais of Guillaume de Machaut: Melody, Rhythm and Form', *Acta Musicologica*, 27 (1955), 40–58; 'Machaut [Machau, Machaud, Machault], Guillaume de [Guillelmus de Machaudio]', *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980), XI: 428–36; Wolfgang Dömling, *Die mehrstimmigen Balladen, Rondeaux und Virelais von Guillaume de Machaut: Untersuchungen zum musikalischen Satz* (Tutzing, 1970), pp. 79–80. Also see Ernst Apfel, 'Zur Entstehung des realen vierstimmigen Satzes in England', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, 17 (1960), 81–99.

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later expanded to four parts by the addition of a triplum (*De toutes flours* (B31).[2] Whatever the chronological relationship between the three-part and four-part versions, the contrapuntal dependence of the triplum on the contratenor in these balades precludes a three-voice performance Tenor–Cantus–Triplum. In addition, whilst the dyadic grammatical basis of the tenor and cantus is still independent in a technical sense, the fundamental musical identity of these pieces is three-part (Tenor–Contratenor–Cantus), so that their theoretically possible two-part versions are not transmitted.[3] Group 1b includes only *Quant theseus / Ne quier* (B34). Textual evidence in the *Voir Dit* showing that it is intended as a four-part piece has stimulated claims that this balade works outside the norms of dyadic counterpoint, that 'the voices have no fixed functions' and that 'Machaut must have conceived [the] whole ... before he worked out the written parts'.[4] It can be shown, however, that although it has a fundamental musical identity of a four-part song because of its poetic function, in terms of its counterpoint *Quant theseus / Ne quier* is identical to balades in group 1a.

Group 2 comprises balades 18 and 23 which, whilst all four parts may be copied into a single source, do not support a four-part rendering because the contratenor and triplum represent alternative third parts and are not compatible.[5] The implication of different but equally valid third-voice readings is that

[2] Dömling, *Die mehrstimmigen Balladen*, 80, also divides the four-part balades into three groups which are somewhat different from those proposed here. Dömling's first category comprises 'Sätze, von denen eine Hs. eine 3st. Fassung Ca.-Te.-Ct. überliefert: Ballades 21, 22' (pieces for which one manuscript transmits a three-voice version Ca–T–Ct: balades 21 and 22). For these two balades he concludes that 'Das Tri. ist entbehrlich, nicht aber der Contratenor' (the triplum is inessential, but not, however, the contratenor), which makes the contrapuntal diagnosis resemble that for Dömling's third category, '3st. Sätze, denen ein Tri. nachgefügt ist' (three-voice pieces to which a triplum is subsequently added) in which only *De toutes flours* (B31) is included. In this case the triplum 'kann den Ct. nicht ersetzen, es erweitert den Satz zur Vierstimmigkeit' (cannot replace the contratenor; it expands the piece to four parts). The separation of Dömling's categories one and three seems tacitly to rely on the extent to which the triplum is part of the original conception of the song: the first category represents reductions from a four-voice conception (both B22 and B21 are in four parts except in one source), whereas the third category represents additions to a three-voice one (B31 is in three parts in all sources except one). However, with our current understanding of the chronology of the Machaut sources, only for *De toutes flours* (B31) does the manuscript situation clearly point to the anteriority of the three-voice version with contratenor.

[3] And arguably would not have been, even in now lost copies. The seemingly two-part instrumental arrangement of B31 in **Fa** is not a real reduction since it synthesizes salient features of both cantus and contratenor in its upper part, see Jane E. Flynn, 'The Intabulation of *De toutes flours* in the Codex Faenza as Analytical Model', unpublished paper read at the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference, York (1998).

[4] See Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, '*Le Voir Dit* and *La Messe de Nostre Dame*: Aspects of Genre and Style in the Late Works of Machaut', *Plainsong & Medieval Music*, 2 (1993), p. 57.

[5] This is coterminous with Dömling's second category of '3st. Sätze Te.–Ca.–Tri., denen teilweise ein Ct. nachgefügt ist: Ballade 18 (Ct. außerhalb der Haupt.-Hss. überliefert), Ballade 23 (Ct. in einer späten Haupt-Hss. überliefert)' (three-voice pieces, T–Ca–Tr, to which, in some sources, a contratenor has been subsequently added: Balade 18 (Ct transmitted outside the principal manuscripts), Balade 23 (Ct transmitted in one of the later principal manuscripts)). Dömling concludes that the four voices of these two songs are not intended to sound simultaneously, but 'sind nur in zweifach 3st. Kombination ausführbar' (are only performable in two three-voice combinations) (*Die mehrstimmigen Balladen*, 80).

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the core parts are complete in themselves and that the written compendium of the four-voice sources offers a two-part, as well as two different three-part versions. This conclusion is corroborated by the existence of two-part manuscript copies for both balades and the use of only the cantus and tenor parts in the chiastic quotation of B23 in the anonymous balade *Dame qui fust*, despite the three-part version with the **PR** contratenor probably being known to its composer.[6]

The third and final group includes the two balades which appear as lyric insertions in Machaut's *Remede de Fortune*. The first of these, *En Amer* (B41), exists in manuscript versions with four parts and with three parts, omitting the triplum – a similar manuscript situation to that of *Se quanque amours* (B21).[7] *Dame de qui* (B42) exists only in two-part and four-part versions.[8] Both balades' manuscript situation suggests certain performance possibilities, but ruling out others on the basis of contrapuntal analysis is remarkably difficult.[9]

All Machaut's song output has a demonstrably dyadic basis.[10] The four-part pieces can be analysed contrapuntally as a number of overlaid duets. There are six possible dyadic vocal combinations, Tenor–Cantus (T–Ca), Tenor–Contratenor (T–Ct), Tenor–Triplum (T–Tr), Contratenor–Cantus (Ct–Ca), Contratenor–Triplum (Ct–Tr) and Cantus–Triplum (Ca–Tr), of which, at any one time, at least three should exhibit a standard discant relationship (simple counterpoint). Normatively these three are the three tenor duets, but the categorization of all six into discant duets and non-discant pairs and the identification of dissonances difficult to understand in terms of a posited underlying simple (consonant) counterpoint will assist the process of discrimination which leads to an identification of performance possibilities and limitations.

Group 1a: *Il mest avis* (B22), *Se quanque amours* (B21) and *De toutes flours* (B31)

That the triplum of *Il mest avis* (B22) was a later addition is not self-evident, since all the sources which transmit the work in a performable version do so with all four parts. In addition, the manuscript copy of *Il mest avis* (B22) in **PR** has a contratenor different from that contained (substantially) in the other copies (**Vg B G A** and **E**). Ernst Apfel maintains that the existence of several contratenors

[6] I have argued this in Elizabeth Eva Leach, 'Fortune's Demesne: The Interrelation of Text and Music in Machaut's *Il mest avis* (B22), *De Fortune* (B23) and two Related Anonymous Balades', *Early Music History*, 19 (2000) 47–49. especially p. 65, ex. 1. For a key to manuscript sigla, see Appendix A.

[7] B41 is in four parts in **C Pe E PR Vg B F A** and in three parts in **K FP** and **Pit**. B21 is in three parts in **A** and four parts in **C Vg B G** and **E**.

[8] In four parts in **E PR Vg B F A**; in two parts in **C Pe** and **K**.

[9] Dömling (*Die mehrstimmigen Balladen*, 80) does not include either song in his summary although they are both commented upon by Reaney, 'Machaut', 430, 435.

[10] See Elizabeth Eva Leach, 'Counterpoint in Guillaume de Machaut's Musical Ballades', D.Phil. diss., Oxford University (1997) and 'Counterpoint and Analysis in Fourteenth-Century Song', forthcoming in *Journal of Music Theory*, 44 (2000).

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is evidence enough that the contratenor is a later addition.[11] However, in manuscript **C**, the earliest source, only the cantus part is actually entered and the copy has staves labelled for tenor and contratenor. The manuscript evidence in conjunction with François Avril's early dating of **C** (not available to Apfel)[12] suggests that a three-part version with contratenor preceded the addition of a triplum, making it the only balade in this vocal combination in **C**.

Even in the absence of transmission evidence that the triplum was added later, the counterpoint of the four-part B22 confirms that the triplum cannot be performed without the contratenor. For a voice to support performance as a third part in a three-voice rendering, it must have a discant relationship with the tenor throughout. This criterion is met by the contratenor of B22, but, as will be shown, not by the triplum. The triplum of B22 actually requires the simultaneous performance of the contratenor (the 'triplum', despite its name, is a *fourth* voice). The evidence for this occurs where the contratenor supports a T–Ca progression by falling below the tenor. At such places, the triplum assumes a discant relationship with the lowest voice, briefly abandoning its discant relationship with the tenor.

The voices of *Il mest avis* (B22) adopt a normative pattern at cadence points. Where the T–Ca duet has a directed progression from a sixth to an octave above the tenor, the T–Ct duet has a third to a fifth, and the T–Tr duet a tenth to a twelfth, the triplum therefore singing in parallel octaves with the contratenor, as at the caesura of line 6 (bars 36–37). Where the T–Ca resolution is to an interval smaller than an octave, some duplication or inversion (in the sense of voices crossing out of their normative relative positions) occurs in other tenor duets. In bars 48–9 the T–Ct interval of resolution is the fifth, and the contratenor therefore takes the unison, and the triplum the octave.[13]

The contratenor has three possible options for dealing with T–Ca resolutions to the unison. In the first of these, as in bars 7-8, the contratenor takes the fifth above the tenor (therefore also above the cantus) and the triplum, the octave above the tenor.[14] The second and third possibilities for the contratenor to harmonize T–Ca resolutions to the unison clarify the relationship of the triplum voice to the other parts. In both cases the contratenor falls below the tenor,

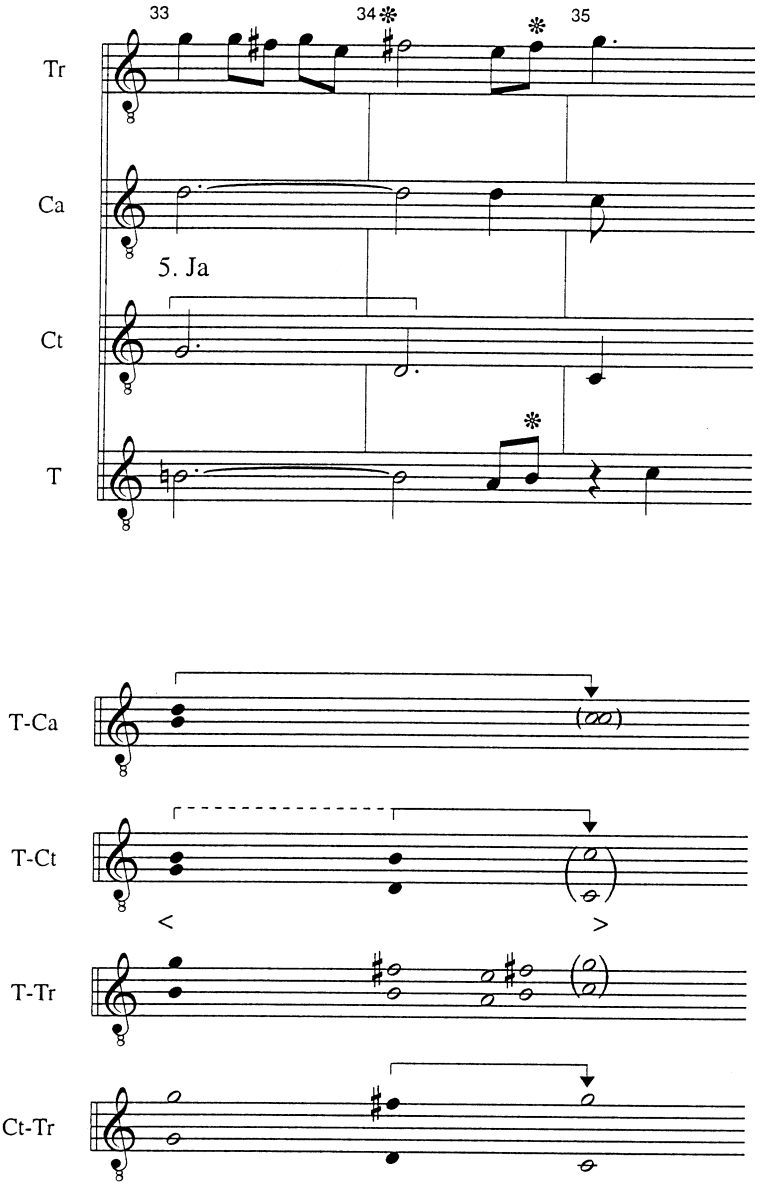
[11] Because for B22 'verschiedene Contratenores überliefert sind, nehme ich an, daß der Contratenor die zuletzt hinzugekommene Stimme ist' (various contratenors are transmitted, I assume that the contratenor is the last voice to be added), Apfel, 'Zur Entstehung', 93.

[12] Apfel, 'Zur Entstehung' (1960) significantly predates François Avril, 'Les manuscrits enluminés de Guillaume de Machaut: Essai de chronologie', in *Guillaume de Machaut: Poète et compositeur* (Paris, 1982), 117–33. Before Avril's re-dating, the catalogue at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France stated that **C** was a late (fifteenth-century) source, a diagnosis which formerly devalued its differences from the rest of the Machaut tradition.

[13] Although at the beginning of bar 48 the Ct–Tr duet is consonant to cover the T–Tr dissonance, this is an additional refinement. Strictly the T–Tr dissonance is not part of the underlying simple counterpoint.

[14] This situation is replicated in bars 14-15 and bars 18-19.

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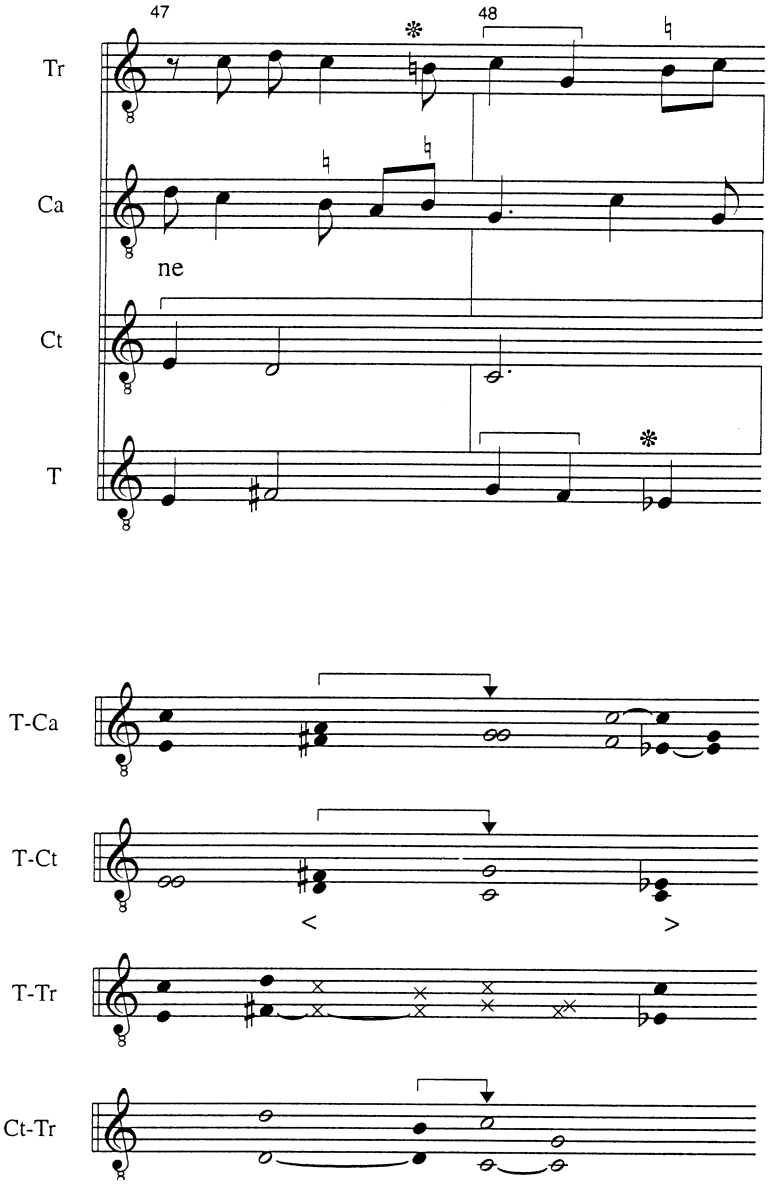


Ex. 1a: *Il mest avis* (B22) contratenor with tenor function

either by an octave (Ex. 1a) or a fifth (Ex. 1b).[15] In Example 1a there is a Ct–Tr directed progression resolving to the twelfth, with the lowest sounding voice (the contratenor) adopting a tenor function with respect to the triplum. In Example 1b the T–Ca resolution to unison *g* (hereafter *g*u) is harmonized by *c* in the contratenor. The T–Tr relationship is thereby complicated, since any con-

[15] For a key to the interpretation of the musical examples, see Appendix B.

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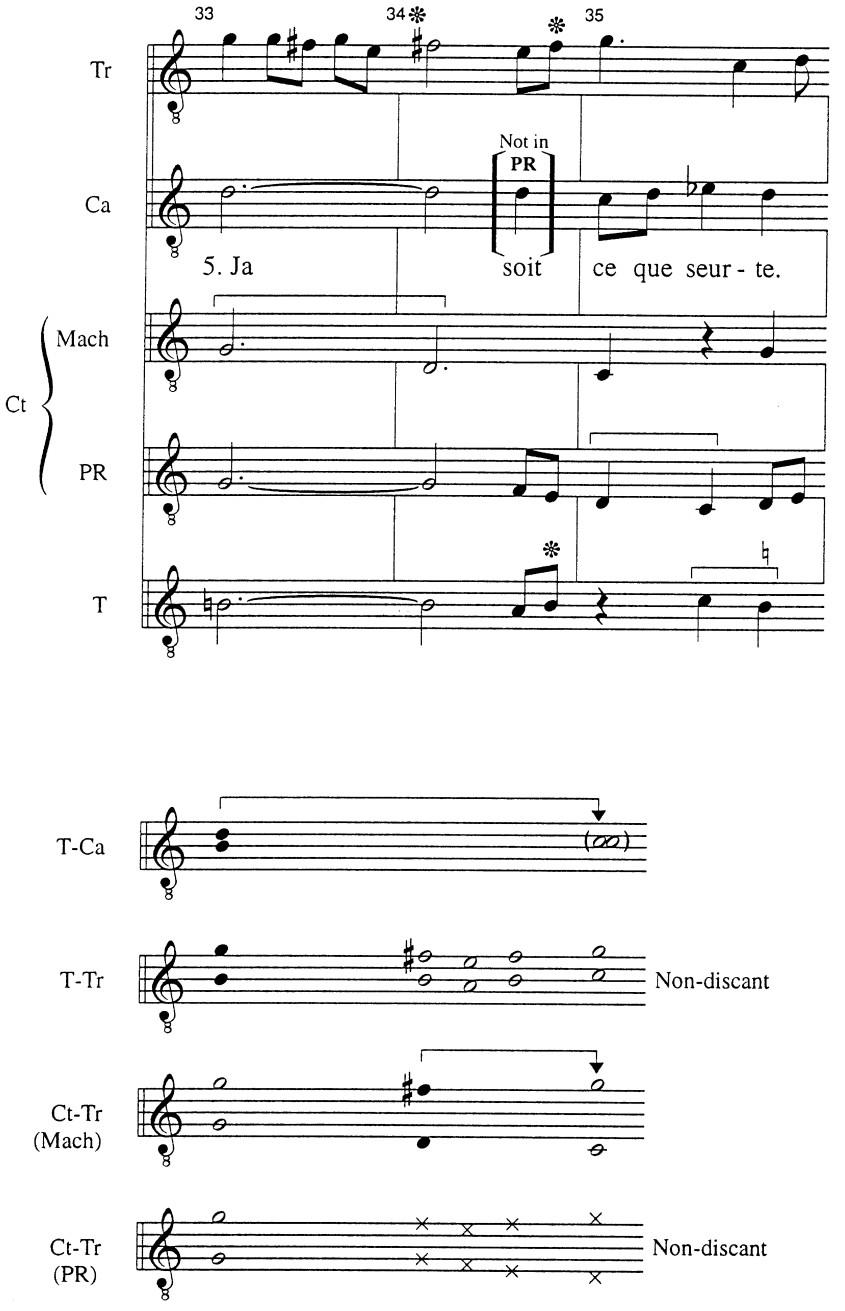


Ex. 1b: *Il mest avis* (B22) refrain melisma – contratenor with tenor function

sonant interval above the tenor would provoke a dissonance with the lowest sounding part. This is avoided, and the triplum performs a simultaneous directed progression to an octave *c* (*c*8) with the contratenor, thereby entering a dissonant (that is, non-discant) relationship with the tenor.

The passages shown in Examples 1a-b to evince the triplum's dependence on four-part performance are dissimilarly treated by the contratenor of **PR**, which lacks the assumption of tenor function found in the Machaut contratenor. In

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Ex. 2a: *Il mest avis* (B22) line 5 comparing the Machaut and **PR** contratenors

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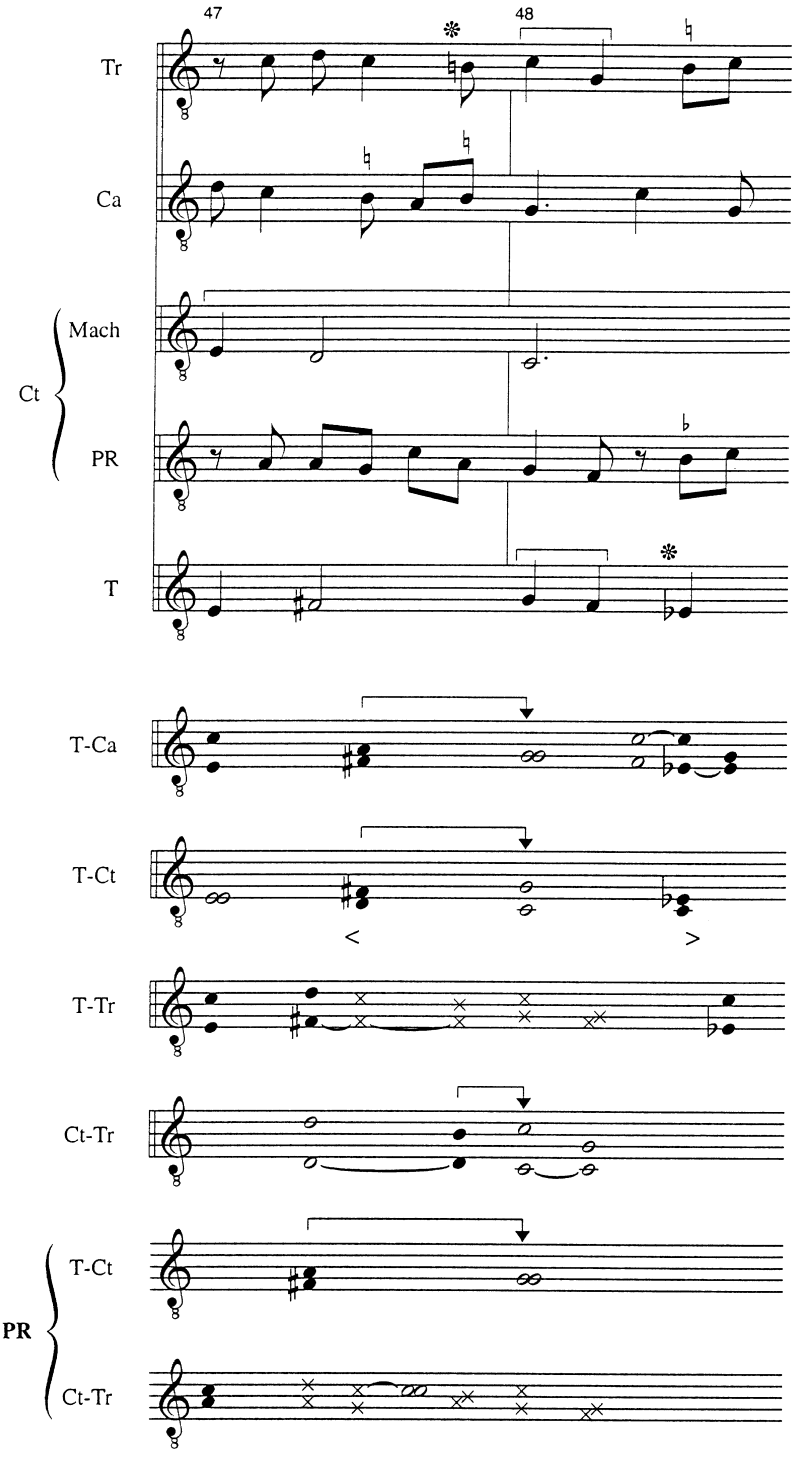
bars 34-5 (Ex. 1a), **PR**'s contratenor lacks a discant relationship between contratenor and triplum (Ex. 2a). Similarly, although the T–Tr duet in bars 47-8 (Ex. 1b) in **PR** has a non-discant relationship (with dissonant fourths above the tenor), **PR**'s contratenor does not fall below the tenor but mirrors the essential discant notes of the T–Ca progression (Ex. 2b). The version of the song in **PR** therefore works in the combination T–Ct–Ca but not in the combination T–Ct–Ca–Tr and if, as I have argued above, three-voice performance with triplum is not an option, **PR** represents a fossilized compendium of incompatible voice parts. **PR** possibly transmits the earliest surviving version of the contratenor – the version that should have appeared in **C** and which did not allow for a triplum part. The subsequent addition of a triplum either caused, or was simply posterior to, slight modifications of the contratenor, of which bars 47-8 as they appear in the Machaut manuscripts as opposed to **PR** (Ex. 2b), are an example. The newer contratenor of the Machaut manuscripts supports T–Ca progressions more strongly, making the addition of the triplum easier and eradicating contratenor duplication of T–Ca resolutions to the unison.

Reaney's preference for the contratenor of **PR** over that in the Machaut manuscripts for B22 is based on its avoidance of parallel perfect intervals with other voices.[16] In the case of B22, the three places which he lists specifically are bars 19-20, 21-2 and 37-8. The second and third instances are merely the presence of parallel octaves between the contratenor and triplum. Since these voices are not normally related as a discant pair, parallel perfect intervals between them are of little consequence and are even to be expected. The first instance which Reaney cites, however, is one of parallel octaves (*a* to *g*) between two voices in discant relationship – the tenor and the Machaut contratenor, from bar 19 to bar 20 (Ex. 3). Reaney maintains that the contratenor in **PR** avoids this movement. Although at the level of the surface this appears to be the case, the underlying contrapuntal movement in the T–Ct duet is actually identical in both versions of the contratenor. They are merely ornamented differently and the ornamentation of the Machaut manuscripts happens to include a parallel movement, which is nevertheless not part of the simple counterpoint. The situation is additionally complicated by the fact that the contratenor in **PR** is missing a semibreve's worth at this point (my solution of which differs from that of Ludwig and Schrade).

Like the triplum of *Il mest avis* (B22), that of *Se quanque amours* (B21) lacks the thoroughgoing discant relationship with the tenor which the contratenor possesses. B21 appears copied with all four parts in **C Vg B G** and **E**, but lacks the triplum in manuscript **A**. Lawrence Earp's convincing explanation for this is that both the original index of **A**, and the hand and layout of *Se quanque amours* (B21), suggest that it was accidentally omitted by the scribe and included

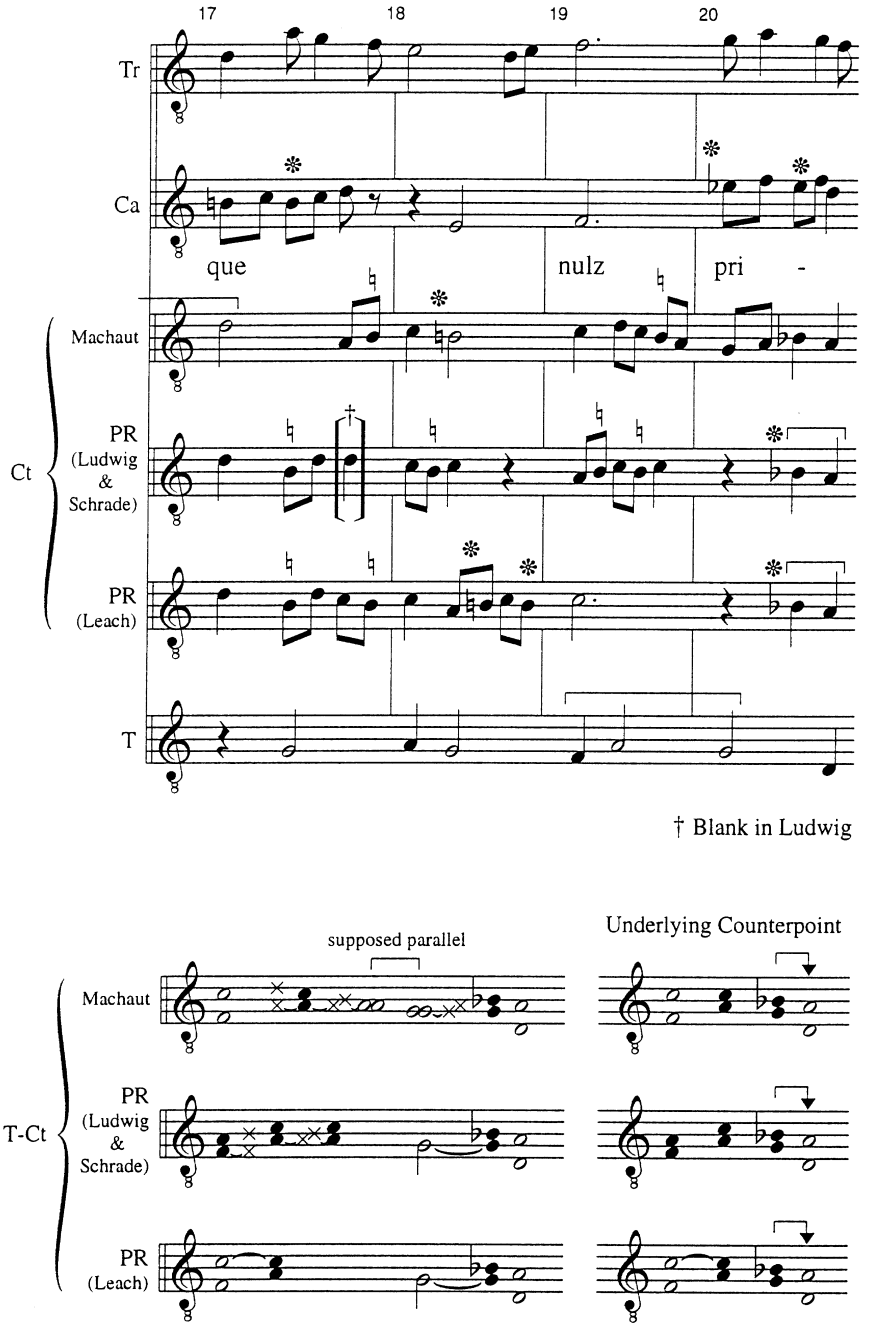
[16] Reaney, 'Fourteenth-Century Harmony', p. 141: 'Generally speaking, the substitute contratenors are an improvement on the normal one'. This supports his preference for **PR**'s contratenor over that of **E** for *De fortune* (B23) (see group 2, below) which is similarly questionable.

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Ex. 2b: *Il mest avis* (B22) refrain melisma comparing the Machaut and **PR** contratenors

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Ex. 3: *Il mest avis* (B22) after line 2′s caesura comparing the Machaut and **PR** contratenors

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later, at which point lack of space forced the omission of the triplum.[17] This attests to scribal recognition of the status of the triplum as an optional fourth voice. The numerous clear T–Ca resolutions to the unison, which in *Il mest avis* (B22) led to the contratenor falling below the tenor and forming a brief contrapuntal pair with the triplum, are not common in *Se quanque amours* (B21) in which only two brief instances indicate the contrapuntal hierarchy. Firstly, in bars 9-10 a T–Ca progression to unison *a* is supported by a T–Ct progression in which the contratenor is a fifth below the tenor. The Ct–Tr relationship is therefore consonant and the T–Tr relationship dissonant. Secondly, at the opening of the B section (bar 23) the T-Ca duet has a held unison *a*. Here, as in bar 10, the contratenor is a fifth below on *d* and, to preserve overall sonority, the triplum sings *d'*, a fourth above the tenor. A performance in three parts with triplum would have dissonances of a fourth between tenor and triplum, implausibly held for the length of a perfect breve at these two points.

In manuscript **Vg**, the triplum has been emended from *d'* to *e'* in bars 10 and 23 to allow for the very performance option which the other sources exclude.[18] This makes a consonance with the tenor and cantus parts, but forms a dissonance (of a ninth) in the vocal combination the other manuscripts necessitate, that is, four-part performance. Perhaps this displays some confusion as to the performance practice for pieces copied with four voices at this time, and shows that Dömling's general rule of thumb that added contratenors are alternatives and added tripla are additions (seen to be true thus far) may not hold for the performance practice exemplified by **Vg**'s emendation.[19]

For *De toutes flours* (B31) the overwhelming majority of the surviving copies are for three voices with contratenor (**Vg B G A Pm FP Pit** and **Mod**). Three sources include a triplum, transmitting all four voices (**E PR** and **Str**). No sources offer a three-voice combination with triplum.[20] In this case, transmission history accurately reflects performance options since, as in B22 and B21, the triplum is, contrapuntally, a fourth voice. This can be shown not just because, as Dömling

[17] Lawrence Marshburn Earp, 'Scribal Practice, Manuscript Production and the Transmission of Music in Late Medieval France: The Manuscripts of Guillaume de Machaut', Ph.D. diss., Princeton University (1983), 68–9.

[18] The now-erased original pitches are visible from the microfilm and it is these which are copied in manuscript **B**, suggesting that **Vg** was altered after **B** copied from it. For the relationship between **Vg** and **B** see Margaret Bent, 'The Machaut Manuscripts *Vg*, *B* and *E*, *Musica Disciplina*, 37 (1983), 53–82.

[19] See Dömling, *Die mehrstimmigen Balladen*, 80.

[20] Reaney, 'The Ballades, Rondeaux and Virelais', 48–9. Lest this be thought to suggest automatically that the triplum voice is to be performed only with all three other voices, it should be noted that a similar manuscript situation for *De fortune* (B23) supports a different conclusion once the music is examined. However, for B23 it is the contratenor that is added to a vocal combination of T–Ca–Tr. The inclusion of an additional triplum to a song in the vocal combination T–Ct–Ca is not necessarily analogous in effect. Basing his conclusions on their similar manuscript situation, Reaney concludes that *De toutes flours* (B31), like *De fortune* (B23), can be performed only in two three-part versions. I disagree. Not only does nothing prevent four-part performance, but three-part performance with triplum is precluded by the counterpoint.

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comments, the triplum is 'correct in its degree of consonance'[21] and a three-voice (T–Ca–Tr) version 'would sound rather bare and would seem unsatisfactory and incomplete in its compound rhythm because the triplum is limited to a small ambitus and stereotypical rhythms which do not have the powerful contrapuntal effect of a contratenor',[22] but also because an examination of the counterpoint reveals the similar adoption of tenor function by the contratenor with respect to the triplum at specific points of T–Ca proximity.

A brief instance of a Ct–Tr discant relationship occurs in bar 28 (and its repeat in bar 63). The T–Ca resolution to *g*u is supported by a T–Ct directed progression to <*c*5> with the contratenor below.[23] The added triplum has a simultaneous directed progression to a twelfth in terms of the overall resolution sonority, but, because of the inversion of the contratenor and triplum, forms a discant relationship with the contratenor and parallel octaves with the tenor.

So far discussion has centred around T–Ca unisons, but it is only necessary that the two core parts be a fifth apart or closer to deny the contratenor its normative position between them. In bars 9-10 of B31 the T–Ca pair has two thirds which imperfect the overall sonority at the resolution of the T–Ct pair's directed progression to <*c*8>; the contratenor is below the tenor. The triplum has a simultaneous directed progression resolving to *c*12 with the contratenor and has parallel fifths (that is, a non-discant relationship) with the tenor.

In the three balades discussed so far, the tenor remains the primary contrapuntal reference for all voices regardless of their position in the texture, and maintains a normative position, reaffirmed at section-end cadences, as the lowest voice. When T–Ca proximity precludes a normative contratenor position and the contratenor goes above the T–Ca pair, this default is preserved. The default is modified when the contratenor falls below the tenor, especially a fifth below, and, in order to prevent overall sounding dissonance, the triplum is guided by the lowest sounding voice. Even at these places, the contratenor only has tenor function for the triplum voice. The tenor voice retains tenor function for the other voices, including the contratenor itself, so that in their three-part versions these pieces conform strictly to the model of two overlaid tenor–discant dyadic pairs (T–Ca and T–Ct).

Group 1b: A Real Four-Part Song? *Quant theseus* / *Ne quier* (B34)

Several things other than its consistent appearance in four parts make *Quant theseus* / *Ne quier* (B34) unique and exceptional, chief amongst which is its status

[21] Dömling, *Die mehrstimmigen Balladen*, 79 (konsonanzmäßig korrekt).

[22] *Ibid*., 79 (würde sonderbar leer klingen und in Gesamtrhyhmus unbefriedigend und unvollständig wirken, da das Tri. auf einen geringen Ambitus und auf stereotype Rhythmen beschränkt ist, die nicht die gegenwirkende Kraft eines Ct. haben).

[23] Sonorities are indicated from the lowest note upwards by numbers indicating the interval; unison is indicated by 'u'. Those sonorities in triangular brackets – <> – show an inversion of the normative position of voices. That is, <*c*5> in the T–Ct duet indicated that the T has *g* and the Ct the *c* a fifth below.

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as a double balade. The first of its two texts is attributed in the *Voir Dit* to Thomas Paien but the veracity of this is questionable.[24] In the context of their fictional presentation at least, the first cantus text (cantus 1) is Thomas's (*Quant theseus*) and the second (cantus 2) Machaut's (*Ne quier*).

Although B34 has been discussed by several scholars its counterpoint has been most thoroughly examined by Daniel Leech-Wilkinson.[25] Leech-Wilkinson concludes that B34 was conceived as four-part sounds and composed into the four voice parts as we now have them. Its compositional process represents a difference of kind from Machaut's other balades, since the interrelationships of the individual voices make it of necessity a four-part piece. Although I would concur in his conclusion that 'it is clear that all four parts were worked on simultaneously',[26] I disagree with the reasoning which Leech-Wilkinson uses in support. He compares the compositional process of B34 to that of the four-part motets and in particular that of the Mass in which, for Leech-Wilkinson, 'the voices have no fixed functions. Structural consonances (sixth to octave progressions, for example) and dissonances (fourths and sevenths especially) are to be found in all possible voice pairings'.[27] It is my contention that, far from having no fixed function, the tenor, cantus 2, contratenor and cantus 1 of B34 have respectively the same functions as the tenor, cantus, contratenor and triplum of a four-part piece such as *Se quanque amours* (B21) or *Il mest avis* (B22) and, more significantly, the same as *De toutes flours* (B31) whose triplum part was almost certainly added after the composition of the other three parts. The exact relationship of the voices of *Quant theseus* / *Ne quier* (B34) can be gleaned from an examination of its counterpoint and particularly the vocal disposition at the end of sections.[28]

[24] See the excellent editorial introduction in Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Livre dou Voir Dit (The Book of the True Poem)*, ed. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York and London, 1998), and also the commentary note 15 on page 740. Margaret Bent (personal communication) has pointed out to me that Thomas is a twin and, if not a reference to an actual Doctor of Law at the Sorbonne, this could be a pun signalling his twinship with Machaut, through the twin texts. 'Paien' means heathen or pagan and could possibly refer to the amount of classical (that is, secular in a medieval context) mythology in the poems.

[25] See, for example, Reaney, 'The Ballades, Rondeaux and Virelais', 54–6; Hellmut Kühn, *Die Harmonik der Ars Nova. Zur Theorie der isorhythmischen Motette* (Munich, 1973), 159–63; Theodore Karp, 'Compositional Process in Machaut's Ballades', in *Music from the Middle Ages through the Twentieth Century: Essays in Honor of Gwynn S. McPeek*, ed. Carmelo P. Comberiati and Matthew C. Steel (New York, 1988), 75–6; and Leech-Wilkinson, *'Le Voir Dit* and *La Messe*, 57–9, 60–1.

[26] Leech-Wilkinson, *'Le Voir Dit* and *La Messe*, 59.

[27] *Ibid.*, 57.

[28] Similarly distributed normative cadences occur at the beginning of the final melisma of the A section, lines 2 and 4 (bars 12-13), and in the equivalent place in the B section, the beginning of line 7's closing melisma in bars 48-9. Even the final cadence preserves this contrapuntal hierarchy although it may appear at first glance to subvert it. The final cadence is shown in Example 8. The T–Ca1 and T–Ct duets form discant pairs – the former has a directed progression 10-12 and the latter 3-5 – typical of triplum and contratenor respectively. The T–Ca2 pair appears to have parallel octaves which would show an uncharacteristic, non-discant relationship. However, although the tenor *d* is the essential discant note for the other two tenor duets, it is ornamental with respect to the cantus. The tenor *g* then forms a directed progression with the cantus. As in bars 38–9,

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Confirmation that cantus 1 and cantus 2 function broadly as triplum and cantus respectively in terms of their counterpoint can be provided by the many normative cadences such as that at the end of line 5 (bars 38-9). In the discussion below, and in subsequent musical examples, I will therefore refer to cantus 1 and cantus 2 as triplum and cantus respectively.

For Leech-Wilkinson, the lack of fixed function that 'we have seen in the Mass, in the late motets and in the earlier *Voir Dit* songs explains why there can be glaring fourths between cantus I [Tr] and tenor, why there are ninths, sevenths and tritones between cantus II [Ca] and tenor and why between tenor and contratenor there are directed progressions'.[29] I shall deal with these points in reverse order. As he maintains that the compositional process of B34 is similar to his view of the late motets and the Mass, the composition is constructed as two pairs of voices – a high pair (here, the two 'cantus' parts) and, importantly, a low and compositely harmonically fundamental pair – the tenor and contratenor. In support of this Leech-Wilkinson cites instances of directed progressions between the contratenor and tenor including that at bars 42-4.[30] However, if a default hierarchy of tenor duets is accepted, such a relationship is normal, since the T–Ct pair often has directed progressions of its own simultaneously with those in the (grammatically, if not necessarily compositionally, prior) T–Ca core.

For the tenor and cantus 2 to display features denying a discant relationship would be a more serious indication of a lack of fixed vocal function. Leech-Wilkinson cites three bars which exemplify 'ninths, sevenths and tritones between cantus II and Tenor' – bars 47, 34 and 63.[31] In all these cases, however, once surface figuration (auxiliary notes, passing notes, suspensions) is recognized, the underlying counterpoint is unremarkable. In bar 47 the tenor tone is suspended, delaying resolution of a T–Ca directed progression to *e*5. In bar 34 (Ex. 4a) the tenor anticipates a non-simultaneous (displaced) T–Ca sixth (shown in parentheses) which resolves by directed progression to *e*8. The counterpoint of bar 63 (Ex. 4b) can either be seen as a displacement of non-directed sonorities or, at the modus level which is partially operating in this song, as a T–Ca directed progression with a non-simultaneous (but conceptually present) imperfect sonority.[32]

Far from having no fixed functions, the three lowest parts, T–Ct–Ca, operate in the same way as in any other Machaut song with the tenor forming decorated simple counterpoint with the other two voices which are not related directly

cantus 1 takes the twelfth, cantus 2 the octave and the contratenor the fifth above the tenor as intervals of resolution for simultaneous directed progressions in all three tenor duets.

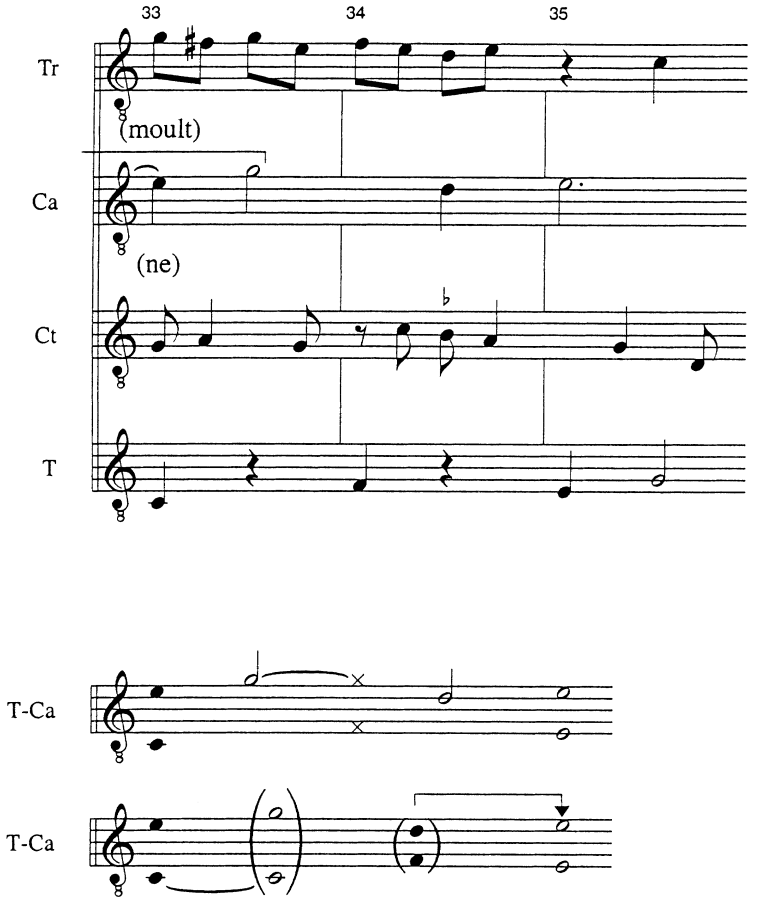
[29] Leech-Wilkinson, '*Le Voir Dit* and *La Messe*, 57.

[30] *Ibid*., 57, n. 35.

[31] *Ibid*., 57.

[32] The only other ostensibly non-discant T–Ca interval is in bar 5 (not cited by Leech-Wilkinson). The tenor link phrase begins slightly before the cantus has a rest, giving a fourth *g*–*c*' between the two voices which can be conceptualized as another example of rhythmic displacement.

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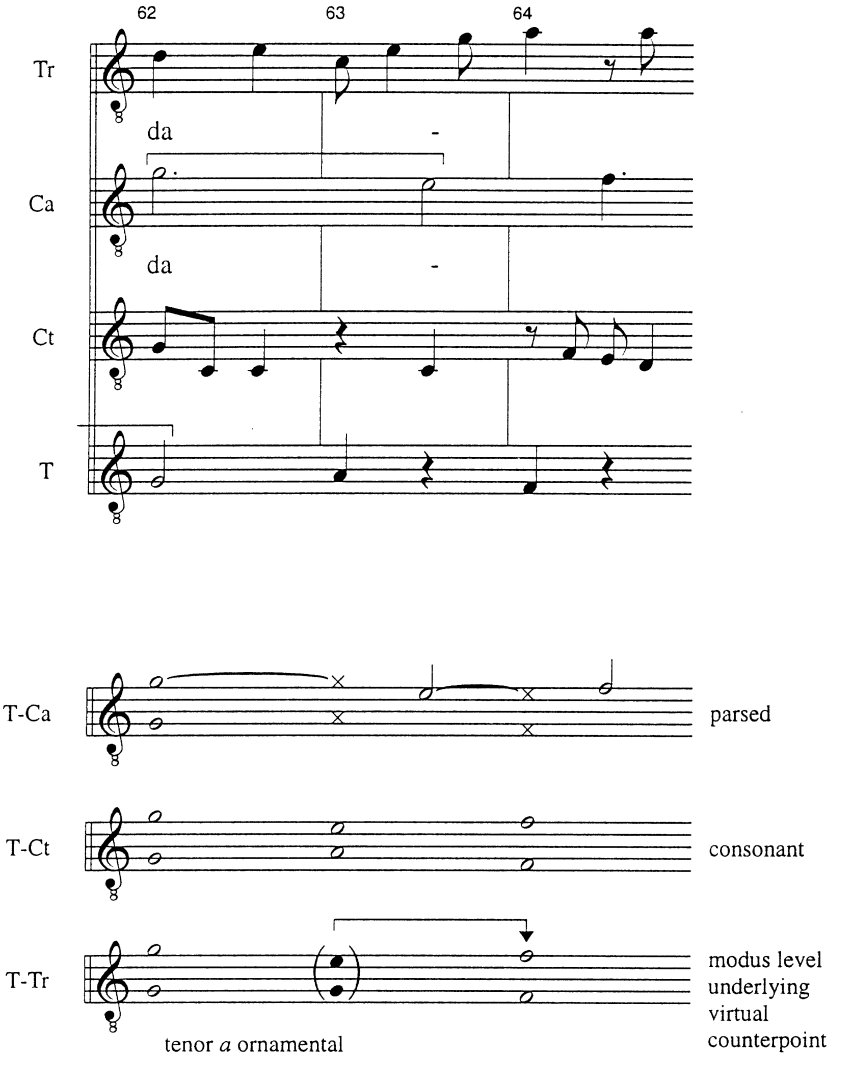
Ex. 4a: *Quant Theseus/Ne quier* (B34) displaced sixth creating T–Ca ninth dissonance

to one another contrapuntally.[33] The instances which Leech-Wilkinson cites as exemplifying 'glaring fourths' between Tr and T, in the light of the normative group 1a balades, now seem familiar. For Leech-Wilkinson the refrain exemplifies his conclusions: 'The magical chord progression . . . at ''Je voy asses'' (bars 55-8) is a momentary uncovering of this underlying form, such as only a composer working in four parts could have imagined'.[34] However, once Cantus 1 is recognized as a triplum part, it is possible to observe the same behaviour between the voices as that seen in the balades of group 1a. The opening of B34's refrain is shown in Example 5. The triplum, like the tripla of B31, B22 and B21, relates to the contratenor when the contratenor is the lowest voice, and a consonance with the tenor would create an unacceptable overall dissonance. The initial breve

[33] Which is not to say that they are composed successively or randomly without regard one for the other. All the parts are worked out together with great concern for overall sonority. In contrapuntal terms, however, they are not related.

[34] Leech-Wilkinson, *'Le Voir Dit* and *La Messe*, 58.

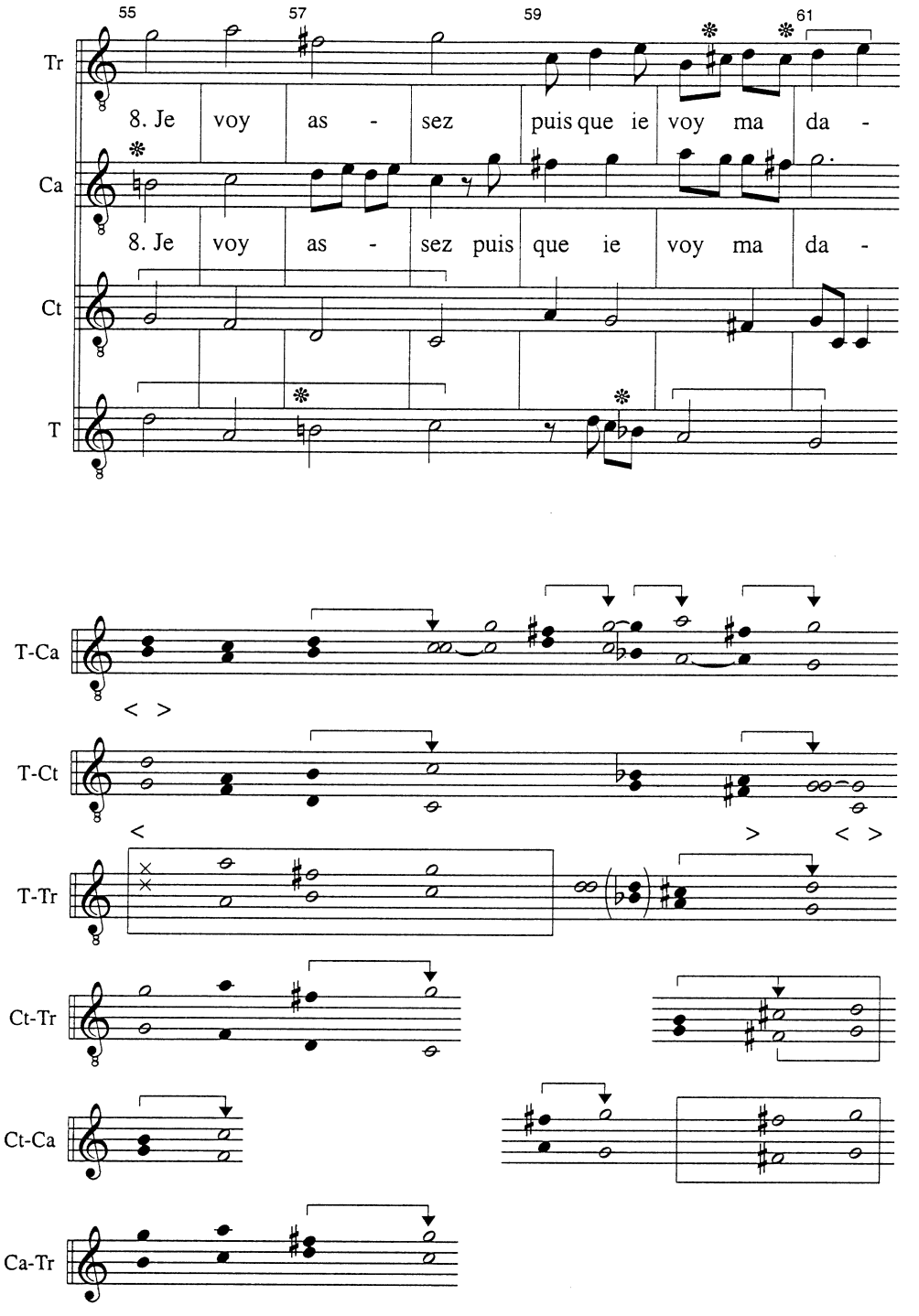
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Ex. 4b: *Quant Theseus/Ne quier* (B34) displacement creating T–Ca seventh dissonance

of the refrain (bar 55) in the T–Tr duet is a fourth *d'–g'*, which is a non-discant interval (boxed in Ex. 5). This resembles in type the initial T–Tr sonority of the B section in B21 (see above) where it shows that the triplum fits with all the other parts rather than with just the two-part core. The contratenor, which is *below* the tenor in bar 55 of B34, has a directed progression in bars 55-6 with the cantus (also below the tenor). The T–Tr relationship continues to be non-discant, with parallel fifths at the T–Ca directed progression in bars 57-9. At the cadence in bars 60-1, which marks the beginning of the final melisma, the voices revert to their normative relations as the T–Ct inversion briefly ceases (with a T–Ct directed progression to the unison in bars 60-1). The two upper voices also

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Ex. 5: *Quant Theseus/Ne quier* (B34) opening of refrain

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have simultaneous directed progressions with the tenor, although the triplum is here below the cantus.[35]

That its contratenor briefly adopts tenor function with respect to the triplum in very defined instances does not distinguish B34 contrapuntally from *De toutes flours* (B31), a piece whose triplum is a later addition to a three-part song. Leech-Wilkinson's citation of these instances as proof of four-part composition must therefore be rejected. Rather, the hierarchic contrapuntal interaction of the voices in B34 and B31 is identical. However, it seems almost certain that the fundamental musical identity of B34 is as a four-part piece. Firstly, it is never copied any other way (something not always congruent with performance possibilities, however, as shall be seen for the group 2 balades). Secondly, as Leech-Wilkinson reports, there is additional textual evidence that *Quant theseus / Ne quier* (B34) was composed, and intended to be performed, as a four-part song. In one of the letters in the *Voir Dit* (the character) Machaut writes, 'ie y ai fait les chans a .iiij. et les ay pluseurs fois ois . et me plaisent moult bien'.[36] This evidence is also present in the framing poetic narrative: 'Et si ay fait les chans a .iiij. / Pour elle deduire et esbatre'.[37] The text of manuscript **E** substitutes a clarifying 'tous' instead of 'a' before the number – 'I have composed the songs in *all* four parts'. Thirdly, if the triplum is sung, it forces the performance of the other three parts. Since the triplum carries Thomas's poem to which, in the context of the *Voir Dit*, the composition of his own balade and the setting to music of both is Machaut's response, this ensures that it is performed as a four-part piece. This evidence is congruent with the almost intuitively felt wholeness of the piece which results from the high degree of integration of all four parts – something which might not in itself be sufficient to support an assertion of a four-part identity. The other directed progressions in B34 occur either in only one duet, or simultaneously in two but with their resolutions imperfected by the fourth voice.

Sometimes this precipitates a contrapuntal chain of directed progressions in which the tension-resolution patterns of the individual tenor duets are overlaid so that the resolution sonority in one occurs simultaneously with the imperfect tension sonority in another. This changing creates forward movement by preventing resolution in the overall sound until such time as the chain is terminated by simultaneously directed progressions in all three tenor duets.

[35] Similarly, the T–Tr interval, bar 21, is a striking dissonance. Once more the contratenor is below the tenor, and although the tenor is in a discant relationship with both Ca and Ct, because the T–Ct progression resolves to a fifth with the contratenor at the bottom of the texture, the triplum sings a fourth above the tenor so as not to imperfect the overall sound.

[36] 'I've composed the songs in four parts and have heard them several times and they please me quite well' as edited and translated in Guillaume de Machaut *Le Livre dou Voir Dit*, Letter 37, p. 456, trans. p. 457.

[37] 'And the music in four parts I wrote / To delight and entertain her', *ibid.*, lines 6486-7, p. 452, trans. p. 453.

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The chaining of directed progressions can be used as evidence of integration, of intended *musical* possibilities rather than the more easily assessed grammatically correct possibilities. This may help distinguish cases in which singing a song in fewer than its maximum number of parts, whilst grammatically correct (as it must be since the balades are all structured according to the same contrapuntal rules), is musically undesirable and historically inaccurate. If this is the case, everything points to the possibility that B34 represents the only balade of Machaut which should *always* be performed in all four parts. Just as the high tone of the poetic rhetoric in the two balade texts is a difference of degree rather than kind with respect to the rest of Machaut's poetic oeuvre, so too with the music.

B34 represents a 'high falutin' version of all the fashions in which Machaut dresses the underlying contrapuntal structure – presenting essential notes in short note values, bifocal ornamentation figures, delaying resolution or breaking the imperfect chord or its perfect resolution by suspension, rests or other forms of displacement. However, in its essential contrapuntal structure it obeys all the same rules as the group 1a balades and is only four part by repute, not intrinsically.

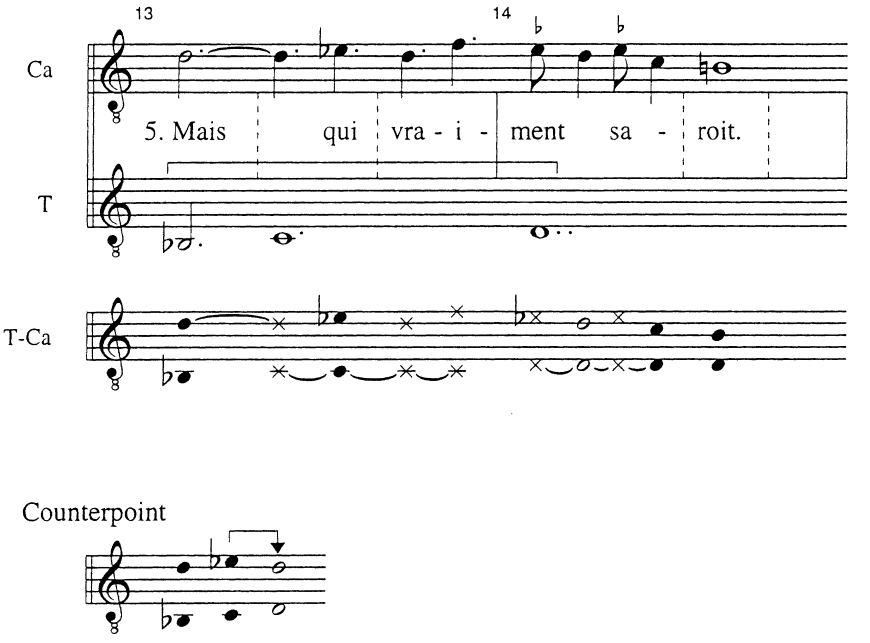
Group 2: Manuscript compendia
Triplum and contratenor as alternatives in *De petit po* (B18) and *De fortune* (B23)

De fortune (B23) survives in two parts in **Pm**, in three parts with triplum in **C Vg B G** and **A**, and with all four parts copied in **Ch PR** and **E**. No copies transmit a three-part version with contratenor, although examination of the counterpoint reveals that a T–Ct–Ca performance of B23 is possible, whereas a four-part one is not. Any single source in which all four parts are transmitted together represents, therefore, a compendium of possible performance versions.

The evidence of the four-part pieces considered in group 1 suggests that overall consonance is important to Machaut (or the T–Tr relationship could have been preserved through creating occasional second, seventh or ninth dissonances between Tr and Ct). However, dissonance in itself – especially between two voices which are not normally a discant pair – is not necessarily a sign that they are alternatives. Evidence from the two-part Machaut songs shows that even the T–Ca discant pair may exhibit dissonances up to three times the length of the contrapuntal consonance which they decorate (see Ex. 6).[38] Machaut's concern for overall consonance and his love of ornamental dissonance are reconciled by identifying concern for overall consonance with the 'deep' level of simple counterpoint and an interest in often 'glaring' dissonance as a feature of the musical surface. For each discant pair, the surface placement of the consonances which form the underlying counterpoint may be metrically weak and temporally short – their contrapuntal value trumps any other kind. However, if the contrapuntally

[38] And see Leach, 'Counterpoint and Analysis'.

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Ex. 6: *Pour ce que tous* (B12) opening of B section

important notes of the discant voices in two separate tenor pairs are mutually dissonant *and presented as such in a temporally and/or metrically prominent fashion at the surface level*, this might signify that they are alternatives.[39]

In *De fortune* (B23), that the contratenor and triplum are alternatives is exemplified by their readings of the tenor ouvert tone *e*. In the ouvert bar 24 the triplum takes *c*′-mi above the tenor *e*, and below the cantus *e*′. This relates the T–Tr open and closed endings as an imperfect sonority and its perfect resolution respectively, rather than, as more commonly, two perfect resolutions in their own right. The contratenor reads the ouvert ending more normatively, effecting a T–Ct directed progression simultaneously with the T–Ca progression, giving a perfect resolution to *e*5/8.[40] The held *b*–*c*′-mi dissonance which would sound between the triplum and the contratenor is comparable to the type of dissonance (a second held for a whole mensural unit) that Machaut is keen to avoid in the balades of group 1 when the contratenor and tenor are inverted and for which he is prepared briefly to let the contratenor function as tenor with respect to the triplum. From the evidence of the ouvert cadence alone it is possible to decide that the two added parts are meant as alternatives.

Two further differences in the contratenor and triplum's reading of the T–Ca

[39] Such dissonances must be presented as temporally emphasized at the level of the surface as well as featuring in the fundamental counterpoint. This explains why the final cadence of B34, above, is permissible in four parts even though the T–Ca pair's imperfect sonority is dissonant with those of the other two pairs.

[40] Like the triplum, the contratenor recognizes the repeat of ouvert material at the end of the B section so that this cadence is replicated there in bars 49–50.

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core can be seen. The first (Ex. 7) is in the contratenors of manuscripts **PR** and **Ch**, bars 33-6. The triplum – once more below the cantus – sings *b* above the tenor's *g* and the T–Tr pair resolves to *f*5 into the start of the next poetic line in bar 36. Simultaneously, the T–Ca pair has a directed progression to *f*8. Of the three available contratenors, that which replicates the triplum most closely is transmitted in **E**, which has *e* below the tenor and then, in bar 35, has the approach to the *f*5 resolution of bar 36 as found in the triplum. The other two contratenors have *c* below the tenor *g* in bar 34, thereby changing the sonority in a manner incompatible with the *b* in the triplum. That of **PR** then has the same as **E** for bar 35 but **Ch** holds the *c* for an entire long.

Example 8 shows a further instance of incompatibility. At the T–Ca directed progression to the clos sonority – *d*8 – at the end of the first poetic line, bars 10-12, the T–Tr has a *d*12 sonority, thereby singing the note *a*′. All versions of the contratenor have *b* rather than *a* at this point, which is dissonant with the *a*′ of the triplum at the level of simple counterpoint and would be audibly dissonant at the surface level. Whilst many of the readings of the contratenor and triplum are similar (especially the large-scale reading of the form and the marking of line ends), compared to the triplum the contratenor gives more weight to the ouvert sonority by making it a sonority of resolution in itself.

De petit po (B18), exists in a two-part version (in **Pg**) in a three-part version with triplum (in **C Vg B G A** and **E**) and in three-part versions with contratenor in most repertory manuscripts (in **Ch FP** and **Pit**). Two manuscript copies (**Mod** and **CaB**) transmit all four parts.[41] Unlike those of B23, the range of sources for B18 suggests that the contratenor and triplum may each be the third part in a three-voice combination. The status of the four-voice copies has been commented on by various scholars.[42] Ernst Apfel summarizes the transmission history of the song as given above and then concludes:

> In fact, as the many dissonances and parallel perfect consonances between the triplum and contratenor show, [balade 18] is not to be performed in four parts. The contratenor and triplum individually present two different possibilities for the expansion of the underlying two-voice structure.[43]
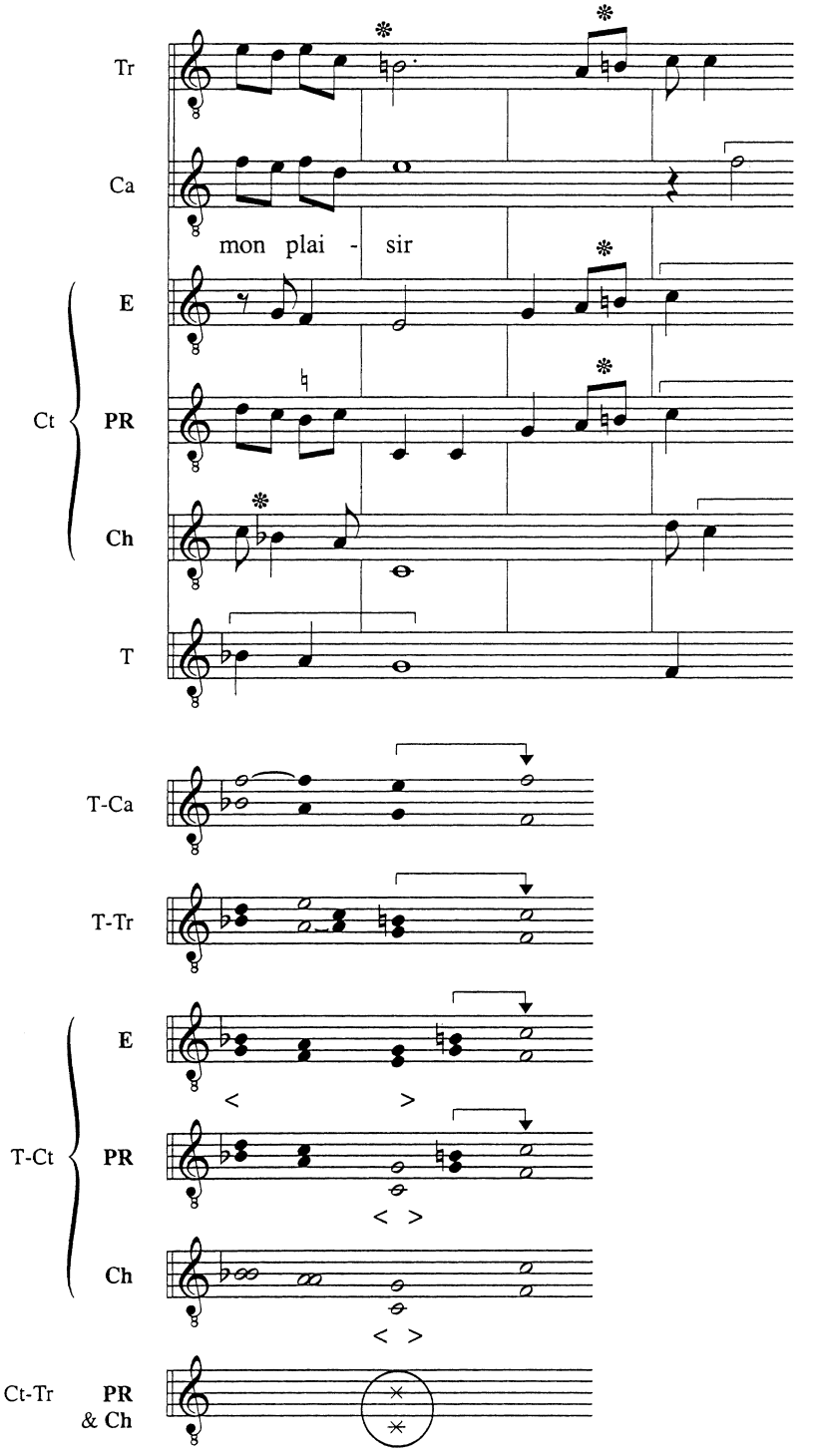
Whilst an examination of the counterpoint of B18 shows Apfel's conclusions to be correct, his premises do not inexorably lead to them. Parallel perfect intervals

[41] The manuscript **CaB** contains all four voices and a fifth voice which has been identified as a second triplum in David Fallows, 'L'origine du ms. 1328 de Cambria', *Revue de musicologie*, 57 (1976), 279. From the microfilm available to me, however, the song is illegible.

[42] Apfel, 'Zur Entstehung', 92, Marie Louise Martinez, *Die Musik des frühen Trecento* (Tutzing, 1963), 112–13, and Gilbert Reaney, 'Notes on the Harmonic Technique of Guillaume de Machaut', in *Essays in Musicology: A Birthday Offering for Willi Apel*, ed. Hans Tischler (Bloomington, 1968), 63–8, esp. 65–6.

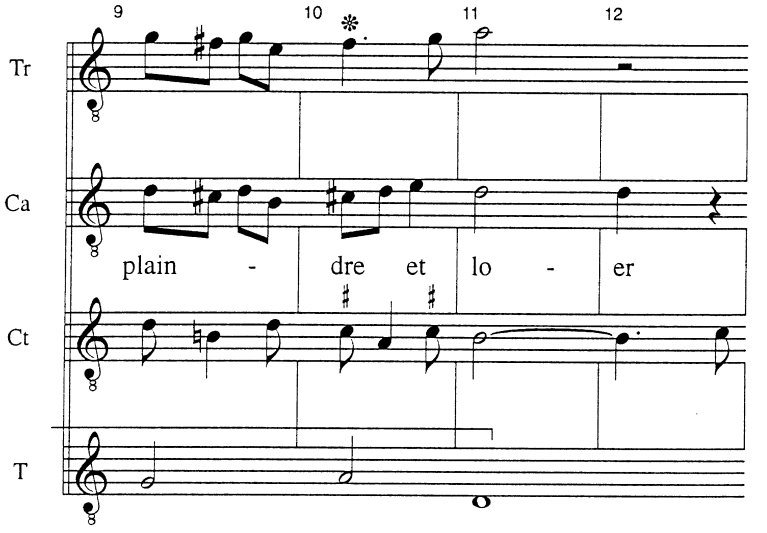
[43] 'Doch wie die besonders zwischen Triplum und Contratenor entstehenden Dissonanzen und parallelen perfekten Konsonanzen zeigen, ist sie [Ballade 18] nicht vierstimmig zu musizieren. Contratenor und Triplum stellen lediglich zwei verschiedene Möglichkeiten der Erweiterung des zugrundeliegenden zweistimmigen Satzes dar', Ernst Apfel, *Grundlagen einer Geschichte der Satztechnik vom 13. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert* [vol. 1] (Saarbrücken, 1974), 171.

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Ex. 7: *De fortune* (B23) bars 33–36 end of line 5 comparing all three contratenors and the triplum

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Ex. 8: *De fortune* (B23) end of line 1 comparing contratenor and triplum

between two parts do not necessarily denote their function as mutually exclusive (and thus alternative) voices, but merely show them not to be in discant relation with each other, something not normally to be expected of the Ct–Tr pair even in viable four-part pieces. Neither does the existence of dissonances between parts necessarily denote their exclusivity, unless as well as being surface phenomena the two dissonant notes are part of each voice's counterpoint with the tenor. All the features cited by Apfel as pinpointing alternative voices are already present between the cantus and triplum voices of *De petit po* (B18) which are not alternative voices. And between voices not normally in discant relation anyway, dissonances, particularly that of the fourth, are *de rigueur* particularly at a 5/8 cadence with the tenor, e.g. bars 6-7. The fourth dissonance (which may indeed be emphasized by note length and mensural position, or both) is not a sign that these two voices are mutually exclusive, but merely that they have a discant relation not to each other, but to a third voice (usually the tenor).

However, Apfel's statement that it is their realization of different possibilities for the expansion of the two-part structure which show the triplum and contratenor of *De petit po* (B18) to be alternatives, approaches a more fruitful line of enquiry. The triplum and contratenor of the piece do indeed read the cadences of the T–Ca duet differently, to a degree which creates sustained sevenths and seconds between these two third parts. Points of contrapuntal divergence include the two primary section endings, the clos and final cadences (which are identical bars 20-22 = 41-42), as well as the other two major section endings, the ouvert cadence (bars 17-19), and the cadence at the end of the B section before the start of the refrain (bars 33-5). These cadences are all similar: between the imperfect sonority and perfect sonority of the T–Ct duet of each, the contratenor delays its note of resolution by striking the note a tone above and holding it for

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two-thirds of a perfection before descending to the awaited note of resolution.[44] By contrast, at the same points, the triplum proceeds immediately to the note of resolution. Between the contratenor and triplum, this gives the relationship of a seventh, held for two-thirds of a perfection. However, these instances do not fulfil the requirements laid out above, since the simple counterpoint of both T–Ct and T–Tr is the same – the held Ct *a* in bar 21 (*b* in ouvert and pre-refrain cadences) is an ornamental consonance. In addition, a dissonance which lasts for two-thirds of a perfection is permissible even between voices in discant relation (see Ex. 6, above). Therefore, a subjective analytical judgement must be made. Perhaps when (as in B18's ouvert and clos cadences) the same progression is duplicated (at pitch or at the octave) in two different tenor duets, and the resolution occurs in one but is simultaneously delayed or suspended in the other, this can be taken as a sign that the voices are alternatives.

For both B18 and B23 the equivalence of their alternative third parts in combination with their different readings of the T–Ca harmony, imply that no single realization of the two-voice core is mandatory and, by extrapolation, that the two voices may be sufficient in themselves. Marie Louise Martinez has commented that when an alternative third voice is added to a pre-existing three-voice structure, 'the piece is usually transmitted as a two-part piece in some of the sources'.[45] This is the case for both B18 and B23, although for the latter, the two-voice version copied in **Pm** represents an editorial reduction from the three-part (with triplum) version of **A**.[46] Not only do both songs lack occasional Ct–Tr function in instances of T–Ca proximity but the mutual exclusivity of the triplum and contratenor is clearly audible from different responses to the T–Ca progressions at prominent cadential points. For both these pieces, therefore, performance possibilities are limited to two-part, and two different three-part versions. The function of the alternative voice-part seems to be to present these early T–Ca–Tr pieces in the T–Ct–Ca combination which became increasingly favoured throughout the century. This is reflected in Machaut's own output, at least in so far as its chronology can be ascertained by a reliance on the manuscript sources. The earliest source, **C**, has all its three-part balades with a triplum as the third part. Those three-part balades which first occur in sources post-dating **C**, all deploy a contratenor as their third part. Adding a contratenor to a three-part piece with triplum, updates it

[44] This is a figure similar to that which is a consistent cadential feature of *Helas tant* (B2), where, however, it appears in the mensural guise of major prolation; see Leach, 'Counterpoint', 97–105.

[45] 'ist das Stück gewöhnlich in einem Teil der Hss. auch zweistimmig überleifert', Martinez, *Die Musik*, 112.

[46] See Avril, 'Les manuscrits enluminés', 129–30, and Wolfgang Dömling, 'Zur Überlieferung der musikalischen Werke Guillaume de Machauts', *Die Musikforschung*, 22 (1969), 194. The two-part version of B18 in **Pg** is less clear in status. That the manuscript is physically later than the Machaut sources does not necessarily imply that its version's genesis post-dates the three-part version of the Machaut manuscripts. In addition, the quotation of B23 in *Dame qui fust* only uses the T–Ca core, even though the composer probably knew the three-part version with contratenor; see n. 6 above.

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into the other available (and latterly more common) three-voice combination, rather than expanding it into a four-voice version.

Group 3: The Balades of the *Remede de fortune: En amer* (B41) and *Dame de qui* (B42)

In his article on Machaut for the *New Grove*, Reaney comments specifically on the two balades from the *Remede*: 'Both balades have four voices, but the triplum and contratenor must be alternatives' because, 'four-voice polyphony in [Machaut's] secular works is sometimes only apparent, with the triplum and contratenor in reality alternatives, and can be assumed only when the triplum and contratenor voices agree mutually as well as with the motetus [cantus] and tenor'.[47] This stipulation is too stringent and ignores the hierarchy present between the voices of Machaut's songs. Since the triplum and contratenor are not in discant relation with each other, or with the cantus, it is necessary only that they display a discant relationship with the tenor voice, or with a voice which has tenor function in cases of vocal inversion. In themselves neither duplication, nor short ornamental dissonances, nor fourths between these voices preclude compatibility. However, as shown above in B23, *certain* dissonances (seconds and sevenths and their compounds) can signify vocal alternatives, or, as shown in B18, simultaneous resolution and suspension of the same pitch class in Ct and Tr may also show them to be alternatives. According to my criteria, nothing about the triplum and contratenor parts of the *Remede* balades precludes their simultaneous performance, but neither do they fit easily into the category outlined in group 1 above.

En amer (B41) shares with *Se quanque amours* (B21) the privilege of being the only four-part songs in the earliest surviving source, manuscript **C**. B21 and B41 also share a transmission history in that they both appear either in four-part versions or in a three-part version with contratenor.[48] For B21, this transmission situation maps logically on to the performance possibilities, since – except in **Vg**'s emended version – B21's triplum cannot be performed with the tenor and cantus parts alone, because it maintains a discant relationship with the lowest voice, which is occasionally the contratenor. However, at T–Ca directed progressions resolving to the unison in B41, the contratenor either continues to sound above the tenor so that all voices retain their default function (as in bars 4-6), or the T–Tr duet retains its functional discant character regardless of the contratenor's lowest status (as in bars 9-10). Nevertheless, a few instances of Ct–Tr discant relationship provide a marginal indication of the triplum's status as (contrapuntally) a fourth part. In bar 16 the T–Ct progression with the contratenor below does not directly support a T–Ca progression (and is therefore imperfected in overall sound by the Ca *e'*) but is itself supported by a simultaneous progression in the Ct–Tr pair, the triplum upholding a discant relation with the lowest sounding voice. The T–Tr relationship is arguably

[47] Reaney, 'Machaut', 430.
[48] See Table 1, below.

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preserved in the bifocal ornamentation figures. In bar 17 the initial T–Ca fourth is 'covered' by the contratenor a fifth below. Even here, however, in a three-part version without the contratenor, the fourth would be a permissible accented dissonance. Bar 16 is not comparable to those examples given for *Il mest avis* (B22), *Se quanque amours* (B21) or even *De toutes flours* (B31), since a three-part version with triplum is not strictly precluded.

In bars 10-11 a T–Ca progression to the octave is supported by a T–Ct progression to the fifth. Although this does *not* involve inversion, it *is* supported simultaneously by a Ct–Tr progression 10-8, giving a non-discant T–Tr movement of parallel twelfths (marked 'early' in Ex. 9). Significantly, this very example is normalized in later copies of the piece (**Vg B F** and **A**) so that the triplum has two minim *f*'s rather than two *a*'s, making a T–Tr directed progression to the twelfth in these bars and parallel octaves between Ct and Tr (marked 'later' in Ex. 9). As this is the one example which suggests similarity between the counterpoint of B41 and that of the balades of group 1, the fact that it is either recognized as, or mistaken for, a third error and corrected in later sources, may point to uncertainty about the performance possibilities of this piece, even for its contemporary audience, performers and scribes (to the extent that these groups may be differentiated). Whether this instance is one of an error in an early source which is corrected in later readings, or of an exceptional compositional instance (predicated on four-part performance) which later scribes misunderstood and normalized, is impossible to decide.
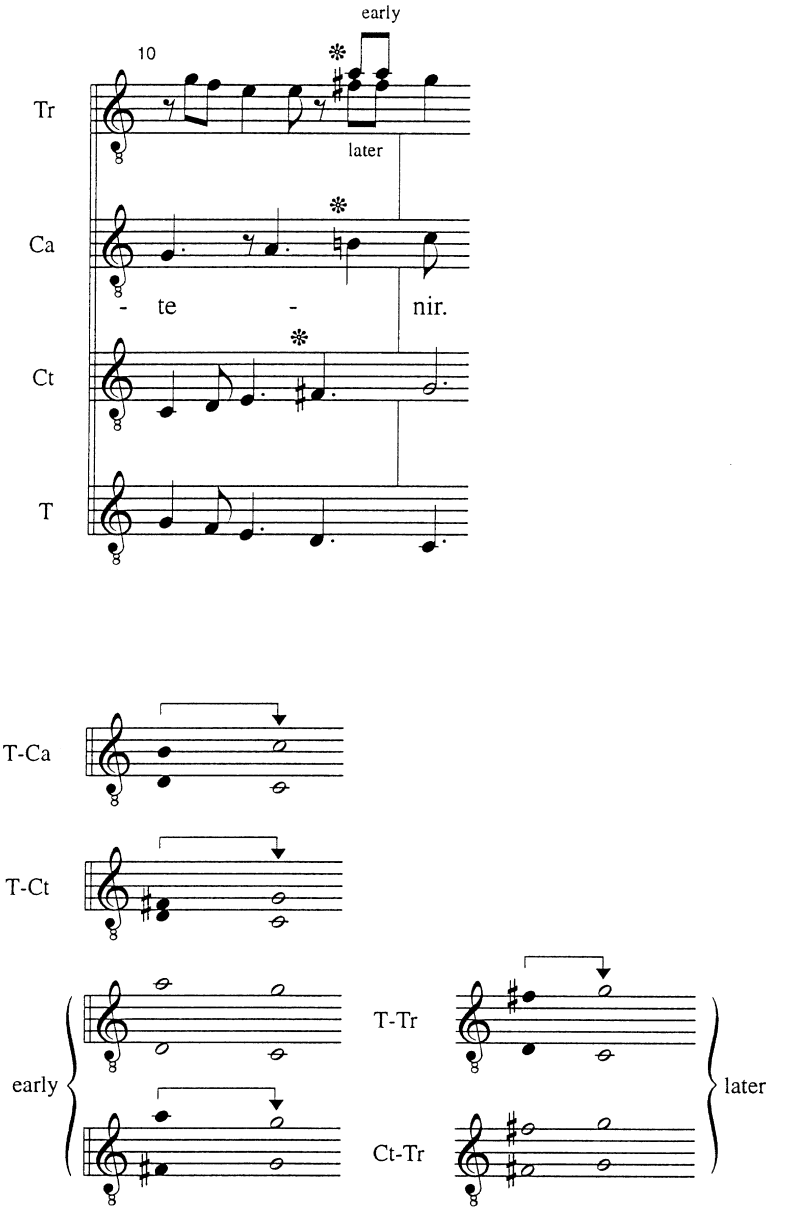
It may be possible that B41 supports all combinations of voices in performance – two-part, three-part with triplum, three-part with contratenor and four-part – and that any attempt to be prescriptive would limit the piece anachronistically and unnecessarily. However, its similarity to *Se quanque amours* (B21), both as the only other four-part piece in **C** and in appearing only with all four parts copied or latterly without the triplum, suggests that the slight evidence of bar 16 is meaningful and that B41 would not have been performed as T–Ca–Tr, even though this possibility is not grammatically excluded by its simple counterpoint (as it is in most copies of B21).

Dame de qui (B42) is the only Machaut song which appears solely in two or four parts (in early and late copies respectively). In examining the nature of the four-part version of *Dame de qui* (B42) the four-part copies of manuscripts **E** and **PR**, which share some readings with the earliest two-part version in **C**, offer the most useful versions for comparison.[49] At all important directed progressions in the T–Ca pair, the added parts occupy their traditional loci, with T–Ca resolutions to the octave being supported by simultaneous progressions to the twelfth (T–Tr) and fifth (T–Ct).[50]

[49] Wimsatt and Kibler have found that the *Remede* text of **E** is aligned with the early group of sources which includes also **Pe** and **C**. Even though, like the later text sources, the balade is in four parts, **E**'s musical readings suggest it is taken from the early tradition. See Guillaume de Machaut, *Le Jugement du Roy de Behaigne and Remede de Fortune*, ed. and trans. James I. Wimsatt and William W. Kibler, music ed. Rebecca A. Baltzer (Athens, GA, 1988), and Leach, 'Counterpoint', 52–8.

[50] Typically disposed progressions occur in all three tenor duets in bars 8-9, 18-19 (ouvert – end line 2), 20-1, 21-2, 24-5 (clos – end line 4), 32-3 (end line 6), 36-8 (end line 7), 44-5 and 48-9 (end line 8).

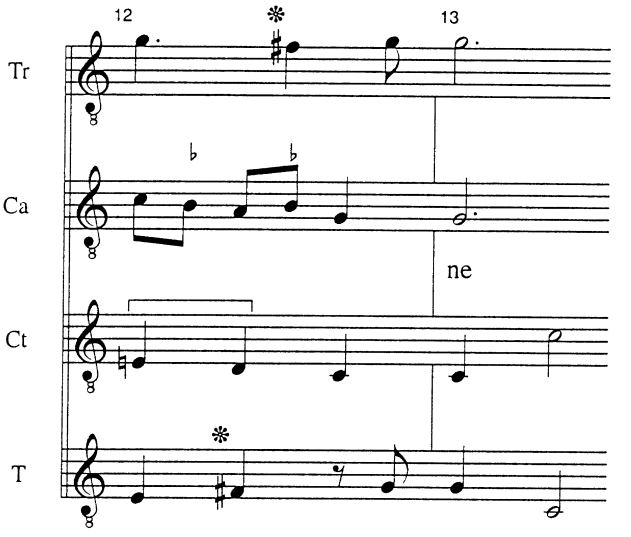
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Ex. 9: *En amer* (B41) end of line 3 showing early and later triplum lines

The only directed progression in *Dame de qui* (B42) which apparently requires performance of the contratenor to support the triplum, is shown in Example 10, where the contratenor supports a unison resolution in the T–Ca pair by taking the lower fifth whilst the triplum has parallel octaves with the tenor and a 10-12 progression with the contratenor. This instance is not as clear in its rhythmic and mensural context as those seen in the group 1 balades. The contratenor and

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Ex. 10: *Dame de qui* (B42) T–Ca unison with T–Ct inversion

tenor immediately move to reassert their normal relative positions, and the parallel intervals between tenor and triplum are brief.

A further instance of the triplum's dependence on the contratenor, however, can be seen in bars 16-17. Although the resolution is imperfected overall by the imperfect sonority of the T–Ca duet, there is a directed progression in an inverted T–Ct pair which is supported by a simultaneous Ct–Tr progression. The T–Tr relationship is one of parallel perfect fifths. Again, this instance is not as unquestionable as those for the songs in group 1. The parallels of the tenor are obscured (and negated) by ornamentation and would not create an entirely unacceptable T–Tr relationship in the event of a three-part performance with triplum.

Other than these examples, *Dame de qui* has instances of Ct–Tr directed progressions (bars 4-5, 16-17) which occur where the contratenor is the lowest voice but where the T–Tr discant relationship is uninterrupted, and an instance in bar 43 where, by forming the lowest pitch, the contratenor 'covers', in terms of overall sonority, a fourth in the T–Tr pair which, were the contratenor not present, would have to be perceived as an accented dissonance.[51]

As with B41, the counterpoint of B42 does not provide a firm basis for precluding any performance possibilities. B41 exists in four-part versions and three-part ver-

[51] *NB*: The triplum in Schrade's edition transmits the reading of manuscripts **Vg B F A** and **PR**, all of which have *d'* in bar 43. MS **E**, which I believe to transmit the earliest version of the triplum and contratenor, has *e'*. This is a bolder contrapuntal move since it forms a directed progression with tenor into bar 44 (*f*8), although the tenor does not reach its contrapuntally essential note (*g*) until the last minim in bar 43, and has a dissonance with the triplum which lasts the first two-thirds of the perfection. The other sources' contrapuntally less-directed version could represent either a correction or a normalization, the latter possibly the result of confusion as to the performance possibilities, since only when the higher-voice combination is performed is the overall sounding sonority as daring as its contrapuntal underpinnings.

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sions with contratenor, suggesting some affinity to the balades in group 1. Conversely, as B42 exists in two-part versions in the earliest sources, it has a fundamentally two-part identity like the balades in group 2. This line of reasoning would imply that B42 similarly has triplum and contratenor as alternative voices. Nor can literary evidence be adduced, since although these songs appear interpolated into a narrative *dit*, the only inference would be that the narrator's song (B42) is meant to parallel that of Hope (B41), but this is clearly not the case in terms of the number of their voice parts at least.

Conclusion

The results of studying all Machaut's balades which have four surviving parts suggest strongly that the basic rules of dyadic counterpoint are in use throughout, and that parts work according to a grammatical structure predicated firstly on the tenor voice, but also with reference to the overall sonority. The contratenor adopts tenor function when it is at the bottom of the texture usually a fifth below the tenor, usually because the tenor and cantus are in unison. In such cases, a fourth voice (the misnamed 'triplum') *may* have a brief discant relationship with the contratenor and a temporary non-discant relationship with the tenor (shown by parallel perfect intervals, or dissonances).

Only an assessment of what is essential contrapuntally can provide a qualitative analysis of the performance possibilities in four-part pieces. Several scholars assume that the piece is only four-part if the triplum and contratenor are mutually consonant.[52] However, other than at exceptional moments where the tenor function is briefly assumed by the contratenor, the contratenor and triplum are *not* in discant relationship with each other, but only individually with the tenor, and therefore do not form strict counterpoint with one another, often displaying dissonances of a fourth (or eleventh). Between two voices not normally in discant relation, only when the notes of each voice's simple counterpoint with the tenor form seconds, sevenths and their compounds and are temporally or metrically prominent in the surface texture, is this a clear indication that the voices are alternatives. A less clear indication is the simultaneous resolution and delaying of resolution of the same pitch class duplicated in T–Tr and T–Ct , as was seen in B18. Duplication alone is not enough, however, and these cases must be assessed subjectively and they remain provisional.

Arguing that the underlying grammar of polyphonic song is dyadic is not to claim that voices were composed successively. As Richard Crocker says 'we must avoid the false dichotomy between linear counterpoint and (triadic) harmony . . . medieval composition is not more successive than our own'.[53] However, the same medieval song may be preserved in a variety of traces which reflect a more varied

[52] For example, Apfel, 'Zur Entstehung', 92, and Reaney, 'Machaut', 430.

[53] Richard L. Crocker, 'Discant, Counterpoint and Harmony', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 15 (1962), 1–21, esp. 12–13.

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Table 1. *Machaut's four-part balades: manuscript transmission and performance possibilities*

Vocal combination	T–Ca		T–Ct–Ca		T–Ca–Tr		T–Ct–Ca–Tr	
Balade	MSS	pos-sible?	MSS	pos-sible?	MSS	pos-sible?	MSS	pos-sible?
22 *Il mest avis*	none	(yes)	**C** (T and Ct staves blank)	yes	none	no	**G Vg B A E PR**[a]	yes
21 *Se quanque amours*	none	(yes)	**A**	yes	none	no	**C G B E**	yes
21 *Se quanque amours* in **Vg**	—	(yes)	—	yes	—	yes	**Vg**	no
31 *De toutes flours*	none	(yes)	**G Vg B A Pm FP Pit [Fa]**[b]	yes	none	no	**E PR Str**	yes
34 *Quant theseus / New quier*	none	(yes)	none	(yes)	none	no	**E Ch PR G Vg B A**	yes
18 *De petit po*	**Pg**	yes	**Ch FP Pit**	yes	**C G VgB A E**	yes	**Mod CaB**	no
23 *De fortune*	**Pm**	yes	none	yes	**C G VgB A Str**	yes	**E PR Ch**	no
41 *En amer*	none	?(yes)	**K FP Pit**	yes	none	?no	**C Pe E PR F Vg B A**	yes
42 *Dame de qui*	**C K**	yes	none	yes	none	yes	**E Pe PR F Vg B A**	?no

[a] But the **PR** contratenor is not for the triplum but for an early three-part version, see group 1a, above.

[b] Flynn ('The Intabulation') has shown that the ornamentation of the ostensibly two-part arrangement of B31 in **Fa** synthesizes aspects of both the contratenor and cantus in the top part, suggesting that it is still conceptually (virtually) a three-part piece.

performance practice than that hinted at by our collected editions. Varied performance practice is *reflected* in manuscript versions of pieces in a minimum number of parts and *enabled* by those versions which transmit a maximum number – sometimes more than can be performed at any one time. However, the manuscript situation of a piece does not necessarily immediately reflect its performance possibilities. The difference between manuscript presentation and performance possibilities allowed by the grammar of the counterpoint is summarized in Table 1, in which manuscript copies of different vocal combinations are contrasted with their performance possibilities.

The appearance of *Se quanque amours* (B21) in **Vg** shows palpable confusion over performance possibilities leading to (probably non-authorial) emendation. Perhaps **Vg** reflects an old-fashioned ensemble assuming the performance combination T–

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Ca–Tr at a time when this has been superseded by the basic compositional combination T–Ct–Ca. The preference for the low-voice combination over the higher-voice one is the principal discernible trend in composition during the period when Machaut was writing balades. How easy would it be to emend other additive tripla, such as those of *De toutes flours* (B31) and *Il mest avis* (B22), to allow for three-voice performances in the vocal combination T–Ca–Tr? Conversely, how easy would it be to emend the disagreements of the alternative contratenors in *De petit po* (B18) and *De fortune* (B23) to make four-voice performance possible? Whatever the answer to these questions, **Vg** offers a valuable insight into the performance possibilities of these songs at the hand of their singers and depicts great fluidity.

It is significant that *Quant theseus* / *Ne quier* (B34) is the only four-part piece which post-dates **C** (except for the expansion of *Dame de qui* (B42)) and it is perhaps surprising that its compositional process is identical to that of the earlier four-part pieces. Perhaps this should caution the analyst against basing chronological constructs on stylistic and compositional criteria since *Se quanque amours* (B21) which was definitely written by 1350 (and perhaps much earlier), and *Quant theseus* / *Ne quier* (B34) – almost certainly written in the 1360s – have the same grammatical basis, exhibit similar compositional traits and obey the same rules of counterpoint which is rhythmicized into music using the same stylistic elements, differing only in their mensural realization.

Table 1 details those performances which would contravene principles of counterpoint – either those which would sing mutually exclusive parts together (whose status as alternatives is so evident to fourteenth-century performers that it does not merit designation in sources which present them as ostensibly four-part pieces) or those which would sing a triplum without the contratenor upon which it occasionally relies (an arrangement not attested in the manuscripts). However, it may be the case that certain *grammatically possible* performances are *musically undesirable*. The case for B34, made above, used the chaining of directed progression as evidence of integration, of intended *musical* possibilities rather than the more easily assessed grammatically correct possibilities, to argue that the song should always be performed in four parts and not fewer. More strongly, the plot of the *Voir Dit* requires that the piece is four-part, because the placement of Thomas's poem in cantus 1 (the triplum voice) makes it necessary to perform all four voices when Thomas's poem is sung. In other cases, two-part versions are attested by manuscript sources, although these are all later in date than the occurrence of the songs in the principal Machaut manuscripts. Two-part versions exist for *De fortune* (B23), *De Petit po* (B18) and *Dame de qui* (B42), and a two-part performance of *En amer* (B41) could be argued by analogy with *Dame de qui* (B42).

No evidence of two-part performance exists for *Se quanque amours* (B21) and *Il mest avis* (B22) although both may be performed in three parts with contratenor. In these cases singing the songs in two parts, whilst grammatically correct (as it must be since the balades are all structured according to the same contrapuntal rules), may be musically undesirable and historically inaccurate. In Table 1, grammatically possible performances which are musically questionable appear in parentheses. An

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assessment of this can rely only upon an argument from chaining as an index of integration and, less objectively, upon the musical intuition of the analyst or performer. The balades of group 1a have a three-part identity, even for *De toutes flours* (B31) the instrumental version of **Fa** is not a two-part reduction but rather supports the idea that it is conceptually (if not grammatically) a three-part piece by incorporating aspects of the contratenor in the top part.[54] However, equating transmission history and performance possibilities is an act fraught with danger. Manuscript copies can represent so many things that the presence or absence of a particular vocal combination is not decisive in terms of performance possibilities – only the diagnostic use of principles derived from late medieval counterpoint teaching to understand both the basis and the individual stylistic features of the music can aid in such a task.

Appendix A: Manuscript sigla

The 'Machaut' Manuscripts

A	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français 1584
B	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français 1585
C	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français 1586
E	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français 9221
F-G	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds français 22545-6
K	Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS A 95 (10)
Pm	New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M 396
Vg	New York, Wildenstein Collection [no shelfmark]

The 'non-Machaut' sources

CaB	Cambrai, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS B. 1328
Fa	Faenza, Biblioteca Communale, 117
FP	Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Panciatichiano 26
Mod	Modena, Biblioteca Estense, a.M.5.24
Pit	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fonds italien 568
PR	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouvelles acquisitions françaises 6771
Str	Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Municipale, M. 222 C. 22 [destroyed by fire in 1870]

[54] See Flynn, 'The Intabulation'.

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Appendix B: Key to musical examples

The musical examples aim to give some idea of the manuscript situation for each passage shown. Accidentals given on the staff are either those which are transmitted in at least one source, or, if accompanied by an asterisk (*) above them, are those which are necessary for reasons of counterpoint. In terms of the latter, two basic principles have been applied. Firstly, semitones have been realized in order to perfect unisons, fifths and octaves which are part of the underlying consonant counterpoint. Secondly, semitones have been realized in directed progressions in order that the perfect sonority of resolution be approached from the preceding imperfect sonority by a semitone step in one voice. An asterisk placed above a note which does *not* have an accidental sign before it on the staff is meant to signify that the preceding sign (either one given in the MSS or one realized in line with counterpoint) is probably still in force.

In the pitch system of the Middle Ages the note *b* can be either *b*-mi (b natural) or *b*-fa (b flat) depending on the context. Where contrapuntal considerations are not decisive, an accidental sign placed above the staff represents an editorial suggestion for the realization of *b* based on linear factors.

The two accidental hexachordal signs of the sources are interpreted in line with the three-sign 'obligatory accidental' system used in modern notation.

As it is the most widely available collected edition, the bar numbers accord with those in Leo Schrade, ed., *The Works of Guillaume de Machaut*, 2 vols. Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century (Monaco: L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1956). Corrections to the readings of Schrade's edition are detailed in Lawrence Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research* (New York and London, 1995), 281. Readings here are from **C**, except for B31 (from **G**), and B34 and B42 (from **E**).

The contrapuntal analysis is shown in an arhythmic format. In the initial parsing, dissonances are shown with crossed noteheads. In both the initial parsing and the analysis of underlying simple counterpoint, consonances are shown with filled and empty noteheads, for imperfect and perfect sonorities respectively. Perfect consonances are unisons, fifths, octaves and their compounds; thirds, sixth and their compounds are imperfect consonances and all other intervals are dissonant. Voice names are abbreviated to T (tenor), Ct (contratenor), Ca (cantus) and Tr (Triplum). Any inversion of the normative relative positions of voices (given in ascending order in the previous sentence) is enclosed in triangular brackets, < and >.

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