BELLE MUSIQUE AND FIN'AMOUR: THIBAUT DE CHAMPAGNE, GACE BRULÉ

AND AN ARISTOCRATIC TROUVÈRE TRADITION

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Many consider Gace Brulé (c1160-c1213) and Thibaut IV, Count of Champagne, (1201-1253) to have been the greatest trouvères. Writers on this subject have not adequately examined this assumption, having focused their energies on such issues as tracking melodic variants of individual works as preserved in different song-books (or chansonniers), the interpretation of rhythm in performance, and creation of modern editions of these songs. This thesis examines the esteem enjoyed by Gace and Thibaut in both medieval and modern times which derives from their exemplarity of, rather than difference from their noble contemporaries.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTATIONS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. LITERARY SOURCES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. MELODIES</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX: SELECTED WORKS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>The Appearance of Trouvères and Their Songs in the First 215 Pages of the Chansonnier de l'Arsenal</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Average Ranges of Songs Analyzed for this Study</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Musical Example</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Gace Brulé: <em>Au renouviau de la douçour</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>The Poetic Structure of <em>Au renouviau de la douçour</em>, First Stanza</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Jehan Erars: <em>Je ne me sai</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Text and Translation of <em>Au renouviau de la douçour</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Text and Translation of <em>Je ne me sai</em></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Thibaut de Champagne: <em>Je ne puis pas bien</em></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Gautier de Dargies: <em>Chançon ferai mult marriz</em></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Moniot de Paris: <em>Lonc tens ai mon tens</em></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Blondel de Nesle: <em>A l’entrant d’esté</em></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Gautier de Dargies: <em>Chançon ferai…</em>, Line 4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>Moniot de Paris: <em>Lonc tens ai mon tens</em>, Line 3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Thibaut de Champagne: <em>De madame souvenir</em></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>Psalm Tone</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>Gace Brulé: <em>Ne me sont pas Acheson</em>, Line 1</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>Moniot de Paris: <em>Lonc tens ai mon tens</em>, Line 1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>Raoul de Soissons: <em>Chançon m’estue</em>, Line 8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Thibaut de Champagne: <em>Amors me fet commencier</em></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>Blondel de Nesle: <em>A l’entrant</em>, Cadences</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTATION

Abbreviations

Paris, BNF f. fr. 845
Paris, BNF f fr. 847
Paris, BNF n.a. fr. 1050
BNF-Bibliothèque Nationale de France
f.fr-fonds français
n.a-nouvelle (new) acquisition

Notation

A B C d e f g a b c d’ e’ f’ g’ a’ b’

| Middle C
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Many consider Gace Brulé (c1160-c1213) and Thibaut IV, Count of Champagne, (1201-1253) to have been the greatest trouvères.¹ Have scholars partaken in this belief uncritically, or is there something truly exceptional about the work of these poet-composers? Writers on this subject have not adequately examined this question, having focused their energies on such issues as tracking melodic variants of individual works as preserved in different song-books (or chansonniers), the interpretation of rhythm in performance, and the creation of modern editions of this repertoire. As I will illustrate in the following pages, Gace and Thibaut garnered favoritism in medieval and modern times because they exemplified, rather than differed from, an aristocratic tradition of composition, which was more esteemed than the bourgeois tradition.

This analysis uncovers these two traditions of trouvère music: aristocratic and bourgeois, though such distinctions did not necessarily indicate the social background of a given poet-musician.² Research for this project included an analysis of sixty-six grand chants (the most prestigious genre of trouvère song), by Gace, Thibaut and nine

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¹ A passage from the Grandes Chroniques de France, a manuscript that was compiled between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, states, "...Along with Gace Brulé [Thibaut] made the most beautiful, delectable, and melodious chançons that were ever heard in song or on the vielle." Cited in Mary O'Neill, Courtly Love Songs of Medieval France: Transmission and Style in the Trouvère Repertoire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 23. For modern reception, see: Anne Marie Josephe Artis, "The Chansons of Thibaut, Count of Champagne, King of Navarre" (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1975), ii; Hans Tischler, The Circle Around Gace Brulé: Four Famous Early Trouvères. (Ottawa: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2002), v; and John E. Stevens, Words and Music in the Middle Ages: Song, Narrative, Dance, and Drama, 1050-1350 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 36.

² The terms “aristocratic” and “bourgeois” are terms I adapted for the purposes of this study, and not distinctions consistently used by medieval and modern authors. Mary O'Neill briefly mentioned how the music of the trouvères eventually transformed into more of a bourgeois art. See O'Neill, Courtly Love Songs of Medieval France, 134. Christopher Page differentiated between high and low styles of trouvère songs, but did so with regards to genre, not social class. See Page, Voices and Instruments of the Middle Ages: Instrumental Practice and Songs in France 1100-1300, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 16.
other trouvères (see Works List) as they appear in the manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Manuscript 5198, (*Chansonnier de l'Arsenal*). The selected trouvères represented different generations and different classes, namely aristocratic or bourgeois. The criteria for comparison of the melodies were mode, range, texture, and issues related to their poetry.

One may question the study of only one manuscript for justified reasons, because there are approximately sixteen sources that contain music and poetry.\(^3\) Nevertheless, examining one manuscript removes the obstacle of accounting for the diverse interpretations of various scribes. MS 5198 is very similar to three other chansonniers, (Paris, BNF f. fr. 845, Paris, BNF f. fr. 847, and Paris, BNF n.a. fr. 1050) in that there are few variants among the same songs.\(^4\) Scholars who have studied all extant trouvère manuscripts have noted variations in the same songs, most of which are minute (for example, the difference of one note in a phrase, or a few more notes on a syllable), but some more significant.\(^5\) Given the scope of this project, I chose to study differences between a representative group of trouvères, and not the variants between manuscripts.

Another area of research in this project was the examination of primary non-musical sources such as poems, theoretical texts, and historical chronicles. The writers in question showed a preference for the aristocratic trouvères over those from the bourgeoisie, giving precedence mostly to Thibaut. Indeed, Thibaut's status as a count, and eventually a king, augmented his fame. A few of Gace's songs appear in a

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\(^3\) O'Neill, *Courtly Love Songs of Medieval France*, 14.

\(^4\) Ibid. See Appendix A for a list of abbreviations.

romance (*Guillaume de Dole*), but he received less attention than Thibaut. Medieval writers considered Gace and particularly Thibaut to be representative of an aristocratic style. This literary distinction is one example of the separation between noble and bourgeois trouvères in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Virtually no studies exist that question the notion that Thibaut and Gace were the best trouvères. Some authors mention the favoritism of Thibaut and Gace in passing because their focus often lies elsewhere. Others concentrate on a single trouvère, with little or no comparison to others. Generally, scholars avoid large-scale comparative analyses of trouvère songs because there are around 2,000 total extant melodies.6

Five secondary sources deal with issues of melodic variants, application of music theory to trouvère music, reception, and relationships between text and music. Mary O'Neill's book outlined the different generations of trouvères, the issue of melodic variants, and orality.7 She devoted a large portion to a case study on Gautier de Dargies, focusing on variants and poetic meter. While she wrote about the differences between the earlier and later trouvères, she did not address why many people think Gace and Thibaut were notable. If anything, O'Neill championed Dargies and referred to him as influential, helping establish trouvère song as a “distinctive entity.”8

O'Neill's book is similar in many ways to Hendrik van der Werf's study of troubadour and trouvère songs.9 Van der Werf focused more on theoretical aspects of this repertoire, but also addressed issues of orality and melodic variants. Like O'Neill, he

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7 Mary O'Neill, *Courtly Love Songs of Medieval France*.
8 Ibid., 94.
applied the issues he brought forth to analyses, though instead of concentrating on one trouvère, he examined a selected group of troubadour and trouvere songs. Van der Werf did not focus on one genre and analyzed several hundred trouvere and troubadour melodies. He gave some background information about Thibaut without examining the reputation and reception of his songs in detail.

Anne-Marie Josephe Artis provided a detailed study on all of Thibaut's songs in her dissertation, but did not compare his songs to other trouveres. The purpose of her dissertation was to analyze Thibaut's melodies and how they related to his poems. She did not study all of the melodic variants: like the present study, she largely studied the songs as they appeared in one manuscript. Artis's work was helpful in determining what characteristics exemplified the songs of Thibaut, but she did not use her information to determine how he was similar to or different from other trouveres.

John Haines examined the reception of troubadour and trouvere music over the past eight centuries. Haines's book is an excellent resource for learning about the reception of this music into the modern period because he presented the salient features of many relevant primary sources. He did not examine the question of whether there was anything unique about Gace or Thibaut's songs. Instead, he described how historians, antiquarians, and musicologists treated this repertoire since the Middle Ages.

John Stevens studied trouvere songs, devoting a small amount of attention to Thibaut. His research is unique because he explored numerical symbolism in the poems. For example, Stevens noted that each stanza of *Dieus est ensi conme est li*

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10 Anne Marie Josephe Artis, “The Chansons of Thibaut, Count of Champagne, King of Navarre” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1975), iv.

The order in which trouvères appear and the amount of pages devoted to each in many chansonniers (see Table 1.1) clearly indicates their perceived importance. In the Chansonnier de l'Arsenal, Thibaut's works appear first, because he was the King of Navarre, followed by those of Gace, who was a knight. The list descends in social rank, ending with mostly bourgeois trouvères, followed by lesser-known figures with only one or two songs each. The scribe included over fifty pages of Thibaut’s songs and almost forty of Gace’s, much higher numbers than the rest of the list. The fact that Thibaut and Gace appear in the chansonnier in this fashion shows this thirteenth-century scribe thought them to be significant.

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13 Ibid.
Table 1.1. The Appearance of Trouvères and their Songs in the First 215 Pages of the *Chansonnier de l’Arsenal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trouvère</th>
<th>Pages Devoted to Songs</th>
<th>Birth and Death Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thibaut de Champagne*^A</td>
<td>1-54</td>
<td>1201-1253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gace Brulé*^A</td>
<td>54-93</td>
<td>c.1160-after 1213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Châtelain de Coucy*^A</td>
<td>93-109</td>
<td>c. 1165-1203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blondel de Nesle*^A</td>
<td>109-121</td>
<td>fl. 1180-1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thibaut de Blazon^B</td>
<td>121-127</td>
<td>d. after 1229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gautier de Dargies*^A</td>
<td>127-133</td>
<td>c. 1165-after 1236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moniot d’Arras*^B</td>
<td>133-138</td>
<td>fl. 1213-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raoul de Soissons*^A</td>
<td>138-143</td>
<td>?1210/15-1270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillebert de Berneville*^B</td>
<td>143-154</td>
<td>fl. 1250-1280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perrin d’Angecourt*^B</td>
<td>154-170</td>
<td>fl. 1245-1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vichant de Remilli</td>
<td>171-177</td>
<td>No date found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vidame de Chartre</td>
<td>178-182</td>
<td>1145/55-1204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert de Blois</td>
<td>182-184</td>
<td>fl. 13th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raoul de Fireres</td>
<td>184-188</td>
<td>fl. 1200-1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Chieu de Rams</td>
<td>188-191</td>
<td>No date found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moniot de Paris*^B</td>
<td>191-199</td>
<td>3rd quarter of 13th c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oedes de la Couroierie</td>
<td>199-204</td>
<td>d. 1294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehan Erars*^B</td>
<td>204-207</td>
<td>1200/10-1258 or 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raoul de Beauvais^B</td>
<td>207-211</td>
<td>fl. mid 13th c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gautier d’Espinal</td>
<td>211-215</td>
<td>c. 1220-1272</td>
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* Indicates trouvères studied for this project; ^A, ^B Indicates aristocratic or bourgeois, if known

Gace and Thibaut represented the aristocratic style because they were part of the cultivated tradition of the arts that surrounded the court of Champagne, in addition to being of a high social rank. Literary and artistic activity there flourished under the
patronage of Marie de Champagne (1145-98) and her husband Count Henry the Liberal (1127-81), Thibaut’s grandparents. Many credit Marie with introducing the concepts of courtly love and courtly poetry to Northern France because of her education, collaboration with poets, and progressive ideas. Several authors and scholars wrote for the court or were affiliated with it in some way, Andreas Capellanus, Chretien de Troyes, and the trouvères Conon de Bethune and Gauthier d'Arras were among them. Gace Brulé reputedly wrote his song *Bien cuidai toute ma vie* at Marie’s request, though he may not have been a regular member of her court. Evidence suggests, however, that he may have come from Champagne, because historical records show that there were several land owners in that region with the name Brulé during his lifetime.

By the late thirteenth century, trouvère song had become more of a bourgeois art, centered mainly around the city of Arras. The bourgeois trouvères, this study demonstrates, tended to employ a simpler style, with less florid melodies and shorter poetic lines. One reason the upper classes favored the noble trouvères was because of the bourgeois trouvères’ association with the Confraternity of Jongleurs of Arras. Jongleurs were wandering entertainers of a low social class who performed and transmitted the songs of trouvères. The Confraternity, established in 1175, was a musicians’ guild that helped legitimize jongleurs’ careers, but these performers were still

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15 Anne Marie Josephe Artis, “The Chansons of Thibaut, Count of Champagne, King of Navarre,” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1975), 2.
16 Ibid, 4
18 Ibid, 567.
condemned by clerics, who thought that jongleurs were on the same level as prostitutes.\footnote{John W. Baldwin, “The Image of the Jongleur in Northern France around 1200,” Speculum 72 (1997): 637, 640.}

The following pages will show how Thibaut and Gace’s represented, rather than diverged from, the aristocratic tradition, first by an examination of literary sources that incorporated their works, and finally by an analysis of the melodies. Thibaut and Gace were highly regarded by medieval scribes, authors, and audiences, but did not exhibit unusual musical traits in their works. Instead, these two trouvères’ songs exemplify a high social register which is more complex than the bourgeois style. Thibaut’s songs (even more so than those of Gace) enjoyed frequent mention or even elaboration in contemporary texts such as poetic romances and treatises for this reason. The favoritism Thibaut and Gace received arose from their political status, especially in the case of Thibaut, who was a king, and how their songs represented the tastes of the aristocracy.
CHAPTER 2
LITERARY SOURCES

Various sources exhibit the works and deeds of Gace and Thibaut: music theory, literary theory, historical chronicles, and stories set in rhymed verse. The chronicles recorded by the anonymous Minstrel of Reims relate the military pursuits of Thibaut, but nothing about Thibaut's songs. The remaining works considered in this study, by contrast, make specific mention of Gace and Thibaut's songs. These include narrative poems by Jean Renart, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun that integrate the trouvères' songs into the plot. Theoretical works by Dante Alighieri and Johannes de Grocheio are also crucial. Dante's *De Vulgari Eloquentia* is a treatise in the defense of vernacular languages that includes as examples two of Thibaut's poems and one by Gace. Johannes de Grocheio, in the first sociological study of music, also cites a song by Thibaut to exemplify the genre of the *cantus coronatus*.

This chapter presents the selected thirteenth-century literature mentioned above by showing the method in which the authors incorporated or analyzed the poems of Thibaut and Gace with a particular focus on the way they were perceived as embodying the tradition of the aristocrats. An examination of historical, literary, and theoretical sources written in the thirteenth century reveals that authors of such sources held Thibaut de Champagne, and to a lesser extent, Gace Brulé, in high esteem. Writers of this time admired the noble trouvères' political power, military pursuits, aristocratic social rank, and the social function of their songs. Indeed, Gace and Thibaut usually eclipse their noble counterparts in this literature, though this fact does not necessarily reflect the quality of any trouvère’s songs. Taken together, the authors' views suggest that Gace
and Thibaut represented the values associated with aristocratic trouvères.

When an author of a narrative poem or theoretical work mentions or refers to a particular trouvère's song, it suggests an assumption on the author’s part that the work was well-known to the intended audience. Frequent examples occur in the poems *Roman de la Rose* and *Guillaume de Dole*, where performance of songs by Thibaut and Gace are part of the plot. Dante and Grocheio, by contrast, use these songs as examples to highlight academic points made in treatises.

A few theories arise when considering the influence of these authors' creations. One is that the authors’ works reflected trends in high culture. For example, if a song by Thibaut appears in a widely circulated fictional story, then we may assume that the author was catering to the tastes of the courtly audience. According to this perspective, Thibaut was already eminent in those circles. Another theory is that the university-trained clergy praised the work of Thibaut and Gace, thus influencing the tastes of the aristocratic culture. This implies that prestigious scholars saw the way in which the two trouvères embodied the aristocratic tradition. Both of these arguments are likely and not mutually exclusive.

A theme of both the preceding literary works as well as the songs themselves is courtly love, or *fin’amour*. This is a difficult term to express in a simple definition. Here, the protagonist typically speaks of an unnamed lady and idolizes her from a distance without the intention of consummating their love. The lady in question, in the

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words of Pierre Aubry, “always appears in such a magnificent halo of nobility, dignity, calm, splendor, and even purity...” 24 Yet these expressions of fin’ amour may also have been vehicles for poets to display their sophistication. 25 Each poet is subtly different in the manner by which he approaches this subject. Gace, for example, often employs opening lines that depict nature to set the tone for subsequent verses, while Thibaut usually begins with a moral statement on love. Fin’ amour plays a prominent role in the works of most of these authors, especially Guillaume de Lorris, Jean de Meun, and Jean Renart.

The chroniclers, by contrast, typically did not mention the poetic or musical abilities of important figures like Gace or Thibaut. Instead it is the two trouvères’ roles in important historical events that helped establish their significance. The Minstrel of Reims was such a chronicler, who recorded numerous stories in 1260. 26 These stories were not meant to be systematic or accurate retellings of important events, but rather entertaining versions of oral traditions inherited from previous generations. 27 The Minstrel recorded his tales for the purpose of entertainment, and the historical characters in his chronicle must have been popular throughout most of the thirteenth century, judging from the date of his authorship.

The Minstrel’s stories of Thibaut de Champagne depict his military engagements, the majority of which occurred with other French nobles. The barons of France saw Thibaut as an impediment to their machinations of overthrowing the Queen of France,

24 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
widow of King Louis and mother to the young King Louis. They planned to blame

Thibaut for the death of Louis, because the former abandoned the latter after a battle:

Now we come back to the barons, who meditated nought but evil against the
Queen of France... And they took counsel among them that they would first deal
with Count Tiebaid of Champagne and would impute unto him the death of King
Lewis, for that he had left him at Avignon and had departed basely, like a traitor;
and if they had accomplished his death or imprisonment, then would they have
had none to gainsay them in seizing the kingdom." The Count of Boulogne then
sends two knights to threaten Thibaut, after which Thibaut gathers together for
counsel. Thibaut' discovers that his men were working with the barons, so he
departs to Provins, because he cannot trust anyone...28

Later, the Minstrel tells of how this plot failed and how the barons “won the Queen's
displeasure.”29

It is no wonder that Thibaut's music captivated people, given his political
notoriety. These legends added to his fame, and in turn, it seems that they created
public interest in his music. Thibaut’s prominence suggests he was not a minor figure,
and in fact had great power. While Thibaut had a substantial amount of authority, the
fact that he abandoned his king after a battle (the uprisings in Avignon) proves to be
cause for scandal.30 The Minstrel portrays Thibaut as a disloyal traitor, thus drawing
negative attention. One part of this account that the Minstrel does not mention is the
legend that arose from King Louis's death: the rumor that Thibaut poisoned him
because he was in love with the Queen.31 Thibaut was a character who generated
gossip and fascination, which is why his music has potential interest for audiences.

29 Ibid., 330.
30 The minstrel does not describe in detail Thibaut's departure from this battle. We can only infer this from
the passage on ibid., 328.
31 John Haines, Eight Centuries of Troubadours and Trouvères, 34. Haines quotes a passage from Roger
of Wendover Flores historiarum from 1235 "Then the count, as rumour has it, arranged for the king to
drink a poison; this was on account of his love for the queen whom he was loving carnally."
Thibaut was not a model of chivalry, judging from his political entanglements. In contrast, the Minstrel depicts Blondel de Nesle as a virtuous character who saved Richard the Lionheart from imprisonment. Richard looked out from his jail cell and noticed Blondel outside, and then the former sang a song only known to the latter. Blondel recognized the song, and sent for help. While this story was probably spurious, it evokes a different depiction of a trouvère from that of Thibaut, namely that of one who was thought to be the embodiment of chivalry. Neither image is more typical than the other because the Minstrel did not write about any other trouvères with the level of detail that he devoted to Thibaut and Blondel.

The Minstrel's tale does not give any clues about the reception of Thibaut's poetry; however it shows that the aristocratic readership was familiar with him. It is probable that Thibaut received literary attention mainly because of his political affairs and noble rank. The Minstrel did not record any stories of Gace, who appears in non-musical sources much less than Thibaut. The inclusion (or exclusion) of a trouvère from chronicles such as this reveals more about the fame of someone like Thibaut, rather than a value judgment on his songs.

Dante Alighieri, instead of focusing on the lives of historical figures, argued for the virtues of vernacular poetry in his unfinished treatise *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (ironically written in Latin). He wrote *De Vulgari...* during his exile from Florence

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33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
sometime between 1300 and 1305.\textsuperscript{37} The vernacular, according to Dante, is noble because it is natural and not artificial like Latin.\textsuperscript{38} Dante uses poems by Thibaut twice as examples in his treatise, mentioning him alongside the eminent Italian poet Guido Guinizzeli, and troubadours such as Guiraut de Borneil.\textsuperscript{39} Indeed, Dante was thoroughly familiar with languages such as Occitan and Old French.\textsuperscript{40}

Dante related the inherent virtues of vernacular languages to the structure of poetic lines. He described the structure of the hendecasyllabic (eleven-syllable) line as a vehicle for lofty expression:

> Of all these lines the most splendid is clearly the hendecasyllable, both for its measured movement and for the scope it offers for subject-matter, constructions, and vocabulary; and the beauty of all these features is most greatly magnified by this metre, as will be readily apparent: for whenever things of value are magnified, their value itself is magnified also. And all the best poets seem to have accepted this, and have begun their illustrious canzoni with a hendecasyllable...The King of Navarre: De fin amor si vient sen et bonté... (Here if we take stress and motivation into account, it will be clear that this is a hendecasyllable.)\textsuperscript{41}

Thibaut used hendecasyllables and Dante cited one of his poems in which this appeared. The translation of Thibaut's poetic line reads “From fin’ amour comes knowledge and goodness (De fin amor si vient sen et bonté).”\textsuperscript{42} This line is a simple, direct statement in support of courtly love, and Dante may have chosen it to emphasize the importance of fin’ amour in the entire trouvère repertoire. Thibaut often uses this hendecasyllabic structure in his poems and expresses feelings that are not obscure for

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.,19.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 61
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 92 (Botterill's endnote 115).
the sake of pedantry. Any competent poet could work with this syllabic structure. Thibaut's poetic structures are not distinct from his contemporaries, and Dante thus presumably used the line *De fin amor* to illustrate aspects of the entire aristocratic works of the trouvères.

Thibaut's songs also attain similar prominence in Johannes de Grocheio's treatise, *De Musica*, on the use of music in Parisian society. *De Musica* was the first sociological study of music, and Grocheio wrote it around 1300, roughly fifty years after Thibaut's death. The relative lateness of this text confirms that Thibaut's songs still elicited acclaim even a half-century after his death. Another view is that Thibaut's works held a high place in Grocheio's own estimation, and that his notions of social register in Paris were idealized rather than realistic. Grocheio did, however, present his ideas as being descriptive of the musical practices in Paris.

Grocheio considers many of the noble trouvères' songs to be near the top of the social hierarchy and he uses Thibaut's *Aussi conme l'unicorne sui* as an example of the genre of the *cantus coronatus*:

The cantus coronatus has been called a 'monophonic conductus' by some; on account of the inherent virtue of its poetry and music it is crowned by masters and students [of the art of songmaking] among pieces, as in the French [as opposed to Latin, the language of the learned] *Aussi com l'unicorne*... This kind of song is customarily composed by kings and nobles and sung in the presence of kings and princes of the land so that it may move their minds to boldness and fortitude, magnanimity, and liberality, all of which things lead to good government. This kind of *cantus* deals with delightful and lofty subject-matter, such as friendship and love, and it is composed entirely from longs-perfect ones at that.

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44 Ibid., 20.
Grocheio places this lower than the *cantus gestualis* (song of deeds), which “has the power to preserve the whole city,” and higher than the *cantus versiculatus*, a song for motivating idle youth.\(^46\) Nobles compose *cantus coronati* for an audience of other aristocrats. Whoever hears these songs of chivalric love will be inspired to do great deeds and be powerful leaders.

Grocheio’s passage is also a reflection of the culture of Paris, with its university and cathedral school. The description of the cantus coronatus as the “monophonic conductus” suggests an association with ecclesiastical music, while his insistence on marking Thibaut’s song as French shows the predominance of Latin in educated (university) society. Grocheio also addresses the performance of the *cantus coronatus*, stating that is was composed of perfect longs, though he reveals nothing else about rhythm. The triple division of the long evokes the trinity and therefore brings forth an association with sacred traditions. Grocheio’s mentioning of “masters and students” again echoes the importance of the university in Parisian society.

In *Aussi conme l’unicorne sui*, the speaker likens himself to a unicorn who lays its head on a lady's lap filled with joy, only to be murdered.\(^47\) Later, he asks the lady to have pity on him because he does not know how to deceive, much like the innocent unicorn. He would thus be able to bear the burden of his unrequited love. Here the

\(^46\) Ibid., 23-24.

\(^47\) “Ausi conme unicorne sui/qui s’esbahist en regardant/quant la pucele va mirant/Tant est liee de son ennui/pasmeee chiet en son giron/lors l’ocit on en traiéon/Et moi on mort d’autel semblant/Amors et ma dame, por voir/mon cuer ont, n’en puis point avoir” [I am like the unicorn/Struck with awe/When he gazes upon the maiden/He is so joyful in his torment/That, fainting, he falls into her lap/Then he is murdered in betrayal/And, likewise, they have put me to death/Love and my lady, indeed/They have my heart; I cannot have it back again]. Kathleen J. Brahney, ed., *The Lyrics of Thibaut de Champagne* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), 102. This alludes to a medieval superstition where one could trap a unicorn by luring it with a virgin. The unicorn would lay its head in her lap, thus making itself vulnerable to capture. See: Lise Gottfredsen, *The Unicorn*, (London: The Harvill Press, 1999).
poetic speaker expresses *fin’amour* in a complex fashion, requiring the listener or reader to think on a high level. Allegory occurs in this poem, and that concept was important in medieval culture. Such elevated ideas, Grocheio might have well argued, inspired leaders who must lead their people with temperance and boldness.

_Allegorical portrayals of *fin’amour*, common in the poems of Thibaut, may have rendered the poem attractive to Grocheio. Noble leaders could sharpen their minds by reading such poems and be inspired to commit great deeds. Grocheio, being a well-educated Frenchman, surely had access to many songs by various trouvères, but he chose to employ that of Thibaut. Here is yet again another example of Thibaut being used as a representative of the trouvères. Grocheio, mindful of the educated aristocrats’ favoritism of Thibaut, included one of his songs in his study.

While Dante focused on the structure of poetry, and Grocheio the sociological functions of music, the authors of the _Roman de la Rose_ and _Guillaume de Dole_ inserted these songs into the plots or reworked them entirely to enhance the story. As in other pieces of literature in this study, the authors concentrated mainly on the songs of Thibaut, but Gace’s songs appear in _Guillaume de Dole_ as well. Gace’s songs in _Guillaume de Dole_ occur during noble gatherings, or when the king wants to be entertained. Guillaume de Lorris reworked a poem by Thibaut to suit a scene in the plot, expecting the reader to understand the reference.

The _Roman de la Rose_ was written over a course of fifty years by two authors: Guillaume de Lorris, who wrote the first part in the 1220s, and Jean de Meun who finished the book in the 1270s.\(^4^8\) De Lorris’s and de Meun’s book is an allegory on love.

written in poetic form.\textsuperscript{49} It was one of the most popular French poems for the three centuries after its completion. The narrative is in the first person and presented as a dream of the narrator. He encounters characters with names such as Avarice, Poverty, and Pope-Holiness, who represent different sides of human character.

The way Guillaume de Lorris reworks Thibaut's \textit{Aussi conme l'unicorne sui} shows that the former assumed a familiarity on the part of the audience with the works of the latter. This is the same poem that Grocheio cited in his discussion of the \textit{cantus coronatus}. Grocheio and de Lorris appear to have shown interest in the allegorical character of Thibaut's song and this emphasizes the appeal of complexity. When the character Jealousy enters her garrison in a castle, she encounters her three gatekeepers:

...Resistance carried the key of the first gate, which opened toward the east, and, to my knowledge, there was a total count of thirty followers with him. Shame guarded the second gate, the one opening to the south. She was very wise, and I tell you that she had a great plenty of followers ready to do her will. Fear also had a large troop and was stationed to guard the third gate, which was placed on the left hand, toward the north. Fear will never be secure unless she is locked in, and she seldom opens the door, for, when she hears the wind moan or sees two grasshoppers jump, she is seized by panic on such occasions.\textsuperscript{50}

This part of the story refers to the third stanza of Thibaut's poem, but in the \textit{Roman} the three gatekeepers are Resistance, Shame, and Fear, instead of Thibaut's Fair Seeming, Beauty, and Danger. The "prison" in Thibaut's poem refers to an earlier verse where the speaker's heart was imprisoned after remaining with the lady while he went away from her. Thibaut's gatekeepers of the prison were under the rule of Love,

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, 85-86. The important passage in \textit{Aussi conme l'unicorne} is: Love holds the key to the prison/And has put three doorkeepers there/Fair Seeming is the name of the first/And Beauty is in command/She has placed Danger at the front door, Repulsive, cruel, base and foul-smelling, Surpassingly evil and wicked/These three are both clever and bold/They have soon seized many a man." Kathleen J. Brahney, ed., \textit{The Lyrics of Thibaut de Champagne} (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), 102.
while Jealousy ruled the garrison keepers of de Lorris. After Love and Jealousy, Resistance and Beauty are the next most important characters, as they are often the secondary emotions one feels after the initial sentiments. Shame and Fair Seeming serve intermediary functions: if someone is jealous, he may resist trusting his lover, but can be met with shame at discovering the incorrectness of his accusations. Conversely, if a woman draws a lover in with her beauty, the lover notices the more detailed aspects of her attractiveness: this is Fair Seeming. The underlying negative entity of Love is Danger, while that of Jealousy is Fear.

The way de Lorris cleverly alludes to this poem shows that he was very familiar with Thibaut's work and that the intended audience must have been as well. It also reveals that de Lorris, and possibly other authors of his time thought that Thibaut represented the aristocratic trouvère tradition. Neither he nor Jean de Meun reworked another song in this fashion by another trouvère. The work of Thibaut, it seems, held a special place in aristocratic culture and elicited appreciation by connoisseurs of literature. Thibaut's status as a king, however, may have been more important than his actual poetry, thus the inclusion of his work would have appealed to the tastes of the aristocratic readership.

Jean Renart wrote *The Romance of the Rose, or Guillaume de Dole* in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. His work is typical of the realistic romances of this time, depicting earthly beings as opposed to the gods and mythical creatures that appeared in twelfth-century examples based on classical antiquity. Scholars know little

51 Jean Renart, *The Romance of the Rose, or Guillaume de Dole*, trans. Patricia Terry and Nancy Vine Durling, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 1. In order to avoid confusion with de Lorris and de Meun's *Roman de la Rose*, I will henceforth refer to this work as *Guillaume de Dole*.

52 Ibid.
about Jean’s life besides a few other works that he may have written: *L’Escouffle* and *Le Lai de l’Ombre*. Guillaume de Dole is a simple story about an emperor named Conrad who falls in love with a young woman named Liénor after hearing a story of her told by a minstrel. The narrative includes lyric insertions by noble trouvères, principally by Gace Brule, lyrics that the characters perform and that also comment on the action of the plot.

In one part of the story, for instance, Renart's inclusion of a poem by Gace serves a twofold purpose: to communicate the ideals of fin’ amour and to create irony as a harbinger of things to come. This scene occurs in the middle of the story when Conrad muses over Liénor, whom he has never met:

Conrad often thought of his beloved. One day when he was standing with Guillaume in the alcove of a window, he suddenly saw Jouglet and asked him to sing this song: In this bitter time of year/when frost makes the branches white/I choose to sing, despite my sadness for all to hear/This is my grievance and my plight: because I would never cheat/Love has brought me to defeat/because I would never lie/Love’s favor passed me by.

The scene described above is an example of fin’ amour because Conrad is expressing strong feelings of grief towards a woman who is at a distance. Such a scene is unusual because Liénor is even more distant than most women who were the objects of courtly poetry.

Nevertheless, Gace’s words express the complex feelings of fin’ amour: restrained passion and despair in honoring an unattainable woman. Conrad, at this point in the story, has no real reason to be sad, but he is longing to be with Liénor. Gace's lyrics evoke winter, when “frost makes the branches white,” to create a somber

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53 Ibid.
mood. Jean Renart likely included this text by Gace to create irony, as the weather never darkens in this optimistic tale. It also foreshadows events to come because Conrad eventually hears a rumor that Liénor lost her virginity, making her unsuitable for marriage. Thus Gace’s lines “This is my grievance and my plight: because I would never cheat” and “Love’s favor passed me by” evoke actual feelings that Conrad will have.

To conclude, Gace and Thibaut’s poems were well known by enough people in order for writers such as de Lorris and Renart to include them in their pieces of literature. The two authors found various ways to integrate the trouvère’s poems, whether as lyrics sung by the characters, or as complete reworkings. Above all, the educated public favored Thibaut and Gace, which explains the abundance of authors who discussed or made use of their songs. Writers of historical chronicles established Thibaut’s fame, recording his military pursuits. The narratives, chronicles, and other works discussed here do not encompass all pertinent medieval literature, but they are major works of the time. Thibaut was the most favored of the two figures, judging from his position in chansonniers and from the numbers of authors who use his works to represent the trouvère tradition.

These sources indicate that Thibaut and Gace’s songs evoked the mainstream of the poet-musicians. As will be seen in Chapter Three, Aussi comme l’unicorne typifies the complex style of the aristocrats. Chapter Three offers a detailed examination of the melodies themselves by demonstrating the ways in which Thibaut and Gace’s melodies exemplified the aristocratic style and how that style is different from that of the bourgeois.

56 Ibid.
CHAPTER 3
MELODIES

Literary figures, as established in the previous section, held Gace and especially Thibaut as exemplars of the trouvère tradition. Although Jean Renart and Johannes de Grocheio gave readers a clear idea of the social function and poetic content of these trouvères' songs, they did not indicate how audiences of the time received the music itself. One might assume that the two trouvères' melodies had unusual characteristics that distinguished them from their contemporaries. On the contrary, Gace and Thibaut's songs were not distinct from but rather exemplary of the aristocratic tradition of trouvère song.

Two traditions, or registers, characterize this music: aristocratic and bourgeois. Thibaut and Gace represented the aristocratic tradition of the trouvères, with its origins in the rural courts of Northern France, while the bourgeois style arose from the cities of Paris and Arras. Generally, the trouvères of the late twelfth to early thirteenth century were aristocrats, while those of the mid-to-late thirteenth century were bourgeois. As will be seen, Thibaut and Gace's melodies exemplify the aristocratic tradition, which differs as a whole from that of the bourgeois, but do not stand out from that tradition.

Part of the bias in favor of the noble trouvères may stem from the complexity of their music and texts (as I noted in Aussi conme l’unicorne sui) compared to the simpler, more direct style of the bourgeois trouvères. The songs of the noble trouvères often have wider ranges and more florid declamation, and thus were likely intended for performance by skilled singers. The bourgeois songs contain smaller ranges and were more likely to employ syllabic text setting. Poems of the nobles are longer, while the
texts of the bourgeois employ fewer and feature shorter lines. Finally, trouvères of both registers express *fin’ amour*, but the bourgeois style exhibits more economy in the sheer amount of words.

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the subtle differences between the aristocratic and bourgeois traditions of trouvère songs and how Gace and Thibaut represented the former. The criteria for comparison will be poetic content, range, text setting, and use of intervals. Finally, I will examine mode not only to give insight into melodic construction, but also to clarify that it is not a factor in determining aristocratic or bourgeois style.

The entire corpus of trouvère songs, regardless of register, exhibits some shared characteristics. Stepwise melodic motion predominates and the text setting is usually syllabic or, at times, neumatic.\(^57\) The range of each song is usually no larger than an eleventh. Many songs have groups of two or more notes occurring on penultimate syllables of poetic lines. The similarities are also textual, and not solely melodic.

As noted above, the sixty-seven songs selected for this study are all *chansons d’amour* or *cantus coronati*, in which the poets espouse *fin’ amour*. The chansons d’amour are all strophic and employ AAB form.\(^58\) Each song is set to a similar rhyme scheme, an example being *Au renouviau de la douçour d’esté*, by Gace Brulé (see Examples 3.1 and 3.2). The poetic material in the A section comprises the *frons* and

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\(^57\) Hendrik Van der Werf, *The Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouvères*, 49. See also: Anne Marie Josephe Artis, “The Chansons of Thibaut, Count of Champagne, King of Navarre,” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1975), 105.

\(^58\) Hendrik Van der Werf avoids using the term “bar form” in reference to trouvère songs, and instead uses it only when discussing the music of the Meistersingers: *The Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouveres*, 64.
each statement of A contains two lines of text known as the pedes. The text contained in the B section is the cauda.

Example 3.1. Gace Brulé: Au renouviau de la douçor d’esté

Example 3.2. The Poetic Structure of Au renouviau de la douçor

1. Au renouviau de la douçor d’esté
2. Que resclarcist li dois en la fontaine
3. Et que sont vert bois et vergier et pré
4. Et li rosiers en mai florist et graine
5. Lors chanterai, que trop m’avra duré
6. Ire et esmaiz qui m’est au cuer prochaine
7. Car fin amis, a tort achoisonez
8. Est mout sovent de legier esfraez

59 Ibid., 60.
60 Ibid.
Example 3.2 shows the poetic structure in more detail. The letters $a$ and $b$ represent different sounds at the end of each line. The rhyme scheme in the frons is $abab$, and this is standard for almost all courtly poems in AAB form. Each trouvère, however, was free to do as he pleased in the cauda. The $a$ and $b$ sounds could occur in any order, and Gace chose $abaa$. In the example below, Gace used rhyming sounds from the frons, but many trouvères introduced a new sound in this part, which would be marked by $c$.

A general difference between the aristocratic and bourgeois styles is grander scale on the part of the aristocrats. The bourgeois’ songs generally use less syllables, less groups of notes, and narrower ranges. The issue of scale manifests in the length of the poems themselves, with the aristocrats typically using either more poetic lines or more syllables per line. These differences are subtle to one who is accustomed to modern music, but still important.

Gace Brulé’s *Au renouviau* is a clear example of the aristocratic style (see Example 3.1). The song’s poetic lines are decasyllabic or hendecasyllabic (ten or eleven syllables). The melodic line is neumatic, with groups of two to three notes throughout. The range is an octave: as the reader shall see, the aristocratic trouvère melodies examined in this study have ranges between a seventh and an eleventh.

Brule’s song is slightly different than Jehan Erars’s (a bourgeois trouvère) *Je ne me sai en quel guise*. While *Je ne me sai*… contains the same amount of poetic lines as Brule’s song, the amount of syllables is shorter, only numbering eight per line. The range is a seventh; the ranges of the bourgeois songs in this study were as small as a fifth and as large as a tenth. The melodic style is not as neumatic as Brule’s song: there
are only eight instances of groups of notes, and six of them only have two notes.

Example 3.3. Jehan Erars: Je ne me sai

While all of the songs examined for this study are in AAB form and are high-style love songs, the way in which the trouvères of the two traditions expressed fin’ amour is slightly different. This, it seems, is a reason why writers held Gace and Thibaut as paragons of all the trouvères: their poems were part of a lofty tradition. As the center of focus shifted from the courts to the merchant class, the character of the poetry changed along with the music. The formal style of Gace and Thibaut survived somewhat in the Arras, or bourgeois tradition, but lost its esoteric sense.\(^6^1\) Also, Roger Dragonetti noted that “it was not reminiscent anymore of the brave [people] who enchanted two generations of trouvères and listeners.”\(^6^2\)

Earlier poems of a higher register often began by setting a mood, sometimes by depicting an idyllic pastoral scene. Gace's *Au renouviau de la douçour* begins the first stanza with the poetic speaker describing the return of summer warmth and its plants

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\(^6^1\) Roger Dragonetti, *La technique poétique des trouvères dans la chanson courtoise*, (Genève: Slatkine, 1979), 378.

\(^6^2\) Ibid: “...il n'était plus que le vague rappel de valeurs qui avaient enchanté deux générations de trouvères et d'auditeurs.”
that will blossom. The reader gathers a clear picture of flowing streams and green fields, but it is after this point that the speaker reveals his true feelings: he is sad from being wrongly blamed for something, and it is not until the return of summer that he will sing again. The method Gace used to set a mood in *Au renoviau*... is similar to the way Thibaut creates an atmosphere in the first stanzas of his poems.

Example 3.4. Text and Translation of *Au renoviau*

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Contrast Brulé’s poem to one by Jehan Erars, a bourgeois trouvère. The poem by Jehan, *Je ne me sai mes en quel guise* (see Example 3.5) is more straightforward and does not rely on such florid language. Instead of describing a scene to set the tone, Jehan’s lyrics begin with an immediate statement of the poetic speaker’s views on love: how he refuses to protest when his beloved despises him. Gace expressed a more complex sense of *fin’amour*, while Jehan did not obscure the basic idea. Gace's and Jehan’s poems represent the differences in poetic expression between the high and low registers.

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64 Trans. by Emily Bly
Example 3.5. Text and Translation of *Je ne me sai mes en quel guise*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Je ne me sai mes en quel guise</em></td>
<td>I am not of the disposition,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ne maintenir ne demener</em></td>
<td>Not sustaining nor struggling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quant cele me het et mes puise</em></td>
<td>When the one scorns and hates me;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ou ruidoie merci trouver</em></td>
<td>Or intending to find mercy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>De moi grueuer s'est entreurise</em></td>
<td>Love intervenes from hurting me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Amours dot tat me sueil loer</em></td>
<td>bringing me to the brink of praise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quant a cele me fet penser</em></td>
<td>When I think of the one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ou ne truis pitie feanchise</em></td>
<td>Who frankly does not find pity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference in textual content also manifested in the length of the poems themselves. Generally, the texts of the bourgeois poets are much shorter in terms of syllable count and length of poetic lines. In Gace Brulé’s poem, each line has ten to eleven syllables, while in Erars’s there are eight to nine. The shorter lines and amounts of syllables of the middle-class trouvères coincide with the direct expression of *fin’amour*, while the elevated language of the noble trouvères is more meditative. Gace and Thibaut, being part of the aristocratic tradition, wrote complex poems when compared to the bourgeois trouvères. Overall, writers of narrative poems and treatises favored the cultivated style of the high register, using Gace and Thibaut as examples.

Another way to differentiate one trouvère's style from another is by the declamation. One may contend that neumes were only performers' improvisations and not vital to the study of individual features of a song. The same song can have many different melodic variations across the trouvère manuscripts, and studying these differences will reveal the practices of adorning a basic melody.\(^{65}\) While this is true, another fact is that the scribe of the Chansonnier de l'Arsenal notated embellishments in a different way for each trouvère. Some songs contain high numbers of neumes, such as those by Gautier de Dargies, and some barely have any, like those of Moniot de

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Paris. Overall, the noble trouvères tended to create melodies that were more neumatic than what the bourgeois trouvères created, or at least that is how the scribe recorded them.

Thibaut and Gace represent the norm with respect to melodic elaboration and text setting, rather than the exception. In Thibaut’s *Je ne puis pas bien* (see Example 3.6) the longest neume of six notes occurs on the penultimate syllable of the entire stanza. The other groupings only have two or three notes, and syllabic text setting balances them. Gace’s *Au renouviau* (see Example 3.1) is also of a typical text setting for an aristocratic melody. The longest neume occurs in Line 1 on the word “d’esté.” Gace’s song is equally as neumatic as Thibaut’s, though neither is distinct from the norm in this respect.

Most of the trouvères are not distinct in their use of neumes besides Gautier de Dargies, an aristocrat and Moniot de Paris, who is part of the bourgeois tradition. Gautier used an abundance of neumes in *Chançon ferai mult marriz* (see example 3.7). Successions of note groups that contain three to seven tones are a striking feature of his style. Such melodic flourishes do not appear only at the end of lines as in songs by his contemporaries; rather he uses them throughout. He may have been more concerned with creating a vehicle for a singer’s virtuosic display rather than clearly expressing the text. Gautier's use of melismas thus made his music distinct even from that of other aristocratic trouvères. In contrast, Moniot’s *Lonc tens ai mon tens* contains only three neumes that have two notes each (see Example 3.8). While the bourgeois trouvères tended to use less neumes, even Moniot’s numbers are unusual.

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Example 3.6. Thibaut de Champagne: *Je ne puis pas bien*

1. Je ne puis pas bien mettre en non cha-loir

2. Que je ne chant quant a-mors m’en semont

3. Que de c’ai je le greigneur douai du mont

4. Que je n’os pas des couvrir pensée

5. Ce dont je vois les autres de ce voir

6. Tels fat semblant d’amér qui point n’i be-e

7. Por ce chant je que g’en re-fraig mon plor

8. Et s’en a-tent joie après doloir

Example 3.7. Gautier de Dargies: *Chançon ferai mult marriz*

1. Chançon ferai mult marriz

2. D’A-mors qui tant seut valoir

3. Faus font les-si-é de cheroir
Thibaut and Gace also exemplified the trouvères of the aristocratic tradition in terms of range. As noted above, the average ranges for the bourgeois trouvères are
generally smaller than the noble trouvères (see Table 3.2). Typically, the melodies of the bourgeois trouvères have ranges of a sixth to an octave, and those of the nobles are an octave to a tenth, sometimes as wide as an eleventh. A few exceptions exist. Thibaut’s *Tout autre si con l’ente* has the range of a seventh while Perrin d’Angecourt’s *Quant il biax estez repere* has the range of a tenth. Yet these are exceptions that did not significantly affect the averages in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Average Ranges of Songs Analyzed for this Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trouvère</th>
<th>Average range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aristocratic Trouvères</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gace</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dargies</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coucy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blondel</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thibaut IV</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soissons</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perrin A</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bourgeois Trouvères</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moniot A</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehan E</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillebert B</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moniot P</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the music of the bourgeois trouvères does not make many demands on the singer when compared to the songs of the higher style. In *Je ne me sai mes en quel* (see Example 3.3) by Jehan Erars, the range is a seventh and there are only two leaps higher than a third. The melodic line moves mainly by seconds and does not

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67 See: Christopher Page, *Voices and Instruments*, 134. Page posits that the singers performed the high-style troubadour and trouvére songs unaccompanied, but eventually this practice gave way to more liberal uses of instruments, especially with the rise of string playing *clercs* in Paris. If Page’s theory is true, then perhaps bourgeois singers relied on the aid of their accompanists to create interest for audiences, while the aristocrats had to create elaborate melodies due to the solo idiom.
exploit the extremes of a singer’s range. An extreme example of simplicity in the bourgeois tradition is Moniot de Paris’s *Lonc tens ai mon tens* (see above, Example 3.8), which has the range of a fifth and is basically a collection series of recitations on different pitches. The range throughout individual sections stays within a second or a third. A person with little musical training could perform this song without much difficulty.

In contrast, someone who performs the music of the noble trouvères must have a moderate amount of ability. Blondel de Nesle’s *A l’entrant d’esté* (see Example 3.9) encompasses an eleventh and exploits the low and high parts of this range.

Example 3.9. Blondel de Nesle: *A l’entrant d’esté*
Likewise, Gautier's *Chançon ferai...* (Example 3.7) contains the range of a tenth and requires a singer to use the low and high parts of his or her voice. Thibaut's *Je ne puis pas bien* (Example 3.6) extends from *g*-b', and makes use of the whole range as well.\(^{68}\)

Overall, this use of a wide range is typical of the aristocratic register.

The most prominent difference between the two classes of trouvères is the disparity in range between the two traditions. Thibaut and Gace both use comparatively wide ranges in their music, much like their upper-class counterparts. The middle-class trouvères tended to use smaller ranges in their songs, sometimes as narrow as a fifth, as in Moniot de Paris's *Lonc tens ai mon tens*.

Thibaut and Gace's music typifies the norm in the sense that most of their songs move in stepwise motion. In this repertoire, the prevailing interval is the second and leaps higher than a third are rare. The wide intervals that do occasionally occur can be as large as a seventh or octave, but no larger. There is slightly more of a tendency for the noble trouvères to have intervals larger than a fourth, but the margin is not very much. Thus the degree of conjunct or disjunct motion is, at best, a weak indicator of the aristocratic or bourgeois style.

Some trouvères' songs are exceptional with regard to intervals. Gautier's *Chançon ferai mult marriz* is unusual in the wide intervals it contains (see Example 3.10). Leaps of fifths and sixths occur within poetic lines, not between them. A sixth occurs in Line 4 between “per” and “riz,” then in the same line, a fifth separates the words “cuz” and “et.” The other extreme is *Lonc tens ai mon tens* by Moniot de Paris, which is mostly a collection of unisons connected by the occasional second or third.

\(^{68}\) See Appendix A for a key on how notes are indicated in prose in this thesis.
Moniot repeats certain notes, mostly $c$, $b$, and $a$ anywhere from five to seven times each.

Example 3.10. Gautier de Dargies: *Chançon Feraï...*, Line 4

![Example 3.10. Gautier de Dargies: *Chançon Feraï...*, Line 4](image)

Example 3.11. Moniot de Paris: *Lonc tens...*, Line 3

![Example 3.11. Moniot de Paris: *Lonc tens...*, Line 3](image)

Thibaut's *De madame souvenir* (see Example 3.12) presents a style that mediates between those of Gautier and Moniot. *De madame...* contains a few successions of thirds, such as on the syllables “son” and “ple” in Line 6 as well as on the words *qu’amors puet* of Line 9. The rest of the song is mostly seconds, though the melody often changes direction. This characteristic, however, is not distinct from the songs of other trouvères, aristocratic or bourgeois.

Thibaut and Gace are representative of the aristocratic trouvères in terms of intervals, range and the use of neumes. Range and text declamation are two features that differ more in the two traditions than intervals. Thibaut and Gace represent a more complex style connected to a higher social register. This is not to say that the bourgeois trouvères were completely unskilled. They were, in fact, professional musicians who generally belonged to guilds. Therefore, the distinction here is not musical skill, but

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rather two styles that appealed to different sectors of society.

Example 3.12. Thibaut de Champagne: *De madame souvenir*

![Musical notation for Thibaut de Champagne's De madame souvenir]

Issues of mode play an important factor when analyzing trouvères' melodies, but do not indicate either of the two previously mentioned styles. Many of the trouvères' songs do not easily conform to the eight church modes and this is probably due to the extemporaneous nature of this music. Trouvères relied on oral rather than written transmission and, thus their differing styles arose from performative practices. Singers learned music by rote, passing songs to subsequent generations, until mid-thirteenth-century scribes finally recorded them.70 One must keep in mind the oral nature of this music when examining the modal characteristics or lack thereof.

As previously stated, the music of the trouvères is often difficult to categorize within the system of eight church modes.71 Some of Thibaut and Gace's melodies

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70 John Haines, *Eight Centuries of Troubadours and Trouvères...*, 27.

adhered to the church modes, while others did not, and this is the case with all of the songs examined in this study. The issue of modal nonconformity is not unique to any of the trouvères, whether aristocratic or bourgeois. One must consider each song separately to determine how closely it relates to modal theory and if there are other ways in which to perform an analysis.

What is notable is that the trouvères existed at a time when modal theory was well-codified. Church musicians used this system extensively, and read works by theorists such as Guido d'Arrezo. Guido's *Micrologus* was a practical manual for singers and his most important work, dating from the late 1020s. He was a legendary figure even centuries after his time, and thinkers credited him with the creation of the hexachord system and solfege.

Guido described the melodic features that comprise good examples of adherence to a mode. Affinities, or paired tetrachords (diatessarons) and pentachords (diapentes) are what give character to a mode. The first mode, for example, is made of a tetrachord consisting of a-b-c-d added to the pentachord d-e-f-g-a. Guido then uses the same procedure to describe three more modes. He does not discuss melodies that are hard to classify, but rather presents those that are standard because "organized material is always more easily grasped than unorganized."
Guido emphasized the importance of the final, stating that the melody should center on it.\textsuperscript{77} Authentic modes rarely reach lower than one note below the final and can extend to an octave, ninth or tenth above it.\textsuperscript{78} Plagal modes extend a fifth above and below the final.\textsuperscript{79} A melody in the authentic mode cannot rise to the sixth degree in the beginnings and ends of phrases, but a plagal one may.\textsuperscript{80} These rules are all examples of how he thought melodies should adhere to the modes.

Modal theory, as codified by Guido, indicates that he expected conformity to the eight modes on the part of those who performed plainchant. Theoretical texts such as his depict an ideal situation for adherence to modes, but in reality, this is not often the case, especially with secular songs. Guido's notion that the last note of a melody helps to indicate the mode applies more to plainchant than to secular songs.\textsuperscript{81} The mode of a trouvère melody depends more on emphasis on particular notes, final notes of verses, motion of thirds, and cadential figures.\textsuperscript{82} Thus one can categorize a trouvère song in terms of mode, but must use different techniques to do so.

No evidence exists to suggest that the trouvères were familiar with the modes.\textsuperscript{83} While cleric- musicians at the large ecclesiastical centers such as Notre Dame of Paris were well-versed in the eight-mode system, this knowledge may not have extended to the royal courts or to the bourgeois musicians. Nevertheless, many of the songs

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 66
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 69
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Hans Tischler, “On Modality in Trouvere Melodies,” \textit{Acta Musicologica} 71 (1999):76. Tischler states that the final in plainchant helps in recognizing the mode, but this is not always the case in secular song.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 77.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
suggest an understanding of modal theory. Perhaps trouvères imitated the plainsong they heard in church while not being familiar with theoretical treatises.

Some trouvère songs evoke the psalm tones employed in plainsong (with an intonation, reciting tone, and termination). A possible consideration is that singers used the formulae to aid in memorization.\(^\text{84}\) This style of recitation begins with an intonation (a gesture of a few notes), and ascends to a reciting tone, finally ending with a termination, a small descending gesture that completes the psalm tone. Many examples show that trouvères used plainsong-like formulae in the creation of their songs. The following examples show how some melodic figures retained the general melodic shape of psalm tones but did not strictly adhere to the pitches typically found in them. Example 3.12 shows a psalm tone in its most basic form, which Gace Brule and Moniot de Paris evoked, as shown in examples 3.13 and 3.14. Raoul de Soissons (Example 3.15) used the structure of the psalm tone and embellished it slightly. The trouvères, therefore, often used psalm tone-like structures and freely elaborated upon them to degrees they saw fit.

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\(^{84}\) Van der Werf, *The Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouvères*, 49.
Moniot de Paris’s *Lonc tens ai* (see Examples 3.14 and 3.8) is vaguely similar to the psalm tones of plainchant. The melody does not begin with an intonation, but on the reciting tone of c instead. The first termination occurs at the end of Line 3. The psalm tone structure repeats a few times throughout Moniot’s song. In Line 4, for example, a new figure begins, but it acts as a cadence. Line 4 ends on a, and it seems that it is the final. The remainder of the song, however, emphasizes g, due to the cadential figures in Lines 8 and 11. The recitation-like tone of this song is both c and b. All of these aspects taken together imply the Hypomixolydian mode. Moniot’s song, with regards to the emphases on a, then g, illustrates how trouvères’ songs do not always conform to prescribed rules of modal theory.

Another way to organize trouvère melodies is to regard the structure of chains of thirds.85 This is a modern idea that medieval theorists did not explore. Chains of thirds are related to modal structure, though they did not always outline important tones.

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connected to the final. Often, the trouvères used two contrasting chains to create feelings of tension and release. In Example 3.17, Lines 7 to 8, the chain \( g-e-C \) alternates with one made of \( d-f-a \), demonstrating notions of instability.

Thibaut's *Amors me fet commencer* (see Example 3.17) evokes the Dorian mode and adheres to the rules of Guido but also exhibits chains of thirds. The *frons* (which contains poetic Lines 1 to 4) emphasizes \( d \), descending to the subtonium of \( C \) and the third degree, \( f \). The next section or the *cauda* (Lines 5 through 10) begins with the subtonium ascending to the final, then to the third degree. Lines 9 and 10 contain the best examples of modal gestures: the beginning of Line 9 is the subtonium, ascends to the final, emphasizes \( f \), leaps to \( a \) (the tenor), then moves from \( c-d' \). Line 10, from the word “por” until the end of the song, outlines \( d-a \), the characteristic fifth of the Dorian mode.

Example 3.17. Thibaut de Champagne: *Amors me fet commencer*

While *Amors me fet*... adheres to modal theory, two different chains of thirds organize this song as well. The most prominent chain is the descending \( g-e-C \) figure
that occurs four times: in Line 2 on the word *chançon*, the first three notes each of Lines 7 and 8, and in Line 10 on the words “mes cuers.” The other chain ascends on *f-a-c* and occurs in two places: between Lines 5 and 6 on “vant c'est la,” and in Line 9 on “lent car men.” The third between *d* and *f* occurs regularly throughout this song; this gesture is common in melodies that begin on *d*.86 The insistence upon *g-e-C* creates tension while the redirection of the melody to *d-f* solves it.

*Amors me fet* therefore, is an example of a song that adheres to a mode but contains other elements which one may explain by other methods such as chains of thirds. The repeated figures found therein may point to an individual style for Thibaut, but this does not make him distinct. Other poet-musicians also have songs with repeated elements. Each trouvère works within the stylistic confines of his social class. Thibaut's song clearly evokes a mode and also clearly displays the chains of thirds.

In contrast, Jehan Erars’s *Je ne me sai mes en quel* (see Example 3.3) evokes a mode, but contains many features that would suggest otherwise. It begins and ends on *a*, but does not indicate Hypodorian; it would have to end on *d*. The ambitus would have to be *A-a* for this to be true, and the range of this song is *e-d*. No theorists codified the Aeolian mode at this time, therefore calling it a transposition would be an attractive option.87 The ambitus, final, and reciting tone on *c* point to transposed Hypodorian with a final of *a*, but other features create modal ambiguity. A chain of thirds beginning on *e* occurs in Line 2 on *Ne maintenir*. The scribe notated a B-flat, but it is not a factor in determining the mode. The need for this B-flat originates in the first line on the words

86 Ibid.

87 Hendrik Van der Werf argued that many melodies of the troubadours and trouvères were, in fact, based upon Ionian and Aeolian scales. See: Van der Werf, *The Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouvères*, 46.
quel guise, where there is downward motion to \( f \). A singer had to avoid the tritone and therefore sing a B-flat instead of a B-natural. What is striking in Lines 1 and 2 is the downward motion to \( f \), if this is supposed to be a melody with a final on \( a \). The descent from \( b \) to \( f \) evokes the Lydian mode. *Je ne me sai...* ends, however with stepwise motion from the \( g \) to \( a \), establishing \( a \) as the important tone.

Stepwise motion from the subtonium to the final or descending motion to the final by two or three steps is quite common in songs examined for this study. Blondel's *A l'entrant d'esté* (see Example 3.18) is exceptional because it contains cadences that approach the final by a descending fifth. The song is in the Dorian mode and ends on its tenor. The descending fifth from \( a \) to \( d \) occurs in Lines 1, 3, and 6 between the penultimate and final syllables. Blondel's emphasis on the fifth between the final and tenor shows a prescriptive notion of modality: he was aware that the fifth between final and tenor helps to establish the mode.

Example 3.18. Blondel de Nesle: *A l'entrant*, Cadences

Thibaut and Gace's songs, to conclude, evoke the aristocratic tradition in many ways. Their texts contain esoteric expressions of *fin’ amour* in lines that are generally longer in length than those of the bourgeois. They employ wider ranges in their melodies than their middle-class counterparts. Like the other aristocrats, the melodic elaboration in Thibaut and Gace's songs is neither too florid in the manner of Gautier de
Dargies nor plainly syllabic like the songs of many bourgeois trouvères. A category that cannot help in distinguishing between social registers is mode, because neither aristocrats nor bourgeois consistently used modal theory in their works. The songs of Thibaut and Gace were typical in this regard, in that their songs could not always be explained by application of the eight church modes. Thibaut and Gace’s melodies exemplified the aristocratic tradition, rather than diverging from it, and above all, the music of the aristocrats was more complex than that of the bourgeois. This complexity caused authors, both medieval and in turn modern, to favor the aristocratic tradition over that of the bourgeois.
CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Thibaut de Champagne and Gace Brulé enjoyed fame because their melodies and lyrics exemplified an aristocratic tradition, rather than as a result of features particular to their music or poetry. Their melodies rarely display numerous wide leaps or excessive use of unisons, nor are the text settings overly syllabic or melismatic. Thibaut and Gace's songs did not conform to modal theory any more or less than other trouvères, regardless of register. Their poetry, while different in character from the bourgeois trouvères, was just as complex as the works of other aristocrats. Medieval writers and commentators, it seems, favored Thibaut and Gace's songs as examples because they exhibited typical features instead of being strikingly different.

Why did Thibaut and Gace appear more often in pieces of literature more than trouvères such as Blondel de Nesle or Le Châtelain de Coucy? In the case of Thibaut, he was a count from an influential family, and eventually the King of Navarre.¹ His military escapades received attention in historical chronicles because of his notorious quarrels with Queen Blanche, wife of King Louis.² Gace does not appear in literature as much as Thibaut, but he was nevertheless favored in court culture judging from the appearance of many of his songs in Guillaume de Dole. Gace and Thibaut's songs were tasteful representations of what the learned upper class wanted to hear.

Many other issues came forth while carrying out the research. Questions of oral transmission, performance practice, and the lack of biographical information about most

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¹ Anne-Marie Josephe Artis, “The Chansons of Thibaut, Count of Champagne, King of Navarre” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1975), 9.
² Ibid., 5.
trouvères made this research challenging. This project was a small-scale comparison of a representative section of trouvère poetry. Courtly love songs only received examination, but the trouvères also wrote other genres, including jeu-partis, lais, crusade songs and others. The issue of melodic variants arose and someone must examine numerous versions of a song to extract the structural notes. Hans Tischler began this work by the creation of his monumental edition of the trouvère repertoire, but no one has done a thorough comparative analysis of the entire corpus.³

The central argument of this study contends that class, register, and musical style are, at times, more important than the individual composer. Some composers garner favor because they embody certain ideals and musical traits that represent their milieu. Thibaut and Gace earned praise over their contemporaries because they represented the complex aristocratic tradition. Thibaut’s status as a king established his fame as a historical character, thus encouraging interest in his songs. Gace was a seemingly famous knight, though mentioned to a much lesser extent in literary sources. Therefore, Thibaut and Gace’s noble rank made them obvious candidates for representing the aristocratic tradition as a whole in addition to explaining the preservation and transmission of their songs. Indeed, these social concerns eclipsed their individual musical and poetic styles.

APPENDIX

SELECTED WORKS
Thibaut de Champagne
Amors me fet commencier
Contre le tens qui devise
Dame, l'en dit que l'en muert
De bone amour vient seance
De madame souvenir
De nouviau m'estuet
En chantant vueil ma dolor
Je ne puis pas bien mettre
Quant fine amor me prie
Qui plus aime
Tout autresi con l'ente

Gace Brulé
Contre tens que voi frimer
En douz tens en bone eure Vueil
Fine amor et bone esperance
Iriez et destroiz et pensis Chanterai
J'ai oublie paine et travax
Ne me sont pas acheson de chanter
Quant je voi l'erbe
Quant l'erbe muert
Sospris d'amors et plains d'ire

Le Châtelain de Coucy
Belle dame me prie de chanter
Commencement de douce seson bele
La douce voiz du rosignol sauvage
L'an que rose ne feuille
Li nouvieu tens et mais
Muet m'est belle la douce conmençance
Par quel forfet et par quele acheson
Tant ne me sai dementer

Blondel de Nesle
À la douçor du tens
À l'entrant d'esté
Bien doit chanter qui fine Amor
Cil qui tous les max essaie
Comment que d'amer me dueille
De mon desir ne sai
J'aim par coustume et par us
Li plus se plaint d'Amours

Quant je plus sui en poor de ma vie
Tant ai en chantant proié
Gautier de Dargies
A Dex! Tant sont mes de vilaine gent
Autres que je ne sueil faz
Bien font Amors leur talent
Chançon ferai muet mariz
Des que ci ai touz
Or chant nouvel, car longement
Quant il ne pert fueille ne flor
Quant la sesons s'est demise

Raoul de Soissons
Chançon m'estuet et fere
Quant je voi et fueille
Quant voi la glare meiure

Gillebert de Berneville
Amors, pour ce que mes chanz
Au besoing voit on l'ami
Au nouviau tens que l'ivers
Haute chosce en amour
He! Amors, je fui norriz

Perrin d'Angecourt
Il ne me chaut d'esté
James ne cuidai avoir
Quant il biax estez repere

Moniot de Paris
Li tens qui rauerdoie
Lonc tens ai mon tens
Qui veut d'amors maintenant

Jehan Erars
Bone amour qui son repe
Je ne cuidai mes chanter
Je ne me sai mes en quel

Moniot d'Arras
Bone amor sanz tricherie
De jolif cuer enamoré
Li douz termine m'agree
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