

Guillaume Du Fay

Le serviteur hault guerdonné a 3

Edition and comments by
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<http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH096.html>

This edition is extracted from the online project *The Copenhagen Chansonnier and the Loire Valley' chansonniers*, which consists of linked html-files and a great number of single PDF editions. It can be accessed at <http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/>.

Each html-file about a song contains lists of sources, and edition and translation of the poetic texts, discussion of the main sources and comments on text and music. Separate files hold lists of contents and descriptions of the sources. Other files contain papers and notes on related topics. The online edition offers many cross references and links to online facsimile editions. These links had to be simplified in the present edition.

Each version of a song is regarded as a valid performance by a scribe/musician, and therefore they are published separately. In most cases there will be no attempts to imagine the intentions of the composer or to reconstruct exactly what the composer had written when the music left his pen. Rather the aim is to interpret the written music in largely the same way as 15th century performers may have read it. Many details, which in one source are different from other sources, must be accepted by the editor as valid elements in a performance of the actual source. Sources marked by an asterisk * are included in the edition.

Sigla

The related 'Loire Valley' chansonniers

Copenhagen	Copenhagen, The Royal Library, MS Thott 291 8° http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/manus/702/dan/0+recto/
Dijon	Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms. 517 http://patrimoine.bm-dijon.fr/pleade/img-viewer/MS00517/viewer.html
Laborde	Washington D.C., Library of Congress, MS M2.1 L25 Case (Laborde Chansonnier) https://www.loc.gov/resource/ihas.200152631.0/?sp=1
Leuven	Leuven, Alamire Foundation, Manuscript without shelf number (Leuven Chansonnier) https://data.idemdatabase.org/IE9381778/representation?fl_pid=FL9382190
Nivelle	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Rés. Vmc. ms. 57 (Chansonnier Nivelle de la Chaussée) http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55007270r/f1.image
Wolfenbüttel	Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Codex Guelf. 287 Extravag. http://diglib.hab.de/wdb.php?dir=mss/287-extrav

Other sources

Berlin 78.C.28	Berlin, Staatliche Museen der Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, Ms. 78.C.28
Escorial IV.a.24	Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo del Escorial, Biblioteca y Archivo de Musica, MS IV.a.24
Florence 2794	Firenze, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2794
Montecassino 871	Montecassino, Biblioteca dell'Abbazia, Ms. 871
Paris 15123	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. f.fr. 15123 (Chansonnier Pixérécourt)
Paris 2973	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. Rothschild 2973 (Chansonnier Cordiforme)
Paris 4379	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. nouv. acq. fr. 4379
Pavia 362	Pavia, Biblioteca Universitaria, Ms. Aldini 362
Perugia 431	Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, Ms. 431
Porto 714	Porto, Biblioteca Pública Municipal, Ms. 714
Rome XIII.27	Roma, Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Cappella Giulia, XIII.27
Trento 90	Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio, Monumenti e Collezioni Provinciali, Ms. 90 (1377)

Text sources

Berlin 78.B.17	Berlin, Staatsliche Museen der Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, Ms. 78.B.17 (Chansonnier Rohan)
London 380	London, BritishLibrary, MS Lansdowne 380
Paris 1719	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. f.fr. 1719
Jardin 1501	<i>Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de rethorique</i> , Paris, [Antoine Verard, 1501]

Literature

Fallows 1999	David Fallows, <i>A Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs, 1415-1480</i> . Oxford 1999
Löpelmann 1923	M. Löpelmann (ed.), <i>Die Liederhandschrift des Cardinals de Rohan</i> (Gesellschaft für romanische Litteratur, Band 44) Göttingen 1923
Meconi 1994	Honey Meconi, 'Art-Song Reworkings: An Overview', <i>Journal of the Royal Musical Association</i> 119 (1994), pp. 1-42
Montellier 1939	Ernest Montellier, 'Quatorze Chansons du XVe siècle extraites des Archives Namuroises' <i>Commission de la vieille chansons populaire: Annuaire 1939</i> . Antwerp 1939, pp. 153-211.

Le serviteur hault guerdonné 3v · Du Fay, Guillaume

Appearance in the group of related chansonniers:

*Dijon ff. 92v-93 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Laborde Index »Le serviteur« (missing in MS)

*Wolfenbüttel ff. 24v-25 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Other musical sources:

Berlin 78.C.28 ff. 4v-5 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Escorial IV.a.24 ff. 76v-77 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Florence 2794 ff. 22v-23 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Montecassino 871 p. 347 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v Duffay

Paris 15123 ff. 92v-93 »I sol tuo servitor donna gentile« 3v

Paris 2973 ff. 33v-34 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

*Paris 4379 ff. 25v-26 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Pavia 362 ff. 40v-41 »Le serviteur hault guerdonné« 3v

Perugia 431 ff. 67v-68 »Le servitor« 3v

Porto 714 ff. 64v-65 »Le servitor mal guerdone« 3v

Rome XIII.27 ff. 84v-85 »Le servitor« 3v

Trento 90 f. 358v »Superno nunc emittitur« 3v

Reworkings, citations, and use of material, see Meconi 1994, p. 34, and Fallows 1999, pp. 252-253.

Text: Rondeau cinquain; full text in Dijon and Wolfenbüttel; also in Escorial IV.a.24, Paris 2973, Paris 4379, Pavia 362; also found in Berlin 78.B.17 f. 91v, ed.: Löpeltmann 1923, p. 142, London 380 f. 241v, Paris 1719 ff. 87-87v, Jardin 1501 f. 87, Namur Archives f. 363v, ed.: Montellier 1939, p. 199.

After Dijon:

Le serviteur hault guerdonné,
assouvy et bien fortuné,
l'élite des heuroux de France
me trouve par la pourveance
d'un tout seul mot bien ordonné.

Il me semble au prime estre né,
car apres deul desordonné
suis fait par nouvelle alliance

le serviteur *hault guerdonné*,
assouvy et bien fortuné,
l'élite des heuroux de France.

The highly rewarded servant,
content and very fortunate,
selected among the happy men of France
I find myself by the providence
of a single word only, well chosen.

I feel as though I have been reborn,
for after confused grief
I have become by a new alliance

the highly rewarded servant,
content and very fortunate,
selected among the happy men of France.

J'estoie l'omme habandonné
et le dolent infortuné,
lors que vostre humble veillance 1)
veult confermer mon esperance, 2)
quant ce beau mot me fut donné:

Le serviteur *hault guerdonné,*
assouvy et bien fortuné,
l'élite des heureux de France
me trouve par le pourveance
d'un tout seul mot bien ordonné.

I was an abandoned man
and an unlucky lamenter
when your true goodwill
agreed to confirm my hope
and that good word was given to me:

The highly rewarded servant,
content and very fortunate,
selected among the happy men of France
I find myself by the providence
of a single word only, well chosen.

1) Wolfenbüttel, line 14, "... vostre begnivolance"

1) Dijon, line 15, "vest confermer ..." (error)

Evaluation of the sources:

The song "Le serviteur" was composed sometime in the 1440s and achieved great fame and wide circulation. This is documented not only by the many sources for the song from the second half of the fifteenth century, primarily Italian, but also by the fact that the song is discussed in contemporary music theory literature. It is also cited in a number of poems and literary works, especially by Molinet, and it appears with Italian and Latin texts; furthermore, since the 1450s it has formed the basis for a great number of musical adaptations, including masses by Fauges and Agricola. Only one manuscript in the list above mentions "Duffay" as its composer. It is the mixed collection in Montecassino, Biblioteca dell'Abbazia, Ms. 871, which was created in southern Italy in the 1480s. However, a letter from the music theorist Giovanni del Lago from 1520 mentions "Le serviteur" as a song by Guillaume Du Fay. At least in Italy, "Le serviteur" was considered an exemplary composition by Du Fay. Nothing in the song's melodic charm and intricate design can contradict this assessment.

David Fallows has aptly remarked that "For a song in so many surviving sources, its list of variants is astonishingly short".¹ The very finished nature of the song has not encouraged creative changes during its dissemination. This is also true of the two versions of the song that are preserved in the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers, in Dijon and Wolfenbüttel; the pages that contained the song in Laborde have now disappeared. The two versions are so similar musically that they could have been copied from the same exemplar, with only a dotted figure in bar 23 and a few differences in the use of ligatures separating them. However, a variant in the tierce-section of the poem indicates that their exemplars belonged to different traditions. In Dijon, the third line of this section (line 14) reads "lors que vostre humble veillance", while in Wolfenbüttel it reads "lors que vostre begnivolance" – in both cases the line has the correct number of nine syllables.

This line has caused problems. In the other sources where the word "humble" appears as in Dijon (MSS Paris 2973 (Cordiforme), Escorial IV.a.24 and Namur Archives) it causes a line that is one syllable too long in the form "... humble bien vueillance" (or variants thereof). The Dijon version manages this by omitting "bien", while Wolfenbüttel and other

1 David Fallows, *The Songs of Guillaume Dufay. Critical Commentary to the Revision of Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae, ser. 1, Vol. VI* (Musicological studies & documents 47), Neuhausen-Stuttgart 1995, p. 261.

sources (MS Paris 4379 and the text collections *Jardin de plaisance* and MS Paris 1719) omit “humble” and transform “bien” into “benivolance”. A third solution is again to omit “humble” and then change “lors” to “alors”, as we see in two sources (MSS Pavia 362 and Berlin 78.B.17 (Rohan)). It is quite interesting to note that Dijon and Wolfenbüttel, which are musically identical, choose different methods to make this line suitable for performance.

The majority of the sources for “Le serviteur”, mostly Italian, are provided with hexachordal signatures of two flats in all voices. Therefore, the existing literature has assumed that this was the original disposition of the song and that the C tonality with two prescribed flats was the irregular first mode discussed by theorists. This is probably true, at least for Italy. However, it overlooks the fact that in no less than four sources, three of which are French, the song is only provided with one flat in each voice supplemented with accidentals. In addition to Dijon and Wolfenbüttel, these include the French chansonnier in Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2794, which was produced by the same workshop that completed the Dijon and Laborde chansonniers,² and the somewhat later manuscript from Naples in Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, Ms. 431.

The song works perfectly in C Dorian with the two-flat signatures, but gains greater tonal scope in the ‘Loire’ manuscripts’ version with one-flat signatures and the prescribed accidentals. Here the tonal development at the end turns from C Dorian to the bright C Mixolydian – in complete agreement with the poem’s happy final line “d’un tout seul mot bien ordonné”, and in this interpretation the first mode becomes even more irregular. In fact, the song demonstrates a mastery in shaping the music so that it works regardless of the combinations of hexachordal signatures with which it is notated. This may also be taken as confirmation of Du Fay’s authorship.

The tonal contrasts are further enhanced in the version of “Le serviteur” preserved in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. nouv. acq. fr. 4379, which together with another fragment in Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, MS 5-1-43, make up most of a chansonnier written in Naples around 1480. Here the one-flat signatures in the lower voices are only introduced in bar 10, where they create a sudden darkening of the sound after the dominance of C- and G-hexachords in the preceding passage (see the edition). Furthermore, the one-flat signature in the contratenor disappears in the final, fauxbourdon-like ending.

Comments on text and music:

For once, the lover in this rondeau is completely happy, having been accepted by the adored one through a single well-chosen word. The refined musical setting – I refer to the version transmitted by Dijon and Wolfenbüttel – involves three male voices, an upper voice in the range *g-b'* and tenor and countertenor in the same range a fifth lower, *c-e'*. All three voices take turns calling upon the listener’s attention to an unusual degree while simultaneously fulfilling their traditional roles in a song from the 1440s.

The first two lines have the superius as the leading voice, but the tenor pushes forward with an emotional leap up to *e'-flat* at the start of the second line (b. 5), which in these lines forces the flattening of E in all three voices. It is striking that after the first cadence to G with the leading note in the upper voice, the tenor takes over and ends its outburst

2 Cf. my article ‘The French musical manuscript in Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2794, and the ‘Loire Valley’ chansonniers’ 2012, at http://www.pwch.dk/Publications/PWCH_Florence2794.pdf.

with a cadence to C in bar 7, after which the line ending to C in bar 9 between the superius and tenor is reinforced with a traditional cadence embellishment in the contra. This figure leads to the fifth in the cadence and at the same time sets in motion the subsequent imitation figure. The third line opens with a unison canonic imitation of an energetic motif, in which all three voices participate, and slides into a fauxbourdon-like cadence to D. It constitutes the mid-cadence of the rondeau but is camouflaged by the bridging continuation of the upper voice.

The song's tonal development becomes sharply profiled in MS Paris 4379, which in the first two lines is devoid of hexachordal signatures in the lower voices and avoids the E-flats. Its sound is here dominated by C-, F- and G-hexachords, and a strong tonal contrast appears when the flats are introduced along with the imitation motif in bar 10.

Both lines in the second section start with three-part canonic unison imitation, which sounds like a song for equal voices that then expands into larger tonal spaces. First on a calm motif that stays within the *f*-hexachord, then the accidental *e'*-flat is required to bring on a short cadential motif (b. 24), which refers to and revives the tenor's outburst in bar 5. The final flourish starts in the tenor bar 27.2 and is followed by the superius in free canon an octave higher; the canonic structure clearly presents the rising C-hexachord and forces the ending of the song into C-Mixolydian. The brightening of the sound and the increase of rhythmic activity perfectly balance the preceding passages' emphasis on the Dorian colouring.

I think that Du Fay's concept of the song was with one-flat hexachordal signatures in all three voices. If it had been conceived with two-flat signatures, it could just as well have been notated a tone higher without signatures, in D-Dorian, and performed with inflections corresponding to the A-flats in all modern editions.³ By composing the song in C with one-flat signatures Du Fay took advantage of the opportunity to alternate between E-flat and E-natural (supported by accidentals) in a way that in D-Dorian would have involved the use of sharps, which was not part of the notational norms of the time. Furthermore, its striking tonal nuances may be part of the explanation for the challenge and attraction that "Le serviteur" posed, as it became the source of numerous adaptations and new compositions from as early as the middle of the century.

3 See for example Guillaume Dufay (ed. H. Besseler, rev. D. Fallows), *Opera omnia VI – Cantiones* (Corpus mensurabilis musicae 1) 1995, no. 92.

Dijon no. 77

Le serviteur hault guerdonné [Du Fay]

Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 517, ff. 92V-93

[Superius] Mensura = ♩

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
 3. J'es - toie l'om - me ha - ban - don -

Tenor

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
 3. J'es - toie l'om - me ha - ban - don -

Contratenor

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
 3. J'es - toie l'om - me ha - ban - don -

5

né, as - sou - vy et bien in - for - tu -
 né et le do - lent in - for - tu -

9

né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
 né, lors que vos - tre hum - ble veul -

14

Fran - ce me trou -
 lan - ce ¹⁾veult con -

de Fran - ce me trou - ve par
 veul - lan - ce veult con - fer - mer la pour -

19

ve par la pour ve an ce
fer mer mon es pe ran ce,
pe an ce

24

d'un tout seul
quant ce beau
d'un tout seul
quant ce beau

28

mot bien or don
mot me fut don
mot me fut don

32

né.
né.
né.

- 1) *Superius*, text 3, bar 17.3, "vest" (error).
- 2) *Contratenor*, the 2nd staff (bb. 10.3-24.1) has a two-flat signature. The only note *e* in this staff is bar 23.1.
- 3) *Superius*, bar 32.3, *minima* - 2 *seminimae* (error).

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
 2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as -

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
 2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as -

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
 2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as -

6 a - pres deul des - or - don - né suis
 sou - vy et bien for - tu - né, l'es -

a - pres deul des - or - don - né suis fait
 sou - vy et bien for - tu - né, l'es - li -

a - pres deul des - or - don - né suis
 sou - vy et bien for - tu - né, l'es -

11 fait par nou - vel - le_al - li - an - - - ce
 li - te des heu - reulx de Fran - - - ce.

par nou - vel - le_al - li - an - - - ce
 te des heu - reulx de Fran - - - ce.

- fait par nou - vel - - - le_al - li - an - - - ce
 - li - te des heu - reulx de Fran - - - ce.

Wolfenbüttel no. 20

Le serviteur hault guerdonné [Du Fay]

Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Codex Guelf. 287 Extravag., ff. 24^v-25

[Superius] Mensura = ♩

Tenor

Contra

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
 3. J'es - toye l'om - me ha - ban - don -

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
 3. J'es - toye l'om - me ha - ban - don -

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
 3. J'es - toye l'om - me ha - ban - don -

5 né, as - sou - vy et bien for - tu -
 né et le do - lent in - for - tu -

né, as - sou - vy et bien for - tu -
 né et le do - lent in - for - tu -

né, as - sou - vy et bien for - tu -
 né et le do - lent in - for - tu -

9 né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
 né, lors que vos - tre be - gni - vo -

né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
 né, lors que vos - tre be - gni - vo -

né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
 né, lors que vos - tre be - gni -

14 Fran - ce me treu -
 lan - ce ce vult con -

Fran - ce me treu - ve par
 lan - ce ce vult con - fer - mer

de Fran - ce me treu - ve par la pour -
 vo - lan - ce ce vult con - fer - mer mon es -

19

ve par la pour voi an - - ce
fer - mer mon es - - pe - ran - - ce,
la pour voi - - an - ce
mon es - pe - - ran - ce,
voi - - an - ce
pe - - ran - ce,

24

d'ung tout seul
quant ce beau
d'ung tout seul
quant ce beau
d'ung tout seul
quant ce beau

28

mot bien or don -
mot me fut don -
mot bien or don -
mot me fut don -
mot bien or don -
mot me fut don -

32

né.
né.
né.
né.

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
 2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as -

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
 2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as -

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
 2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as -

6 a - pres dueil des - or - don - né suis
 sou - vy et bien for - tu - né, l'es -

a - pres dueil des - or - don - né suis fait
 sou - vy et bien for - tu - né, l'es - li -

a - pres dueil des - or - don - né suis
 sou - vy et bien for - tu - né, l'es -

11 fait par nou - vel - le_al - li - an - - - ce
 li - te des heu - reux de Fran - - - ce.

par nou - vel - le_al - li - an - - - ce
 te des heu - reux de Fran - - - ce.

- fait par nou - vel - - - le_al - li - an - - - ce
 - li - te des heu - reux de Fran - - - ce.

Paris 4379 no. 64

Le serviteur hault guerdonné [Du Fay]

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. nouv. acq. fr. 4379, ff. 25^v-26

[Superius] Mensura = ♩

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
3. J'es - toie l'om - me ha - ban - don -

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
3. J'es - toie l'om - me ha - ban - don -

1.4. Le ser - vi - teur hault - guer - don -
3. J'es - toie l'om - me ha - ban - don -

5
né, as - sou - vi - et bien for -
né, et le do - lent in for -

né, as - sou - vi - et bien for - tu -
né, et le do - lent in for - tu -

né, as - sou - vi - et bien for - tu -
né, et le do - lent in for - tu -

9
né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
né, lors que vos - tre be - ni - vo -

né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
né, lors que vos - tre be - ni - vo -

né, l'es - li - te des heu - reux de
né, lors que vos - tre be - ni -

14
Fran - ce me treu -
len - ce ce vult con -

Fran - ce me treu - ve
len - ce ce vult con - for -

de Fran - ce me treu - ve par la
vo - len - ce ce vult con - for - ter mon

19

for - ter par la pour - ve - an - - ce
 ter mon es - - pe - - ran - - ce,
 es - - ve - - an - - ce
 pe - - ran - - ce,

24

d'un tout seul
 quant ce beau
 d'un tout seul
 quant ce beau
 d'un tout seul
 quant ce beau

28

mot bien or - don -
 mot me fut don -
 mot bien or - don -
 mot me fut don -
 mot bien or - don -
 mot me fut don -

32

né.
 né:
 né.
 né:
 né.
 né:

2a. Il me semb - le_au pri - me_es - tre né, car
2b. le ser - vi - teur hault guer - don - né, as

a - prez dueil des - hor - né sui
sou - vi et bien for - né, l'es

fait par nou - vel - le_a - li - an - ce
li - te des heu - reux de Fran - ce