

Antoine Busnoys

Quant j'ay au cueur aulcun contraire a 3

Edition and comments by
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<http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH284.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) http://depot.lias.be/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE9381778
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

Paris 15123	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. f.fr. 15123 (Chansonnier Pixérécourt)
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Text sources

Jardin 1501	<i>Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de rethorique</i> , Paris, [Antoine Verard, 1501]
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Literature

Fallows 1999	David Fallows, <i>A Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs, 1415-1480</i> . Oxford 1999
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Quant j'ay au cueur aulcun contraire 3v · Busnoys, Antoine

Appearance in the group of related chansonnières:

*Leuven ff. 65v-67 »Quant j'ay au cueur aulcun contraire« 3v

Other source:

Paris 15123 ff. 184v-185 »Quant j'ay au cueur aucun contraire« 3v Busnoys

Citations and use in other compositions, see Fallows 1999, p. 337.

Text: Rondeau cinquain, full text in Leuven, also found in Jardin 1501 f. 83 (no. 232); after Leuven:

Quant j'ay au cueur aulcun contraire
et j'ay aulcunement affaire
qu'aulcun me viengne secourir,
il ne me fault que recourir 1)
a vous, belle tres debonnaire.

Car vous estes mon doux repaire
ou je me voys tousjours retraire
pour mon povre cueur resjouir,

quant j'ay au cueur *aulcun contraire*
et j'ay *aulcunement affaire*
qu'aulcun me viengne secourir.

Nully ne m'en sauroit hors traire,
veu qu'avez voulu parfaire 2)
la volente de mon desir;
pour ce vueil tousjours obeir 3)
et en toutes choses complaire.

Quant j'ay au *cueur aulcun contraire*
et j'ay *aulcunement affaire*
qu'aulcun me viengne secourir,
il ne me fault que recourir
a vous, belle tres debonnaire.

- 1) line 4, "il ne fault ..." (error)
- 2) line 13 is one syllable short
- 3) line 15, "pour ce vous vueil ..." (error)

Lines 12-16 in Jardin 1501:

Nully ne m'en scauroit hors traire,
puisque vo cueur m'a voulu traire
a vostre gracieux plaisir;
pourtant vueil tousjours obeir
a vous, belle tres debonnaire.

When I in my heart somewhat suffer
and I cannot in any way get
anyone to come and relieve me,
I must turn
to you, most gracious beauty.

For you are my gentle refuge,
to which I will always retreat
to uplift my poor heart,

when I in my heart somewhat suffer
and I cannot in any way get
anyone to come and relieve me.

No one could draw me away,
since you have wanted to satisfy
the wish of my desire;
for this I want ever to obey you
and in all things please you.

When I in my heart somewhat suffer
and I cannot in any way get
anyone to come and relieve me,
I must turn
to you, most gracious beauty.

No one could draw me away,
since your heart has wanted to draw me
into your gracious service;
for this I want ever to obey
you, most merciful beauty.

Evaluation of the sources:

»Quant j'ay au cueur aulcun contraire« survives without composer attribution in the Leuven chansonnier, which is the only source that transmits the poem and its music in a complete version. Not that the copy in Leuven is perfect. It has a misplaced clef and several wrong notes, which all are easy to see through, and the scribe displays some laxity concerning the length of the poetic lines; lines 4 and 13 each miss a syllable, while line 15 has one too many (see above).

The younger Florentine chansonnier in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. f.fr. 15123 (MS Pixérécourt) gives the song under Busnoys' name in a corrupt version. In comparison with Leuven it exhibits many differences of musical details, and of coloration and ligatures. At some point during its transmission, two *puncti* belonging to the ligature, which fills out bar 18 in the tenor, have gone missing. The ensuing rhythmic discrepancy between the voices has been repaired by blackening the second note of the ligature in the superius and substituting the two *semiminimae* with a black *minima*, and in the contratenor the *semibrevis a* has been deleted. In this way the voices fit together again, the song has become one *semibrevis* shorter, and all cadences are displaced in relation to the perfections. This version has been published in the *Collected Works*.¹

The Pixérécourt MS gives only the refrain as text. The poem appears in the *Jardin de plaisance*, published in Paris by Antoine Verard just after 1500. Here it is quite obvious that the printed tierce is not original, but an adaption, maybe a clumsy effort to make the poem more in line with the courtly style. The second line of this tierce reuses the rime word of the first line, "traire", and the last line was simply lifted from the refrain's last line "a vous belle tres debonnaire" – not procedures recommended by the *Rhétoriqueurs*!

Comments on text and music:

The courtlyness of this rondeau is a bit ambiguous. The lover praises his lady in rich rimes. However, the "belle tres debonnaire" has surrendered to his advances, so to him she has become a safe haven to which he can turn, when other women reject him. The praise seems shaded, bordering on a shaming, more fitting for an entertainment among men than in a lady's salon.

The setting is lyrical and elegant, written for a high agile voice *d'-f''*, a high tenor *g-a'*, and a supporting contratenor a fifth lower *d-d'*. The variable, rhythmically animated upper voice sustains the melodic interest in mostly free polyphony with the supporting voices, while the tenor forms the backbone of the music with its persistent keeping within the *c'*-hexachord, only in bars 4 and 23-24 does it shortly dip down into the *g*-hexachord. Colouring is supplied by the contratenor, which inserts b-flats into the harmony (in Leuven by turning hexachordal signatures on and off, in Paris 15123 by accidentals). The two sections of the rondeau cinquain are of equal length. The two-line second section has been extended by long melismas, the first one (bb. 20.3-22) is a strict canon at the fifth at *minima* distance between superius and tenor, and the final one is a confident demonstration of setting the melodic arc of the tenor's C-hexachord.

1 Antoine Busnoys (Leeman L. Perkins ed.), *Collected Works, Parts 1A-1B: Works with texts in the vernacular* (Masters and Monuments of the Renaissance 5) New York 2018, no. 29.

An Italian scribe of the 1480s, who most probable copied a French exemplar, ascribed this song to Busnoys. Nothing in the music contradicts this ascription. However, heard in the context of the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers, "Quant j'ay au cueur aulcun contraire" sounds more like Caron's musical language.

Leuven no. 41

Quant j'ay au cuer aulcun contraire [Busnoys]

Leuven, Alamire Foundation, Manuscript without shelf number, ff. 65^v-67

[Superius] Mensura = ♩

1.4. Quant j'ay au cuer aul - cun con -
 3. Nul - ly ne m'en sau - roit hors -

Tenor

1.4. Quant j'ay au cuer aul - cun con -
 3. Nul - ly ne m'en sau - roit hors -

Contratenor

1.4. Quant j'ay au cuer aul - cun con -
 3. Nul - ly ne m'en sau - roit hors -

5 1)

traï - re et j'ay aul - cu - ne - ment
 traï - re, veu qu'a - vez vou - lu

2)

traï - re et j'ay aul - cu - ne - ment
 traï - re, veu qu'a - vez vou - lu

3)

traï - re et j'ay aul - cu - ne - ment
 traï - re, veu qu'a - vez vou - lu

9

af - fai - re qu'aul - cun me - vien -
 par - fai - re la vou - len - te -

3)

af - fai - re qu'aul - cun me - vien -
 par - fai - re la vou - len - te -

13

gne de se - cou - - - - - rir,
 de mon cou de - - - - - sir;

gne de se - cou - - - - - rir,
 de mon cou de - - - - - sir;

gne de se - cou - - - - - rir,
 de mon cou de - - - - - sir;

1) Superius, bar 5.2, minima f' (error).

2) Tenor, bars 7-12, wrong clef, c3 in stead of c2 (error).

3) Contratenor, bar 9.2. g-d' (error).

17

il pour ne ce ⁴⁾me vueil fault tous - - - que jours re - o -

8 il pour ne ce me vueil fault tous - - - que jours re - o -

8 il pour ne ce me vueil fault tous - - - que jours re - o -

21

- - - - - cou be - - - rir ir

8 - - - - - cou be - - - rir ir

8 - - - - - cou be - - - rir ir

25

a et vous, bel tou - le tes tres cho - de ses bon com - - -

8 a et vous, en bel tou - le tes tres cho - de ses - - -

8 a et vous, en bel tou - le tes tres cho - de ses - - -

29

- - - - - nai plai - - - re. re.

8 bon com - - - - - nai plai - - - re. re.

5) 8 bon com - - - - - nai plai - - - re. re.

4) *Superius*, text 3, bar 18.2, "vous vueil" (error).

5) *Contratenor*, bar 29.1-2 is written twice (error).

