

Antoine Busnoys

M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli a 3

Edition and comments by
Peter Woetmann Christoffersen

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<http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH010.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

Bologna Q16	Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS Q16
Florence 229	Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Banco Rari 229
Florence 2794	Firenze, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2794
Rome 2856	Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, Ms. 2856
Sevilla 5-1-43	Sevilla, Biblioteca Capítular y Colombina, MS 5-1-43

Text sources

Paris 1719	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. f.fr. 1719
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M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli 3v · Busnoys, Antoine

Appearance in the five chansonniers:

*Copenhagen ff. 11v-13 »M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli« 3v

*Dijon ff. 101v-103 »M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli« 3v

*Laborde ff. 95v-97 »M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli« 3v

Other musical sources:

Bologna Q16 ff. 40v-42 »Terribile fortuna« 3v

Florence 229 ff. 245v-247 »M'a vestre cueur« 3v

Florence 2794 ff. 36v-38 »M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli« 3v

Rome 2856 ff. 71v-73 »Ma doulce ceur« 3v Busnois

Sevilla 5-1-43 ff. 55v-56 »M'a vostre cuer mis en oubli« 3v

Text: Bergerette; full text in Copenhagen, Dijon, Laborde, and Florence 2794; also in Paris 1719 f. 113v (no. 359). After Copenhagen:

M'a vostre cueur mis en oubli,
dont tant il me souvient? Helas!
Je croy que de moi il est las,
le plus de tous biens ennobli.

Se vostre doux cueur me renonce,
que je dis mon dieu terrien,
mort suis, et ma mort vous anonce,
car plus je l'aime qu'aultre rien.

Par lui souloie estre embely
d'esper d'avoir joye et soulas;
et ores me tient en ses las
Desespoir, et crie anver lui: (1)

M'a vostre cueur *mis en oubli*,
dont tant il me souvient? Helas!
Je croy que de moi il est las,
le plus de tous biens ennobli.

Has your heart forgotten me,
while I remember it so? Alas!
I believe that it, the most noble
in all virtues, is tired of me.

If your sweet heart, which I call
my earthly god, renounces me,

I shall die, and I announce my death to you,
for I love your heart more than anything else.

Because of it I used to brighten up
by the hope of having joy and solace;
and now Despair holds me in its bonds,
and I cry out to him:

Has your heart forgotten me,
while I remember it so? Alas!
I believe that it, the most noble
in all virtues, is tired of me.

1) Copenhagen and Laborde, line 12, "... crie aver ..."; changed in accordance with Dijon. Some minor differences in spelling occur.

Evaluation of the sources:

"M'a vostre cueur" offers an instructive example of how difficult it could be for a meticulous music scribe to present the sounding reality of music in writing, of how the flexibility of the notation in changing configurations could collaborate with the performers' routines and expectations. Especially in an extended song in Dorian where a varied contrapuntal development needs flattened as well as natural Bs there can be several ways of putting the music in writing as regards hexachordal signatures. The

sources for this chanson show the complete range of possibilities. In the slightly later Italian and French MSS it appears without any signatures at all (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Banco Rari 229 and Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, Ms. 2856) and with a one flat signature in the contratenor only (Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS Q16, Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2794 (only in the first two staves in the refrain, bb. 1-25, and in the first staff of the couplets, bb. 50-62), and Sevilla, Biblioteca Capitulare y Colombina, MS 5-1-43). The Dijon scribe has used different configurations of hexachordal signatures in the two sections of the bergerette in his three copies: Dijon, - (b in the first staff, bb. 1-11), b, b / b, -, b; Laborde, -, -, b / -, b, b; and Copenhagen, b, -, b / -, b, b.

These sources evidently transmit two different interpretations of the tonal development and the contrasts in the bergerette. In the sources without any flats quite a lot of B-flats will have to be performed in the contratenor to correct fifths and because the part for long stretches is written in a transposed scale reaching down to the low *F*. However, B-flats will not be needed in the three-part imitative opening of the second section, the *couplets*, where the contratenor opens the imitation. In this way a contrast between the two sections involving this variable scale degree will probably be established.¹ In all the other sources with at least a flat in the contratenor this tonal contrast will be eradicated in a performance, and the contrasts reduced to what occurs inside each section.

The Dijon scribe apparently struggled with these internal contrasts and the question of how best to communicate them in musical notation. His three versions was most probable created on basis of the same exemplar. We shall return to this question in a moment, but first a special feature, which cannot be used to identify a common exemplar, must shortly be discussed:

The song's first section has an incision in bar 22 with a final *longa* in the tenor followed by rests, and it is moreover marked with *signa* in most voices (in Dijon, Laborde, Copenhagen, Bologna Q16) or fermatas (Florence 2794 and Rome 2856) without being a cadence from which to start a repeat of the section as in a rondeau. Here the signs must be interpreted as fermatas which prolong the final notes (or designate undefined note lengths and thus creating a caesura) in order to start the next musical phrase (b. 24.2) with an upbeat; if not, every musical accent in the rest of the song will be displaced in relation to the dominant *brevis mensura* of *tempus imperfectum diminutum* (this is probably a fictive and irrelevant problem when performing from the parts in mensural notation). Only one source, Florence 229, has consequently inserted *semibrevis* rests in all voices in bar 24.1.

An error common to the Dijon scribe's three copies probably reaches back to an ancestor shared by two other sources. It is extremely common for a contratenor in the middle decades of the 15th century to end with a leap of an octave and to insert its final note as the fifth in the concord. That is how the refrain section of "M'a vostre cuer" ends, but this ending is absolutely not possible in the second *couplet* as superius and tenor come together on a unison *d'*. A scribe overlooked the difference between the first and second section and routinely wrote the octave leap, and thereby turned the final concord into an unsupported fourth. This was repeated by the Dijon scribe three times, while the

1 Cf. the edition after Florence 229 in Howard Mayer Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier from the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale MS Banco Rari 229* (Monuments of Renaissance Music VII) Chicago 1983, vol. II, pp. 536-539.

MSS Bologna Q16, Florence 229, Florence 2794 have the correct note *d*. The chansonnier Sevilla 5-I-43 also has the octave leap but with *d* as an alternative or supportive note, and in Rome 2856 the scribe or an editor recomposed the ending by the adding a descent in the tenor line and in this way was able to retain the octave leap in the contratenor.² This problem may go back to a very early copy of the chanson.

As mentioned above, it is most probable that the Dijon scribe used the same exemplar for all his copies. If we to begin with disregarding the differences in hexachordal signatures, the differences between the MSS all belong to the sort of changes, which copyists might execute while working on the music. In Laborde most differences in relation to Dijon concern the omission of ligatures (S bb. 17.2-18.1, and 32; T b. 56) and changing *minor color* into a dotted figure (S bb. 20.2-21.1, 22, bb. 59.2-60.1, b. 61.1, and 76; C bb. 24.2-25.1, 62, and 68). In the very small format of Laborde he on the one hand made some further writing errors (S bb. 10.2 and 74-75; C b. 4), the most important being the omission of nearly two bars of the superius in bb. 74-75, which also made him omit the repetitions signs for the *couplets' ouvert* and *clos* endings; on the other hand he showed great care in getting the song's quite extended moments of canonic imitation right. In bars 68-69 he revised the superius, which was not exactly like the tenor in bars 66-67 in Dijon and in his exemplar (probably owing to a change of staff).

When he copied the chanson into the Copenhagen chansonnier, he had forgot about most of this revision as he retained a tone repetition in the superius bar 68 like in Dijon. Else he continued the replacement of *minor color* by dotted figures, so that in Copenhagen only one single coloration is left on the pages (C bb. 24.2-25.1), but also here he made some mistakes (S bb. 44-45; T b. 3).

We can only guess what the Dijon scribe's exemplar looked like, but it probably had a signature of one flat in the contratenor like the majority of other sources – in this reading of the music a natural is never necessary in this voice –, and it had no signatures in the tenor and superius voices. Here the scribe had to struggle to convey the changing quality of B's (natural or soft) to the performers. It never occurred to him to put in some unambiguous accidentals in their parts.

Working on the Dijon chansonnier, he observed that a B-flat was required in the opening three-part imitation and maybe for this reason put a flat signature in all three voices. He soon realized that the *b*-flat in the superius' bar 4 is the only one, which is required in the first section, and accordingly dropped the signature for the remainder of the section in the upper voice. The tenor is forced to sing natural Bs in bars 15-22 and again from bar 32 to the end of the first section, leaving only one possible *b*-flat to perform after the initial imitation. In the second part he dropped the flat in the tenor, but introduced it again in the superius. This section's opening three-part imitation on a short cadential figure, again started by the contratenor, requires a flat – tenor and superius cannot help singing it having heard the contratenor, but soon naturals take over as they advance to the cadence on A in bar 61. Just before the repeat of the *couplet* the flat is needed again. The dilemma of the scribe is quite understandable.

In Laborde he decided on a simpler solution and in the first section probably followed his exemplar in having no flats in the upper voices and relying on the contratenor's example to supply the flats in the opening bars. In the second section he exchanged the superius flat of the Dijon version for a flat in the tenor. Maybe he considered this to be

² See the example in Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier*, vol. II, p. 519.

clearer as the tenor only has to raise one important note, the *b* in bar 60, and the flat signature does colour the end of the *couplets*, maybe preparing the repeats of the *couplet* and the *tierce*.

Anyway he kept this solution for his copy in the Copenhagen chansonnier, but when working through the different combinations he here in the first section wrote a signature of one flat in the superius, leaving the tenor without. This changes the harmonic colour of bars 15-16, but not much else – it might be his final word on this chanson.

The Dijon scribe's difficulties in deciding how best to communicate the fluidity of the variable scale degree and its influence on the sound of the music clearly demonstrates that to him and to many others in his generation the concept of signatures had not acquired its modern prescriptive meaning. In many cases it was just an indication of a *default hexachordal position within musica recta*, a starting point from which the performer might work out his solution, and a flat signature does not exclude that the alternative position, a semitone higher, has to be preferred where demanded by the context without in any way transgressing the boundaries of *musica recta*. The reverse is of course just as true: In a voice with no signature it can just as often be necessary to sing the lower alternative.

Peter Urquhart has in his article on 'False Concords in Busnoys' reached the same conclusion, but he ascribes the variety of signatures to "errors or creativity on the part of the scribes".³ My interpretation of the work of the Dijon scribe prefers his "creativity" rather than "errors". He worked conscientiously to notate his pieces as precisely as possible within a set of conventions different from those of later periods, and exactly such experimentation with signatures as we find in his work may have led to new conventions as established around 1500, and much later to the modern concept of key signatures.

Comments on text and music:

It is a sad love song in bergerette form in artful *rimes léonines* about a person (male or female) who feels abandoned by the lover's heart. Its music is ambitious with long carefully balanced lines and a strong sense of musical unity, and it is closely related to Busnoys' bergerette »Soudainement mon cueur a pris«, which is also found in Dijon (no. 100) and Copenhagen (no. 23).⁴ The similarities include: the Dorian mode, the ranges of the voices, the use of *tempus imperfectum diminutum* in both sections, the dimensions of the music and melodic similarities, and the scribe's uncertainty about key signatures.

Both sections open with a three-part imitation (compare the cadential imitation motives in the second section here and in "Soudainement"), and canonic imitation at the octave

3 Peter Urquhart, 'False Concords in Busnoys', in Paula Higgins (ed.), *Antoine Busnoys. Method, Meaning, and Context in Late Medieval Music*. Oxford 1999, pp. 361-387 has a simplified tabulation of key signatures p. 379 and comments: "The sources of one piece in particular, *M'a vostre cueur*, transmit quite a variety of signatures ..., ranging from no flats in any voice to one flat in all voices. Despite this confusion, there is little question of what mode or what inflections to use in *M'a vostre cueur*. The variety of flat signatures is probably the result of errors or creativity on the part of the scribes; however, it should warn us that the meaning of the flat signature is far less reliable or specific during this period than we today would like to assume." – See also my comments in the article and edition "The restoration of Antoine Busnoys' four-part Flemish song "In mijnen sijn": An experiment in sound, imitation technique, and the setting of a popular tune", *Danish Musicology Online*, Vol. 2 (2011), pp. 21-51 (at http://www.danishmusicologyonline.dk/arkiv/arkiv_dmo/dmo_02/dmo_02_artikel_02.pdf).

4 At <http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH023.html>.

between tenor and superius plays a great role, see for example the final line of both sections (bb. 36.2 ff and 63.2 ff).

A little melodic figure is heard very often in a characteristic rhythm: a upward turn and stepwise descend on a dotted *minima* and *semiminima* followed by a *minima* and two *fusae*. It contributes to the unity of the setting, and similar figures can be found in “Soudainement” and Busnoys’ related rondeau »Quant vous me ferez plus de bien«.⁵

The strongly marked middle cadence in the first section made Charles Edward Barret propose: “It could be that the composer, if indeed, it is Busnois, may have reworked a *rondeau quatrain*, his own or that of a friend by using the original refrain, omitting the two-line second strophe and writing himself the new four lines of the couplet and the required new music. This would be considered, in light of the times, as a tour de force.”⁶ One could add that the just as elaborate cadence in the second section (bb. 61-62) could support that the couplets were composed with the refrain as model. However, we find nearly as strongly marked cadences after the second line in the anonymous »Le joly tetin de ma dame« (Copenhagen and Wolfenbüttel no. 17, bb. 24-30)⁷ or in Busnoys’ “Soudainement” (bb. 20-21). Maybe it is more productive to speculate that Busnoys (he is certainly the composer of both) was experimenting with the greater dimensions of the bergerette, with a greater unity between the sections and exploitation of canonic imitation.

5 At <http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH024.html>.

6 Charles Edward Barret, *A Critical Edition of the Dijon Chansonnier: Dijon, Bibliothèque de la Ville, Ms. 517* (unpublished Ph.D. diss., George Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt University) 1981, p. 618.

7 At <http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH017.html>.

Copenhagen no. 10

M'a vostre coeur mis en oubli [Busnoys]

Copenhagen, The Royal Library, MS Thott 291 8°, ff. 11^v-13

[Superius] Mensura = \circ / d

1.4. M'a vos - tre coeur mis en - tre_em -
3. Par lui sou - loi - e_es -

1.4. M'a vos - tre coeur mis
3. Par lui sou - loi - e_es -

1.4. M'a vos - tre coeur mis
3. Par lui sou - loi - e_es - - - - tre

8

ou be - bli, dont
- be - - - - - ly d'es -

en tre_em - ou be - bli, dont
- - - - - ly d'es -

en ou - bli, dont
em - be - - - - - ly d'es -

15

tant il me sou - vient? He -
poir d'a - voir joy - e_et sou -

tant poir il me sou - vient? He -
poir d'a - voir joy - e_et sou -

tant poir il me sou - vient? He -
poir d'a - voir joy - e_et sou -

22

las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

1) Tenor, bar 3, the rest is a *semibrevis* (error).

2) All voices, b. 24.1 is not in the MS. The preceding *signa* must be understood as fermatas extending b. 23.

31

il en est ses las, las
 il en est ses las, las le Des plus
 il en est ses las, las

38

le Des plus de poir, tous et biens cri - en - e_a -
 de poir, tous et biens cri - en - e_a -
 le plus de poir, tous et biens cri - e en - a -

44

no ver bli. lui:
 no ver bli. lui:
 no ver bli. lui:

50

2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma
 2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma coeur mort me vous
 2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma coeur mort me vous

1) *Superius*, bar 44.2, the last two notes are *semiminimae* (error).

2) *Superius*, bar 45.2, the *f* is missing (error); added in accordance with Dijon and Laborde.

56

cœur me re - - - non - - - ce,
mort vous a - - - non - - - ce,

re - non - - - ce,
a - non - - - ce,

re - non - ce,
a - non - ce,

63

que car je plus dis mon l'ai -

que car je plus dis mon dieu je l'ai - - - me

que car je plus dis je mon l'ai -

69

dieu me ter - - - ri - - - en,
qu'aul - - - tre

ter - - - ri - - - en,
qu'aul - - - tre

dieu me ter - - - ri - en,
qu'aul - - - tre

75

rien.

rien.

rien.
2)

rien.

1) *Superius*, bar 68.1-2 is a *semibrevis* and a *minima*.
2) *Contratenor*, bars 78-79, the final note is *a* in MS.

Dijon no. 84

M'a vostre coeur mis en oubli [Busnoys]

Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 517, ff. 101^v-103

[Superius] Mensura = \circ / d

1) bb

1.4. M'a vos - tre coeur mis en
3. Par lui sou - loi e_es - tre_em -

Tenor

1.4. M'a vos - tre coeur mis
3. Par lui sou - loi e_es -

Contraténor

1.4. M'a vos - tre coeur mis
3. Par lui sou - loi e_es - - - - - tre

8

ou bel - - - - - bli, dont
- bel - - - - - ly d'es -

en tre_em - - - - - ou bel - - - - - bli, dont
- - - - - ly d'es -

en ou - - - - - bli, dont
em - bel - - - - - ly d'es - - - - -

15

tant il me sou - - - - - vient? He - - - - -
poir d'a - voir joi - - - - - e_et sou - - - - -

tant poir il me sou - vient? He - - - - -
poir d'a - voir joi - e_et sou - - - - -

tant poir il me sou - vient? He - - - - -
poir d'a - voir joi - e_et sou - - - - -

22

las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

1) Superius has a key signature of one flat in the first staff (bb 1-11.1) only; in the transcription it has been interpreted as notated accidentals in bb . 4 and 11.

2) All voices, b. 24.1 is not in the MS. The preceding *signa* must be understood as fermatas extending b. 23.

31

il en est ses las, las
 il en est ses las, las le Des plus
 en ses las, las

38

le Des plus de poir, tous et biens en - e_an -
 de poir, tous et biens en - e_an -
 le plus de poir, tous et biens en - e_an -

44

no ver bly. luy:
 no ver bly. luy:
 no ver bly. luy:

50

2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma
 2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma coeur me
 2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma coeur me

56

cœur me re - - - non - - - ce,
mort vous a - - - non - - - ce,

re - non - ce,
a - non - ce,

re - non - ce,
a - non - ce,

63

que car je plus / dis je l'ai - me

que car je plus / dis je l'ai - me

que car je plus / dis je l'ai - me

69

ter - - - ri - - - en,
qu'aul - - - tre

ter - - - ri - - - en,
qu'aul - - - tre

dieu me ter - - - ri - en,
qu'aul - - - tre

75

rien.

rien.

rien.

rien.

1) Tenor b. 72, the second note is a *minima* and *semiminima* because of a change of staff.

2) Contratenor, bars 78-79, the final note is a in MS.

[Superius] Mensura = \circ / d

1.4. M'a vos - tre cueur mis en - tre_em -
3. Par lui sou - loy - e_es - tre

1.4. M'a vos - tre cueur mis
3. Par lui sou - loy - e_es -

8
ou be - bli, dont d'es -
en ou be - bli, dont d'es -
en ou be - bli, dont d'es -

15
tant il me sou - vient? He -
poir d'a - voir joy - e_et sou -
tant poir il me sou - vient? He -
poir d'a - voir joy - e_et sou -

22
las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient
las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient
las! Je croy que de moi
las; et o - res me tient

1) *Contratenor*, bar 4, in MS four *minimae* (error); corrected in accordance with Dijon and Copenhagen.

2) *Superius*, bar 10.2, before the dotted *a* is a superfluous *minima a* (error – it is the last note on the first staff).

3) *All voices*, b. 24.1 is not in the MS. The preceding *signa* must be understood as fermatas extending b. 23.

31

il en est ses las, las
 il en est ses las, las le Des plus
 en ses las, las

38

le Des plus de poir, tous si biens cri - en - e_a -
 de poir, tous si biens cri - en - e_a -
 le plus de poir, tous si biens cri - e en - a -

44

o ver bly. lui:
 o ver bly. lui:
 o ver bly. lui:

50

2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma
 2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma coeur me
 2a. Se vos suis, - tre et doux ma coeur me

56

cœur me re - - - non - - - ce,
mort vous a - - - non - - - ce,
re - non - ce,
a - non - ce,

63

que je dis mon
1) car plus je l'ay -
que car je plus dis mon dieu
car plus je l'ay - - - me
que car je plus dis je mon l'ay -

69

dieu ter - - - ri - -
me qu'aul - - - tres
ter qu'aul - - - ri - -
dieu me ter qu'aul - - - ri tres

75

en,
rien.
en,
rien.
3) en,
rien.

1) *Superius*, bars 74-75, the notes from the 1st *a*' in b. 74 and including *g*' in b. 75 are missing (error); added in accordance with Dijon and Copenhagen. 2) *Superius*, text 2b, bar 65.2, "car" is missing (error). 3) *Contratenor*, bars 78-79, the final note is *a* in MS.