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# STRUCTURE AND PROCESS IN THE OLD FRENCH *JEU-PARTI*

Of the Old French *jeu-parti*, a genre of sung debate staged between two trouvères, Hendrik van der Werf states the following: 'since all of them are strophic, their music does not reflect the form of debate' (van der Werf 2001). Van der Werf's contention is a reasonable one, and reflects a fundamental question to which any study of strophic song must respond: can second and subsequent stanzas of a strophic song have meaningful text-music relations? Van der Werf's pessimistic assessment of these relationships in the later stanzas of *jeux-partis* is typical of the suspicion that lies behind several approaches to trouvère song. His statement implies that if new words are added to a pre-existent text-melody unit, the melody cannot reflect the new text's meaning because it was composed before the new text. But the *jeu-parti*, a genre practised in Northern France during the thirteenth century, requires us to take another look at this established view of strophic song. In the *jeu-parti*, two trouvères exchanged stanzas that were probably set to the same melody while debating the opposing sides of a love question.[1] In responding to the text and melody presented to him by his opponent, the second trouvère had to construct a text (the second stanza) that the rhyme scheme and melody of his opponent will accommodate.[2] The *jeu-parti* would thus appear to challenge the view that second and subsequent stanzas do not have meaningful text-music relations.

Existing studies of trouvère song have tended to focus only on structural aspects of text and music that do not change from stanza to stanza. Mary O'Neill (1995, p. 184) gives a paradigmatic reading of a song by Gautier de Dargies but does not interpret her findings in light of the different textual structures in each of the song's stanzas. Daniel E. O'Sullivan analyses the music-text relationships in more than one stanza of the song by Chrétien de

Troyes that forms the focus of his study, but his findings are broadly structural: he sees a bi-partite division of the melody to be reflected in stanzas that are generally divided into two halves (O'Sullivan 2003, p. 104). Leo Treitler describes shifting tonal centres of Jaufre Rudel's *Lanquan li jorn* as a 'dynamic process' but reverts to a structure-based view when he states that all the stanzas have the same meaning (Treitler 2003, p. 477). Fiona McAlpine, meanwhile, makes a strong case against a purely motivic analysis of trouvère song; though an advocate of a 'dynamic' approach to structure, she employs Schenkerian voice-leading to uncover a musical structure that is the same throughout all stanzas of a song (McAlpine 1995, p. 15). Similar points could be made for a number of other structure-based analytical studies (Parker 1977, McAlpine 1989, McAlpine 1990, Treitler 1992).

To embrace the full range of music-text relations in a strophic song, we need to rethink our analytical approaches to medieval song. My proposed methodology accounts for the multiple and emerging meanings that *jeu-parti* melodies can convey by considering not only the concept of structure, but also the concept of process. By structure, I mean the relation of parts of a melody to the whole, the patterns of repetition that emerge, the hierarchy of pitches within a tonal space: 'structure', in short, refers to the aspects of a melody that do not change from one stanza to the next and that have been the focus of the previous analyses just outlined. However, I wish to expand the concept of structure here to include structures of expectation, the established stylistic norms that, at the moment of composition or performance, were conceptually fixed (more on this below). By process, I mean the decisions that poet-composers made – or were seen to make – in the unfolding of a song in real time. 'Process' can be approached from several angles, and this depends on the hypothetical composition or performance situation that one prefers. For the purposes of this study, I imagine *jeux-partis* as they were experienced 'live' in order to maximise the opportunity for process-based readings. This deliberately extreme stance aims to show the usefulness of the

concept of 'process', but also enables speculation over how listeners might have appreciated a *jeu-parti*, as well as how poet-composers (or a single poet-composer) might have constructed it. (I revisit this distinction between the composition of a *jeu-parti* and the linear experience of a *jeu-parti* performance at the end of this study.) The terms structure and process, then, while not new to musicology, are employed here to offer a wider range of analytical observations of trouvère song than have hitherto been achieved.

A focus only on structure is a blunt tool for the analysis of trouvère song for a number of reasons. An analytic method that investigates structure will look for fixed and repeatable phenomena, and late medieval song – and the *jeu-parti* in particular – cannot be reified in this neat way. Medieval lyric poetry was, in general transmitted with a high degree of variability, a phenomenon that Paul Zumthor has termed 'mouvance' (Zumthor 1972, p. 507). It is not uncommon, for example, for a *jeu-parti* to be transmitted in one sources with six stanzas and two *envois* (the standard form) but to be missing stanzas in versions of the song in other sources; different versions of the same text may also diverge on individual words.[3] This variability means that the *jeu-parti* is not a stable object for structure-based analysis. Furthermore, each *jeu-parti* melody has not one set of music-text relationships but several, thanks to the strophic form of the genre. An analytic method that determines structure alone is poorly suited to dealing with such variation. However, an analytic method based on 'process' more easily accommodates a genre with such a high degree of *mouvance*. In the performance of a *jeu-parti*, the first trouvère hails their opponent and poses a dilemma question; this takes up the first stanza of the song. The second trouvère chooses one of the alternatives in the dilemma to defend, replacing the words of his opponent's first stanza with his defence, set to the melody and rhyme scheme that the first trouvère has established. The first trouvère is left to defend the other alternative in the dilemma, and the two trouvères take it in turns to replace their opponent's words with their own, creating new text-music

complexes. The debate ends when each trouvère calls to two judges for judgement. In their texts, the *jeu-parti* is presented as a product of collaborative musical acts. It is unhelpful therefore to think of the *jeu-parti* only as a musical object or structure. The written versions of *jeux-partis* in over 20 sources are not only texts but also evidence of acts. The *jeu-parti* is not only a musical structure, but also a musical process.

The experience of a *jeu-parti* could be understood as a negotiation of structure and process in several ways. Within each *jeu-parti*, the conventions of the genre dictate what choices trouvères make. Since the melody and rhyme scheme is constant throughout, trouvères must argue their side of the dilemma, normally a question about love, by creating poetry that will fit the fixed melody and poetic scheme. The melody and poetic scheme are fixed by the trouvère who sings first in the debate but need not be seen as limiting; rather, a melody could be interpreted in a range of ways through the superimposition of poetic texts with differing structures. Then there is the structure of the dilemma itself: the first trouvère proposes the dilemma but does not choose which alternative to defend. The second trouvère in a *jeu-parti* chooses the alternative that the second singer prefers, leaving the remaining side of the dilemma to their opponent. These are the structural parameters of the genre, which trouvères negotiated in the process of singing or creating a *jeu-parti*, and which likely shaped the way that listeners, if distinct from the singers, appreciated a song.

The creation of a *jeu-parti* also involved the negotiation of a different kind of structure: the expectations of stylistic convention of text and melody. Peter Lefferts has argued (with regard to fourteenth-century song) that ‘the paradigms or fundamental givens, the constraints understood at the outset, the range of choices available to the composer’ should be established in the analysis of medieval song (Lefferts 1995, p. 117). Sarah Fuller has refuted Lefferts’s claims, arguing that the structures of expectation which he proposed did not reflect fourteenth-century listeners’ experience. While Lefferts argued that the tonal space

of a song adheres to a 'tonal type', Fuller considers tonal space to be revealed in a 'process of definition' when a song is performed (Fuller 1998, p. 65). By considering both structure and process, I seek to synthesis these two positions. Stylistic norms are established through the repetition of certain compositional choices. These structures of expectation do not exist *a priori*: it is the repetition of a musical feature in composition or performance that creates convention. On the other hand, a knowledge of melodic style would have shaped the choices made by trouvères in creating a *jeu-parti*. At any given moment in a *jeu-parti*, a trouvère could choose to follow convention or, in the language of James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, to 'reject all of the default choices altogether, in pursuit of a *deformation* of that compositional moment' (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, p. 10, emphasis in the original). While the norms of melodic style constituted a conceptual structure for trouvères, their compositional choices would have been part of a 'process' or 'dialogue' with convention (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, p. 10).

If the structure of a *jeu-parti* melody was the result of a process of negotiating structures of expectation, it follows that structure (as it has been traditionally viewed) and process are connected and inseparable. Nicholas Cook argues against too strict a conceptual separation between the constructs of structure and process along similar lines: 'process and product […] are not so much alternative options as complementary strands of the twisted braid we call performance' (Cook 2001, paragraph 20). In my consideration of structure and process, my separation of the two concepts should be seen as a rhetorical necessity rather than an over-simplification of *jeu-parti* composition.

There is good evidence, in fact, that structure and process were distinct concepts for medieval poet-singers and writers. Fritz Reckow (1986) has shown, for example, that descriptions of the conductus and motet emphasise their status as process or structure

respectively. In descriptions of the *jeu-parti*, the concepts are similarly distinct. In one *jeu-parti*, for example, the trouvère Jehan Bretel hails his opponent and invites him to act:[4]

> 'Robert de le Piere, respondés moi: / Dus jeus vous part, et le meilleur prendés!' [RS 1672, lines 1–2.]
>
> 'Robert de le Piere, reply to me: I'll divide two alternatives for you, so choose the better one!'

Bretel's opening address recognises the process of debate that is about to ensue. Bretel is going to 'divide' (*partir*) the dilemma question, to which Robert must respond. At the start of his response, Robert acknowledges the structure that Bretel has created:

> 'Jehan Bretel, grant guerredon vous doi, / qant si bele parture me partés.' [RS 1672, lines 10–11.]
>
> 'Jehan Bretel, great recompense I must [give] you, since you divide such a beautiful *jeu-parti* for me.'

Bretel, in his first stanza, has provided the melody and poetic structure to which Robert, in the second, must set his response. Both trouvères thus foreground their compositional acts as the creation of structures and a process of negotiation.

The analytical constructs of structure and process therefore reflect trouvères' understanding of their songs and offer an alternative to analytical methods that neglect music-text relationships in the second and subsequent stanzas of strophic songs. In creating the second and subsequent stanzas of a *jeu-parti*, trouvères engaged in a process in which they negotiated a range of compositional choices. The melodic and poetic structure established in

the first stanza of a song could be exploited through the addition of new texts to a pre-existent melody. It is certainly possible that the first stanza of a *jeu-parti* could have been composed with this process in mind, facilitating not one but several interpretations of a melody. The first stanza was also created from the processual negotiation of a structure: the stylistic norms of the genre. In both of these senses, structure was always already imbricated in compositional process. To support this contention, the norms of the *jeu-parti* will be presented, after which I provide an analysis of the structure and process of one composition.

**Structures of expectation**

To establish what the 'default choices' in *jeu-parti* composition might have been, 167 *jeu-parti* melodies were studied. In order to limit the scope of the study, I analysed only the parameters of melody that have relative independence from the text that a melody carries. Given that *jeux-partis* are strophic and that most have six stanzas, each melody has up to six or more different music-text relationships. To analyse each stanza individually would be a gargantuan task: the analysis of over 1,000 musical items. Of necessity, my analytic method ignores – at least to begin with – questions of syntax and structural breaks in the text, even though the relationship between text and melody in the *jeu-parti* would have been paramount to the process of composition. This is a highly artificial approach to the genre: *jeu-parti* melodies are not presented in manuscript sources without their texts, and although a melody might have been heard without its text in performance (perhaps in an instrumental accompaniment or version), no written evidence survives for such a practice. While we can know for sure that *jeu-parti* melodies were bound to their texts in written exemplars, we cannot know whether or not melodies also had an independent essence, written or oral. The structure of norms and expectations that I present here is therefore a construct: it enables the analysis of just one aspect of the *jeu-parti*. The flipside of this analytical coin, the construct

of 'process', justifies the construct of structure since it is in discussing process that questions of music-text relationships may be addressed.

The most extensive analysis of the *jeu-parti* to date has been conducted by Michelle Stewart (1979). Having analysed 207 melodies, she presents statistics for the occurrence of certain melodic gestures. In particular, she focuses on melodic formulae at the beginnings and ends of poetic lines, cadential approaches to the final pitch of a line, and the relationship between the end of one line and the start of the next. For some of the melodic parameters that Stewart tests, the statistical significance of her results persuasively demonstrates a common stylistic trait. For example, in her analysis of mode, she shows that E is rarely the *finalis* of a mode, occurring in only 3.5% of melodies, while D is the *finalis* in 38% of melodies (p. 91). For other parameters, the results are far less conclusive. She shows, for example, that in 56% of cases the final pitch of a line is reached by a descent and in 44% of cases by an ascent (p. 98). Statistically, this is significant because it differs markedly from plainsong melodies, which fall to the final in most cases. For understanding normative practice in the *jeu-parti*, though, Stewart's taxonomisation of line endings does not show what is common, unusual, expected and unexpected. She sometimes fails to identify patterns of statistical significance because she tests for the same phenomenon – in this case, direction at the ends of lines – without regard for questions of structural significance or manuscript record.

The statistical problems of Stewart's study may be avoided by looking more closely at the relationship between different aspects of a melody such as source distribution and structure. Stewart is indiscriminate in her treatment of the sources of melodies, treating melodies from all manuscripts equally; as a consequence, her results are skewed. *Jeux-partis* may be said to have one of two types of formal structure - either *pedes-cum-cauda* (ababx or similar) or through-composed.[5] Melodies with *pedes-cum-cauda* structure are significantly more common than through-composed melodies within the corpus as a whole. Of the 167

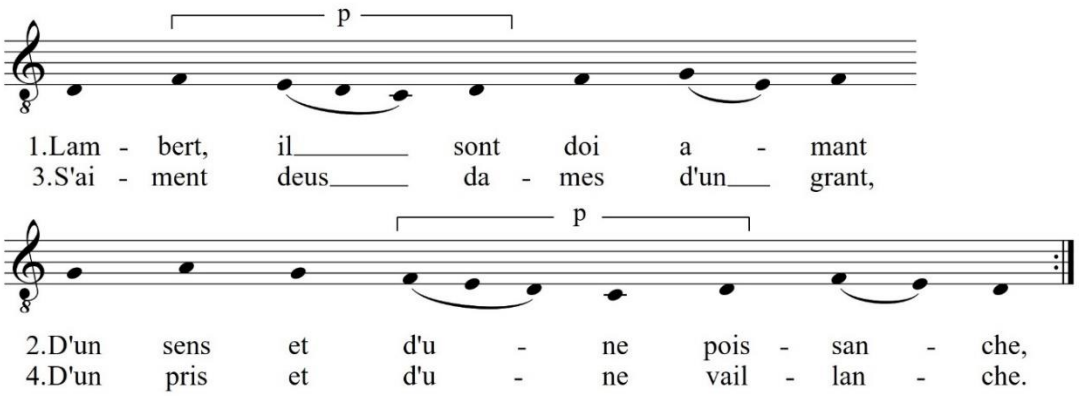
melodies in this study, 72% have *pedes-cum-cauda* structure and 28% are through-composed.[6] However, in three manuscripts, **R**, **V** and **W**, *pedes-cum-cauda* structure is far less common.[7] This suggests that the melodies transmitted in **R**, **V** and **W** reflect a melodic practice different from that found in the other sources. For this reason, the 27 melodies transmitted only in **R**, **V** and **W** have been excluded from this study, since they require further examination.

*Articulation of formal structure*

In the 140 *jeu-parti* melodies that are transmitted in sources other than **R**, **V** and **W** (from this point forward I refer to these as 'all melodies'), the prevalence of *pedes-cum-cauda* structure (81%) means that melodic form was a very important aspect of the stylistic conventions of the *jeu-parti*. In strict *pedes-cum-cauda* form, a *pes* (a pair of different melodic lines) is repeated: I term this opening quatrain the *frons*. Following the *frons* comes the *cauda*, a section of the melody between two and ten poetic lines in length. Since the proportion of *jeux-partis* in *pedes-cum-cauda* form is so high, the bipartite division of *frons* and *cauda* is likely to have been central to listeners' and trouvères' conception of the *jeu-parti*. The striking repetition of the opening pair of lines in *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies means that the ends of lines 2 and 4 would have been significant, not only for their rhyme sounds but also for their position in the structure of a *jeu-parti*. Even for the small proportion of songs that are through-composed (19%) and that therefore lack the structural repetition of the opening pair of lines, I argue that listeners would have treated the end of the fourth line as an important structural break, judging whether the music that they had just heard adhered to the more common *pedes-cum-cauda* form.

One means of articulating formal structure is through repetition: in *pedes-cum-cauda* form, the melody set to the opening pair of poetic lines is repeated, normally verbatim, as the

melody for poetic lines 3 and 4. This is exemplified by the *frons* of *Lambert, il sont doi amant* (RS 296), a *jeu-parti* between Jehan Bretel and Lambert Ferri:



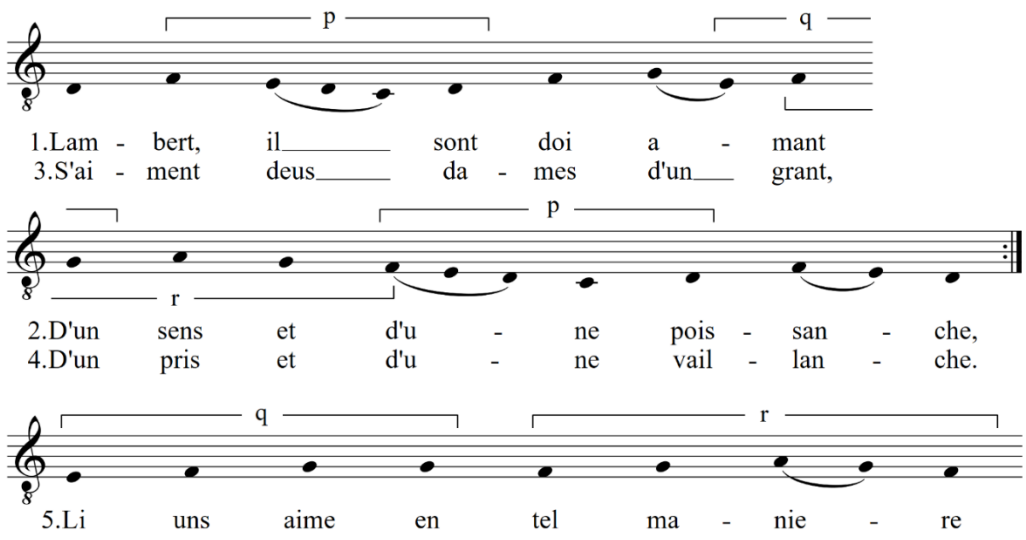

**Ex. 1: *Frons* of RS 296**[8]

Here, the pattern of the rhymes (abab) exactly mirrors the melodic structure (abab). Lines 3 and 4 also sound like a repetition of lines 1 and 2 thanks to the close textual similarities between lines 2 and 4. There is one instance of motivic repetition in the quatrain: the pitch string F–E–D–C–D–F (marked 'p' in Ex. 1) at the start of lines 1 and 3 is also found in the middle of lines 2 and 4, although grouped differently according to syllable (a melisma E–D–C versus F–E–D). The most obvious repetition within the quatrain, though, is the exact repetition of the opening two lines. This repetition lends structural significance to the final pitches of lines 2 and 4, which mark the end of the unit of repetition.

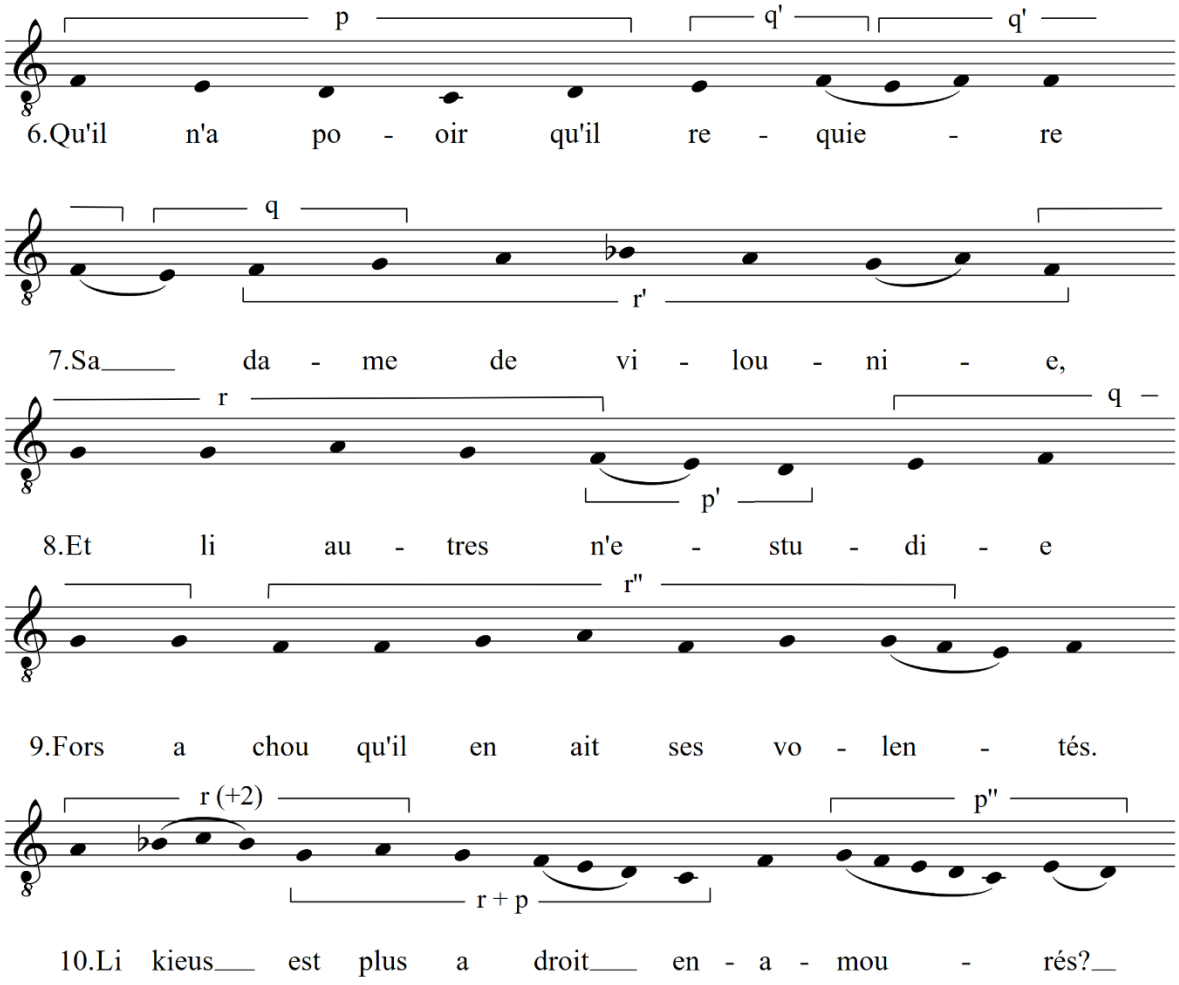
Repetition in the *cauda* of RS 296 occurs in a different way. Instead of the repetition of whole lines, it is melodic cells that are repeated, frequently bridging the end of one poetic line and the start of another (see Ex. 2). At the start of the *cauda*, poetic line 5 is set to two pitch strings that are labelled in Ex. 2 as 'q' and 'r'. These melodic cells, though present in the *frons*, do not have motivic significance in the opening four lines. In the *frons*, q and r bridge the break between lines 1 and 2 and are overlapping; this suggests that listeners are unlikely to have heard them as motivically significant. In line 5, these two pitch strings are separated and given greater

significance than in the *frons*. It is with the separation and repetition of q and r in line 5 that these pitch strings become recognisable.

Whether any of the pitch strings labelled in Ex. 2 is sufficiently pronounced to be considered a motive is debatable. All three pitch strings consist of step-wise movement and do not seem particularly distinctive, although given that *jeu-parti* melodies are generally stepwise, this could hardly be otherwise. The two versions of pitch string p differ in their placement of the melisma, while p in line 2 has an additional E pitch.[9] In line 1, pitch string q begins in the middle of a two-note melisma and spans the break between lines one and two. It might therefore be argued, then, that p, q and r lack the stable and recognisable melodic identity requisite in a motive.[10] But as shown above, 'stability' is a modern analytic criterion that is inappropriate for medieval texts and music; their variability was not an obstacle to different versions of the same text being considered substantively the same. As Leach shows in her contribution to this issue, a pitch string could be repeated with extra pitches and distributed differently across syllables but still constitute an instance of recognisable musical repetition. She advocates for at least some conceptual independence of a trouvère melody from its text, contending that 'the flexibility of text-music alignment can be seen to support the idea that basic pitch string is a more fundamental aspect of melody than its syllabification' (2019). The 'unstable' situation of p, q and r does not, I think, mean that they are unrecognisable when repeated in a varied form, but rather that the types of repetition of these pitch strings in the *cauda* was part of a strategy of elaboration that is common in the *cauda* of *jeux-partis* in general, and less common in the *frons*.




**Ex. 2: RS 296, ll. 1–5**

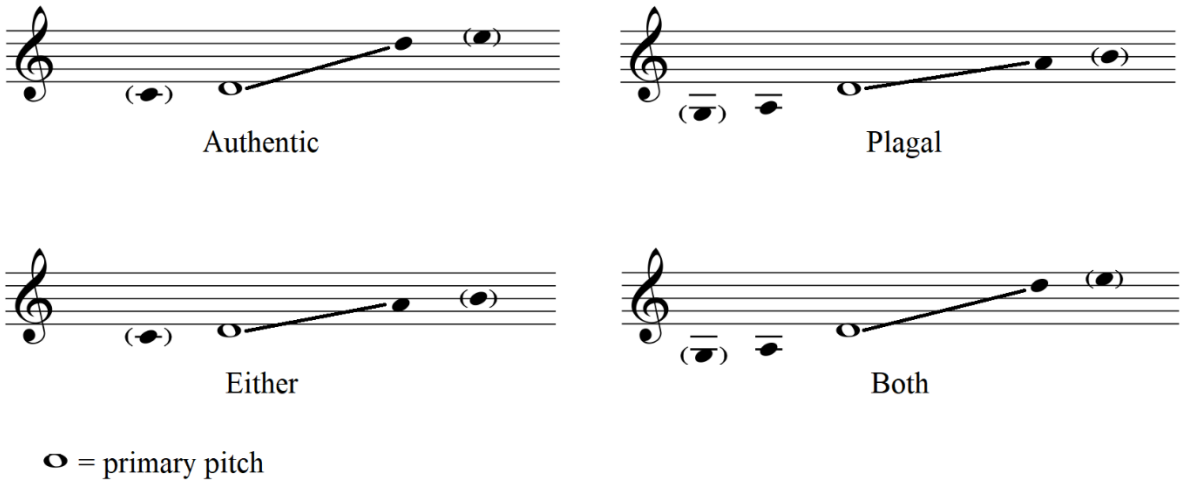



**Ex. 3: RS 296, ll. 6–10**

After line 5, melodic repetition occurs that is typical of a *jeu-parti cauda*, thus differentiating this section from what has come before. Once p, q and r become recognisable, these melodic groupings are repeated and manipulated freely. Ex. 3 presents one possible reading of lines 6–10: thanks to the small range and predominantly step-wise motion of the melody, a number of other readings are possible (and would be shaped by the structure of the particular text set to the melody). The overlapping of pitch strings q and r' in line 7 shows both the difficulty in finding discrete motives in this melody and the overlapping potential ways to understand this melody, which trouvères could exploit in different stanzas of a *jeu-parti*. Although some of the melodic cells in Ex. 3 are very short – p', for example – the example shows the kinds of local repetition that might be seen to occur, and that do not necessarily respect breaks between poetic lines. Motive **r** may be heard to span the break between lines 7 and 8, while q begins at the end of line 8 and continues into line 9. This suggests that the poetic line is not as important a measure of melody in the *cauda* as it is in the *frons*. Further, the end of poetic lines in the *cauda*, with the exception of the very end of a melody, are not necessarily structurally significant moments. By using repetition in different ways, trouvères were thus able to articulate the different sections of *frons* and *cauda* in a melody that follows *pedes-cum-cauda* form.

Trouvères also used the ambitus of a melody to differentiate the *cauda* from the *frons*. I propose four categories of ambitus for *jeux-partis*, which describe the position of the primary pitch within a tonal space: 'either', 'authentic', 'plagal' and 'both'.[11] The ambitus of a melodic section (*frons* or *cauda*) is authentic when the melody extends more than a sixth above the primary pitch and not more than a tone below. For a plagal ambitus, the melody reaches no more than a sixth above the primary pitch and extends more than a tone below. Melodic sections that do not extend higher than a sixth above the primary pitch and not lower than a tone below it could have either authentic or plagal ambitus. There are also some

melodic sections that span both the plagal and authentic ambituses. The four categories of ambitus are summarised in Ex. 4.



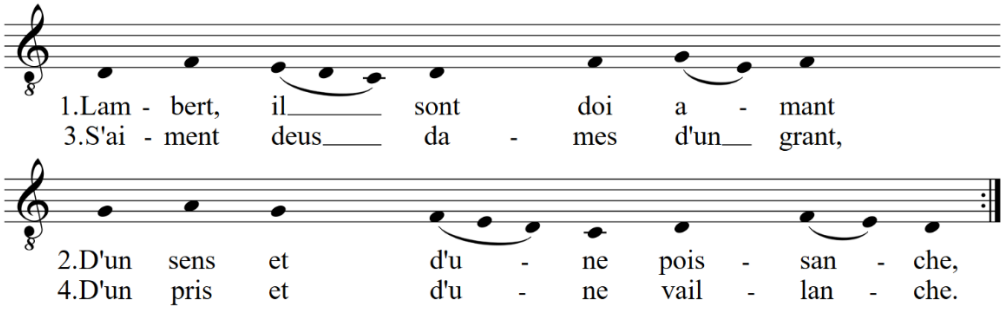

**Ex. 4: Categories of ambitus**

The *frons* and *cauda* of *jeu-parti* melodies have different conventions where ambitus is concerned. As the following discussion shows, *jeux-partis* generally (though not always) begin with a narrow ambitus in the *frons* and expand for the *cauda*. Table 1 shows the distribution of different categories of ambitus in the *frons* of melodies.

| | Either ambitus | Authentic ambitus | Plagal ambitus | Spans both ambitus |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Frons* of all melodies (140) | 52% | 23% | 24% | 1% |
| *Frons* of *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies (114) | 57% | 18% | 25% | 1% |

**Table 1: Distribution of ambitus in the *frons* of *jeu-parti* melodies**

A significant proportion (52%) of all melodies have a *frons* that could have either authentic or plagal ambitus, a proportion that is even more significant (57%) for *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies. In these melodies, the *frons* extends no more than a tone below the primary pitch and no more than a sixth above the primary pitch. In RS 296, for example, D is the primary pitch of the *frons* and the melody extends only a tone below D and no higher than a (see Ex. 5).




**Ex. 5: RS 296, ll. 1–4**

The melody here could belong to a tonal space that is either authentic ((C)–D–a–d–(e)) or plagal ((Γ)–A–D–a–(b)). The proportion of all melodies whose *frons* has an authentic ambitus (23%) is approximately equal to the proportion of those with plagal ambitus (24%), and this is not significantly different among melodies with a *pedes-cum-cauda* structure (18% and 25% respectively). Only one melody (RS 1331) has a *frons* that spans more than an eleventh.

The conventions of ambitus in the *cauda* are different to those of the *frons*.

| | Either ambitus | Authentic ambitus | Plagal ambitus | Spans both ambitus |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Cauda* of all melodies (140) | 11% | 62% | 23% | 4% |
| *Cauda* of *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies (114) | 11% | 64% | 20% | 4% |

**Table 2: *Cauda* ambitus for all melodies and for *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies**

As Table 2 shows, a majority of melodies (62% of all melodies and 64% of *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies) have a *cauda* whose ambitus is authentic, while a much smaller proportion (23% of all melodies and 20% of *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies) have a plagal ambitus in their *cauda.* The proportion of melodies whose *cauda* is confined to the range of a sixth, and could therefore be either authentic or plagal, is much smaller (11%) than the proportion of *frons* melodies that could be either plagal or authentic (52%). The proportion of melodies with a *cauda* that spans both ambitus is higher (4%) than the proportion of melodies whose *frons* spans both (1%). Of the 73 melodies whose *frons* could be either plagal or authentic, 61 have a *cauda* that is larger

in compass (authentic, plagal or both) than the *frons*. In general, the distribution of types of ambitus of the *cauda* implies that the ambitus of the *cauda* of a *jeu-parti* is conventionally larger than the ambitus of its *frons*.

| | | *Cauda* ambitus | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | plagal | either | authentic | both |
| *Frons* ambitus | plagal | 17 (12%) | 3 (2%) | 11 (8%) | 3 (2%) |
| | either | 10 (7%) | 12 (9%) | 49 (35%) | 2 (1%) |
| | authentic | 6 (4%) | 0 | 26 (19%) | 0 |
| | both | 0 | 0 | 1 (1%) | 0 |

**Table 3: Number and proportion of *jeu-parti* melodies (140) for each combination of *frons* ambitus and *cauda* ambitus[12]**

| | | *Cauda* ambitus | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | plagal | either | authentic | both |
| *Frons* ambitus | plagal | 12 (11%) | 3 (3%) | 10 (9%) | 3 (3%) |
| | either | 9 (8%) | 10 (9%) | 44 (39%) | 2 (2%) |
| | authentic | 2 (2%) | 0 | 18 (16%) | 0 |
| | both | 0 | 0 | 1 (1%) | 0 |

**Table 4: Number and proportion of *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies (114) for each combination of *frons* ambitus and *cauda* ambitus**

A closer look at the data shows that a particular ambitus in the *frons* was more likely to lead to some ambitus than others. Tables 3–4 show the number of melodies for each combination of ambitus in *frons* and *cauda*. In a significant proportion of all of the melodies (140), there is no difference between the ambitus of the *frons* and the *cauda*; there are 17 plagal-plagal melodies, 12 either-either melodies and 26 authentic-authentic melodies,

totalling 55 melodies (39%). In 64 other melodies (46% of the corpus), the *cauda* is clearly larger in ambitus than the *frons*. 61 of these melodies have a small ambitus in the *frons* (the 'either' category) and a *cauda* whose ambitus is plagal (10 melodies), authentic (49 melodies) or both plagal and authentic (2 melodies); 3 melodies have a plagal *frons* and a *cauda* that expands to span both plagal and authentic ambituses. While not all melodies have a larger ambitus in the *cauda*, there is a significant proportion that do expand in ambitus in the second section of the melody.

The significant proportion of melodies whose ambitus in the *cauda* is at least as large as that of the *frons* (85%) suggests that the default choice for trouvères was to maintain the outer limits of the melody's ambitus when moving from *frons* to *cauda*. A closer look at different combinations of ambitus shows this to be partly true. A small number of melodies appear to establish a lower limit in the *frons* that is not maintained in the *cauda*. For example, three melodies with a plagal *frons* have a *cauda* that only descends a step below the primary pitch (either) (see Table 5).

| *Frons* | *Cauda* | |
|---|---|---|
| Plagal | Either | 3 (2%) |
| Plagal | Authentic | 11 (8%) |
| Both | Either | 0 |
| Both | Authentic | 1 (1%) |

**Table 5: Combinations of ambitus for which the lower limit of the melody could be higher in the *cauda* than in the *frons***

On closer inspection, several of these melodies change primary pitch between *frons* and *cauda*, effectively maintaining the lower limit of the ambitus.

| | ***Frons*** | | | ***Cauda*** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| RS | Primary tone | Ambitus | Compass | Primary tone | Ambitus | Compass |
| 335 (in **O**) | F | plagal | C–c | F | either | F–d |
| 596 (in **A**) | E | plagal | C–c | D | either | C–b-fa |
| 1584 (in **a**) | F | plagal | C–b-fa | D | either | C–b-fa |
| 203 | G | plagal | B–d | C | authentic | B–d |
| 335 (in **Aa**) | F | plagal | C–d | F | authentic | E–f |
| 335 (in **KMNX**) | F | plagal | C–d | F | authentic | E–f |
| 668 (in **A**) | c | plagal | a–f | G | authentic | F–f |
| 703 | d | plagal | G–f | a | authentic | G–f |
| 842 | c | plagal | G–g | G | authentic | G–g |
| 942 | D | plagal | A–a | D | authentic | C–c |
| 1191 | b | plagal | G–g | G | authentic | G–g |
| 1674 (in **A**) | F | plagal | B–b | C | authentic | B–b |
| 1675 (in **A**) | a | plagal | F–e | D | authentic | C–c |
| 1687 | c | plagal | G–aa | G | authentic | G–aa |
| 1331 | F | both | C–f | D | authentic | C–f |

**Table 6: Melodies whose lower limit could be higher in the *cauda* than in the *frons***

Of the 15 melodies presented in Table 6, only four (RS 335 (all three versions) and RS 942) fail to maintain the lower limit of the *frons* ambitus in the *cauda*.

A similar picture appears from an investigation of the upper limit of ambitus. Table 7 gives the combinations of ambitus for which the upper limit of the ambitus in the *cauda* could be lower than that of the *cauda*. Strikingly, three of the four combinations are not found in the *jeu-parti* repertory. An authentic *frons* never leads to a *cauda* that could have either plagal or authentic ambitus, for example. For the six melodies whose *frons* is authentic and whose *cauda* is plagal, there is a change of primary pitch from *frons* to *cauda* (see Table 8).

| *Frons* | *Cauda* | |
|---|---|---|
| Authentic | Plagal | 6 (4%) |
| Authentic | Either | 0 |
| Both | Plagal | 0 |
| Both | Either | 0 |

**Table 7: Combinations of ambitus for which the upper limit of the melody could be lower in the *cauda* than in the *frons***

| | ***Frons*** | | ***Cauda*** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Primary pitch | Ambitus | Primary pitch | Ambitus |
| RS 8 | F | Authentic | c | Plagal |
| RS 494 (in **A**) | C | Authentic | G | Plagal |
| RS 915 | C | Authentic | G | Plagal |
| RS 1085 (in **A**) | C | Authentic | G | Plagal |
| RS 1097 (in **DKMOX**) | D | Authentic | F | Plagal |
| RS 1354 (in **A**) | G | Authentic | c | Plagal |

**Table 8: Melodies with an authentic *frons* and a plagal *cauda***

In each of these six melodies, the range of the *frons* is replicated in the *cauda* because the shift to a plagal ambitus is accompanied by the move to a new, higher primary pitch. This suggests that only rarely, if ever, the upper limit of the ambitus in the *cauda* is lower than the upper limit of the ambitus in the *frons*.

In comparing the types of repetition found in the *frons* and *cauda* and the conventions of melodic ambitus and compass of both sections, I have shown that the *cauda* tended to be more varied – both in repetition and in compass – than the *frons*. The *cauda* is a space for the development of the tonal space and melodic ideas introduced in the *frons*. Although the poetic line is only the unit of musical repetition for the *frons* of melodies that are in *pedes-cum-cauda* form, the prevalence of *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies, especially when the melodies of chansonniers **R**, **V** and **W** are omitted, suggests that listeners might expect the end of the

fourth line of a through-composed melody to be a structural break, just as it would be in a *pedes-cum-cauda* melody. Further, the *cauda* tends to have the same or larger compass than the *frons*, and in cases where a change of ambitus occurred (for example, plagal followed by authentic), there is most frequently also a change of primary pitch, with the result that the overall compass of the melody does not change. Where the compass of a melody is reduced from the *frons* to the *cauda*, only the compass below the primary pitch is reduced; the upper limit of the melodic compass is almost never lower in the *cauda*.

*Establishment of tonal space*

Structures of expectation are not only discernible in the conventional formal structure of *jeux-partis*; tonal parameters such as the primary pitch or the final pitch of certain lines in a melody also follow some broad trends. Some of these have been established in other studies: Stewart shows, for example, the frequency by which different pitches are (in her terms) the *finalis* of the melody (see discussion above). Hendrik van der Werf has suggested that in trouvère melodies, there is only 'one scale [that is] "major" and the other "minor" in character' (van der Werf 1972, p. 55). Although the terms 'major' and 'minor' are anachronistic, van der Werf argues that there are two basic tonal types in the trouvère repertory. My analysis of primary pitch supports this view. For each melody, I designated the primary pitch of the *frons* and the *cauda* with its letter name and its solmisation, for example, D-re. This was intended to allow for the possibility that melodies could be copied by music scribes at different pitch levels while transmitting the same basic melodic content. Of the 140 melodies analysed here, 71 (51%) have the primary pitch ut in the *frons* and 64 (46%) have the primary pitch re. Only five melodies have a primary pitch on mi. 97% of *frons* sections are therefore ut-type (van der Werf's 'major' category) or re-type (van der Werf's 'minor'). An examination of primary pitch can go much further, however.

Determining the primary pitch for both sections in every *jeu-parti* melody is not always straightforward. Even by looking at melodies in an artificial way, ignoring the way that the texts of a *jeu-parti* might emphasise or conceal the structural importance of the primary pitch, each melody must be treated as a musical process, a tonal space which unfolds throughout the melody. This chimes with Fuller's view of tonal space in fourteenth-century song, which she describes as a 'process of definition' (Fuller 1998, p. 65). Cadences and large leaps in a melody shaped my appreciation of what the primary pitch of a melody might be, as I believe they would also have done for a thirteenth-century listener. On the other hand, the structural characteristics of *jeu-parti* melodies, which are outlined above, do suggest that important structural moments might also have been significant in the construction of tonal space. A listener's expectation that a melody would be in *pedes-cum-cauda* form could lead them to ascribe special significance to pitches heard at the end of lines 2 and 4 – the end of the unit of repetition in the *frons* – and the final pitch of the melody, the point at which one trouvère ceases to sing and the other begins. The establishment of tonal space is thus a negotiation of structure and process.

A comparison of the final pitches of lines 3 and 4, both for the 96 songs in a strict *pedes-cum-cauda* form (in which lines 3 and 4 are an exact repetition of lines 1 and 2) and for the 114 songs in any kind of *pedes-cum-cauda* form reveals some stylistic conventions. Notably, Stewart provides results of weak statistical significance where line endings are concerned because she examines all line endings indiscriminately: a focus on lines 3 and 4 takes account of the structural significance of line endings in the *frons*, which is much greater than the significance of line endings in the *cauda*. Table 9 gives the frequency for which an interval between the final pitch of line 3 and the final pitch of line 4 occurs. 'Lower' indicates that the final pitch of line 4 is lower than the final pitch of line 3: e.g. when the final of line 3 is *a* and the final of line 4 is *G*, the song would fall in the category 'tone lower'.

| | **Songs in strict *pedes-cum-cauda* form** | | | **Songs in any *pedes-cum-cauda* form** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Relation of final of line 4 to final of line 3 | No. (96) | % | Cumulative frequency | No. (114) | % | Cumulative frequency |
| Same pitch | 22 | 23% | 23% | 29 | 25% | 25% |
| third lower | 18 | 19% | 42% | 21 | 18% | 43% |
| tone lower | 18 | 19% | 61% | 19 | 17% | 60% |
| tone higher | 12 | 13% | 74% | 15 | 13% | 73% |
| fifth lower | 8 | 8% | 82% | 11 | 10% | 83% |
| fourth lower | 6 | 6% | 88% | 6 | 5% | 88% |
| third higher | 5 | 5% | 93% | 5 | 4% | 92% |
| fifth higher | 4 | 4% | 97% | 4 | 4% | 96% |
| fourth higher | 2 | 2% | 99% | 2 | 2% | 98% |
| seventh lower | 1 | 1% | 100% | 1 | 1% | 99% |
| seventh higher | 0 | 0% | 100% | 1 | 1% | 100% |

**Table 9: Relationships between the final pitches of lines 3 and 4**

As Table 9 shows, the most frequent intervals are the same pitch, followed by a third lower, tone lower, tone higher and fifth lower. While no single interval occurs with sufficient frequency to be considered conventional, the cumulative frequency of the five most frequent intervals between final pitches of lines 3 and 4 is above 80% in both strict *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies and in all *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies, suggesting that these five relationships are conventional.

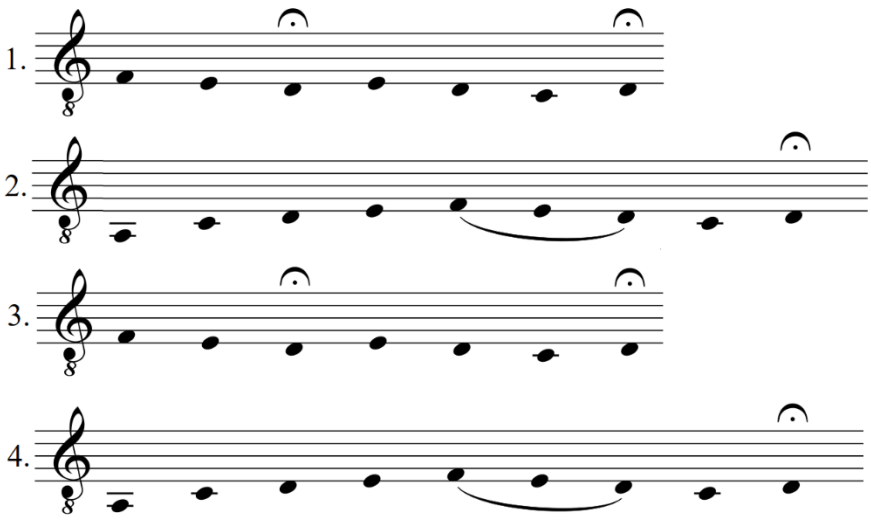
The primary pitch of the *frons* affects which relationship between the final pitches of lines 3 and 4 is more likely. Where the finals of lines 3 and 4 are the same pitch, or the final pitch of line 4 is a tone or a fifth below the final pitch of line 3, the primary pitch is more likely to be ut. Where the final of line 4 is a third below or a tone above the final pitch of line 3, the primary pitch is more likely to be re (see Table 10).

| Interval between final of line 4 and final of line 3 | Total no. of songs | Ut | Re | Mi |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Same pitch | 22 | 15 | 7 | 0 |
| third lower | 18 | 5 | 11 | 2 |
| tone lower | 18 | 14 | 4 | 0 |
| tone higher | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0 |
| fifth lower | 8 | 5 | 2 | 1 |

**Table 10: Most likely relationships between finals of lines 4 and 3 for tonal centres ut, re and mi in strict *pedes-cum-cauda* form songs**

To complicate the picture, the final pitch of line 4 is not always the primary pitch of the *frons*. Of the 140 melodies that were analysed, the final pitch of line 4 is also the tonal centre of the *frons* in 113 melodies (81%). In the 114 melodies in some kind of *pedes-cum-cauda* form, the final pitch of line 4 is different from the tonal centre of the *frons* in 14 melodies (12%). Four of these 14 melodies are not in strict *pedes-cum-cauda* form (RS 950 in **a**, RS 927 in **Z**, RS 1675 in **a**, RS 949); the difference between the final pitch of line 4 and the tonal centre of the *frons* is due to the inexact repetition of lines in these cases. Of the eleven remaining melodies – those whose *frons* contain an exact repetition of the opening two lines – nine melodies have a tonal centre in the *frons* that is stated at the end of line 3. For *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies, therefore, it is very common for the tonal centre to be stated at the end of the *frons*, or at the end of line 3. It is very rare for the tonal centre not to be stated at the end of at least one of the four lines of the *frons*.

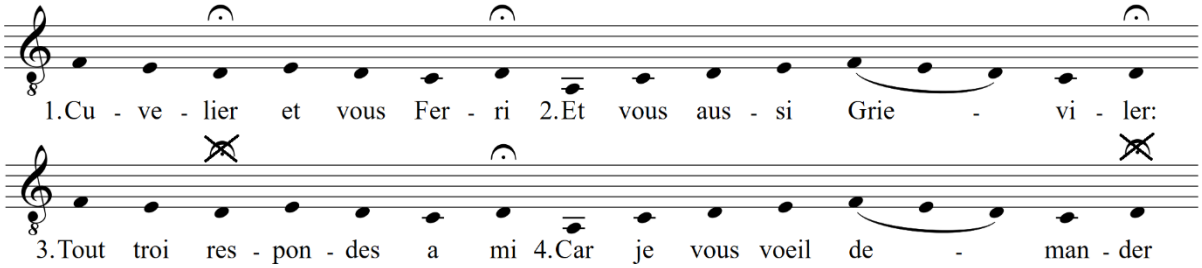
One way in which the primary pitch of the *frons* could be established is through the choice of pitches at the end of lines 1 to 4. Another way that a melody might delineate tonal space is through cadences, that is melodic gestures that imply closure or repose. A cadence might be a turn-figure around a central pitch that ends on that pitch, as in the version of *Cuvelier et vous Ferri* (RS 1042) that is transmitted in chansonnier **a** (see Ex. 6). Melodic gestures with the potential to act as cadences are marked in the example by fermatas.




**Ex. 6: *Frons* of RS 1042 without text**[13]

RS 1042 demarcates its tonal space very clearly. All four lines end on D, each time using a turn figure. In lines 1 and 3, this five-note figure (D–E–D–C–D) centres on the primary pitch, D. In lines 2 and 4, the turn is only a three-note figure (D–C–D). However, the primary pitch of the melody is reached before the end of the first line. The melody descends to D at the third syllable of the first line, establishing D as the tonal centre at the earliest opportunity.

RS 1042 exemplifies the two most common forms of cadence: a turn on a pitch and a descent to a pitch. However, trouvères did not always take advantage of a potential cadence in melody. Ex. 7 gives the *frons* of RS 1042 with the text of the first stanza underlaid.




**Ex. 7: *Frons* of RS 1042, stanza 1**

In lines 1–2, each of the potential cadences coincides with a syntactic break in the text, coming directly before the word 'and' (*et*) in two cases, or at the end of the clause. While the first three notes of line 1 function as a cadence on D, these same three notes in line 3 do not form a cadence because D is in the middle of the word 'respondés' (marked in the example by a cancelled fermata). And although the final pitch of line 3 is a cadence, preceding the word 'because' (*car*), line 4 does not end with a cadence because the clause continues into line 5, thanks to poetic enjambment. Local decisions of text setting can therefore obscure (or simply not utilise) the potential structure that a melody has.

The establishment of the tonal centre through a cadence is sometimes achieved within the first line of a *jeu-parti*. At the very opening of most *jeux-partis*, the first trouvère hails their opponent. This opening address typically consists of a title such as 'maistre', 'amis' or 'sire' and the opponent's name, after which the opponent is invited to choose between the alternative choices in the dilemma question. Because an opening address is commonplace and tends to end with the first syntactic break in a *jeu-parti*, the end of the address has particular significance. This could, therefore, be a textual moment that trouvères could exploit with a cadence.

In the first line of the 140 *jeux-partis* that were examined, 57 (41%) melodies placed emphasis on the primary pitch of the *frons* in a way that could potentially be cadential, and 43 (31%) have a potential cadence on a pitch different to the primary pitch. Only in 29% of melodies was it difficult to find a potential cadence point. The level of significance is even greater for *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies: 41% of melodies have a potential cadence on the primary pitch, 32% have a potential cadence on a pitch other than the primary pitch, and 26% have no identifiable cadence in their first line. However, when the text of the first line is taken into account, the picture changes significantly. Of the 140 melodies, only 24 (17%) had a cadence on the primary pitch that coincided with the end of the address. Even if the ten

melodies that could not be measured in this way are excluded (because their texts did not have the stereotypical opening address), the proportion of melodies that cadence on the primary pitch is only 18%. These proportions are the same for *pedes-cum-cauda* melodies.

This suggests a number of conclusions. First, the frequency of potential cadences points to a stylistic convention in *jeu-parti* melodies, in which tonal centres could be established through cadential figures. Listeners might have attended to cadences to orient themselves in the tonal space of a melody: this would mean that cadences within and at the end of lines had a structural significance for listeners. Secondly, the use of cadences on pitches other than the primary pitch would suggest that *jeu-parti* melodies have primary and secondary pitch centres. Finally, as cadences with a syntactic break in the text occur on the primary pitch relatively infrequently, trouvères did not always exploit potential cadences in a melody.

The corpus-wide trends that have been presented here support an analytical methodology of structure and process. *Jeux-partis* melodies are conventionally in *pedes-cum-cauda* form, which is articulated by different types of melodic repetition and different sizes of ambitus. Melodies tend to be either ut-type or re-type melodies, with a primary pitch in the *frons* that often matches the final pitch of the fourth line. These formal and tonal characteristics make up some of the structures of expectation that trouvères and listeners would have brought to bear on their experience of the *jeu-parti*. But throughout this discussion of structure, musical process has not been far away. While the likelihood of an ambitus differs for the sections of *frons* and *cauda*, there are also some relationships between the ambitus of the *frons* and the ambitus of the *cauda* that are more likely than others. Once the *frons* of a *jeu-parti* with authentic ambitus had been sung, listeners would not, I suggest, expect the ambitus of the *cauda* to reduce in compass, given that no melodies that have been transmitted in written sources have the combination of an authentic *frons* and a *cauda* with

the range of a seventh (either plagal or authentic). This structured expectation would be tested by what follows in performance: the *cauda*. Similarly, the tonal space of a melody might be established by a cadence in the first line, only for further potential cadences to be ignored or undermined by the way the text is set. It therefore is impossible to think of structures of expectation without the musical processes that both give rise to and deviate from such conventions.

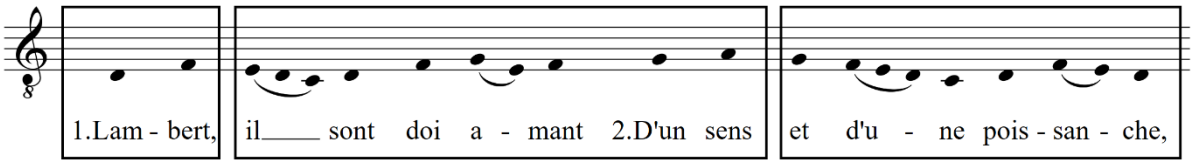
**The process of negotiating structure**

While there are demonstrable conventions of style that would have shaped trouvères' compositional decisions, the identification of structures of expectation in the *jeu-parti* does little to address the analytical bias which the conceptual tools of structure and process aim to counter. If studies of strophic medieval song tend to focus on the melody without words, or only on the music-text relationships of the first stanza of a song, then a methodology of structure **and** process must be applicable to the stanzas of a song subsequent to the first stanza. To demonstrate this, the following discussion will examine one *jeu-parti* in detail, *Lambert, il sont doi amant* (RS 296), which was introduced above. An edition and translation of the song may be found in appendix 2.

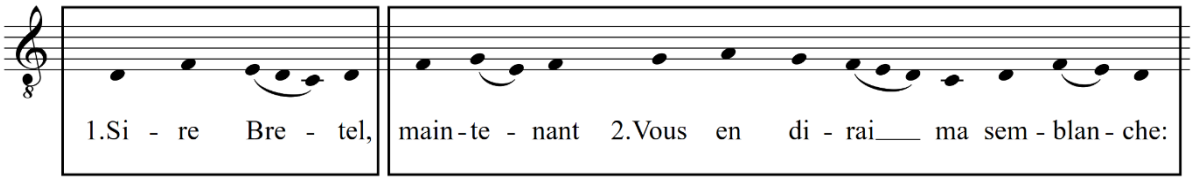
Although there is no evidence to suggest that a *jeu-parti* melody was created before its text, it is helpful, for analytical purposes, to think of the first stanza of a *jeu-parti* as a process of addition of text to a melody. In separating text and melody, it becomes possible to consider the first stanza of a song as one of several interpretations of a melody – interpretations that are expressed through text-setting. (This is not to imply that *jeux-partis* started as textless melodies, with each text layered on top in order, although this may well represent the experience of listening to a *jeu-parti*); the compositional process may have been more complex and less linear.) *Jeu-parti* texts tend to follow certain structural principles: short semantic units (proverbs, maxims, insults) that often last no longer than two or three

poetic lines (Gally 1987); comparisons that are separated by the conjunction 'or' (*u*) (Gally 1987); and argumentative turning points triggered by the words 'but' (*mais*) and 'to the contrary' (*ains*) (Lavis 1991). *Jeu-parti* texts therefore contain several syntactic or semantic divisions within each stanza. These divisions are not always the same from stanza to stanza, however. Ex. 8 demonstrates the textual divisions in the opening lines of stanza one and stanza two of RS 296. Boxes show the textual units in these lines; divisions in the text occur in different places. Thanks to the different placement of textual breaks, the melody of a *jeu-parti* can thus also be divided in different ways from stanza to stanza.

**STANZA 1**




**STANZA 2**




**Ex. 8: Comparison of lines 1–2 in stanzas 1 and 2 of RS 296**

The structure of the text of different stanzas does not tell the whole story. Given that text and music were likely created together for a *jeu-parti*, one might just as well say that the structure of the melody shaped the structure of a text, rather than (or as well as) vice versa. Melodies also have potential structures latent within them that a particular text, through its structure, could accentuate. Likewise, the potential structures in a melody could have shaped trouvères decisions in how to write a new text to a pre-existent melody. Melodies may be seen to exhibit 'affordance', a term from ecological theory that describes an object's potential

to afford (allow or encourage) certain behavioural responses (Gibson 2015, p. 15). The different responses afforded by a melody can be seen in Ex. 8. In this example, the different textual divisions between stanzas construct different tonal spaces. In both cases, D is the primary pitch since line 2 ends with D, an important structural break in the melody, but also a syntactic break in both texts. But the importance of D in the tonal hierarchy of RS 296 is clearer in stanza 2 than in stanza 1. The first six pitches of the melody form a potential cadence on D through a turn figure: D–F–E–D–C–D. In stanza 2, the address 'Sire Bretel' is set to these pitches, forming a discrete syntactic unit that exploits the potential cadence in the melody. D is thus established early in the melody as the primary pitch. In stanza 1, the tonal space is different. Because the opening address, 'Lambert', is only two syllables in length, the pitch *F* is emphasised at the outset. The potential cadence on D is divided by the text, with the result that it does not function as a cadence. Since F is the final pitch of line 1, coinciding with the first rhyme sound, '-ant', and is approached by the short turn figure F–G–E–F, the primary pitch is heard as F in line 1. Only with the syntactic unit beginning with 'et' ('and') in line 2 does the melody move into a tonal space in which D is the most important pitch. In his opening stanza, Bretel thus chooses to ignore the potential afforded by the melody to establish D as the primary pitch. Ferri, by contrast, begins his second stanza with a recognition that the opening few pitches of the melody can form a cadence: this potential cadence shaped his choice to address Bretel as 'sire', thus matching a musical break (the cadence) to a syntactic break in his text.

The melody of RS 296 has other structures that are exploited by Bretel and Ferri. Some of these do not change from stanza to stanza. For example, the hierarchy established between D and F by Bretel inflects the *cauda* of the melody. I suggested above that for a given melody, listeners would consider the final pitches of lines 2 and 4 and the final pitch of the entire melody to be of special importance. RS 296 supports this hypothesis, since lines 2,

4 and 10 (the final line) end with D, while all other lines end with F. Although the final pitches of lines in the *cauda* have less significance than in the *frons* (as I argued above), the pairs of rhyme sounds at the end of *cauda* lines would sonically draw some attention to these pitches. I suggest that in each stanza, it would be noticeable to the listener that, after the *frons*, the only coincidence of the pitch D with a rhyme sound comes at the very end of the cauda. Since the return to D is delayed to the end of the *cauda*, listeners might have been fooled into thinking that F is the primary pitch of the *cauda*: during the *cauda*, the pitch F is stated far more frequently (nineteen times) than the pitch D (six occurrences). However, of the relatively high number of *jeu-parti* melodies that have D as the primary pitch in the *frons* (44), only four have a different final pitch in the *cauda*. And while it is not uncommon in *jeu-parti* melodies for the final pitch of the *frons* to differ from the final pitch of the *cauda*, it would appear that melodies with a D-centred *frons* would be expected to have a D-centred *cauda*. Even though the melody of RS 296 emphasises F over D during its *cauda*, listeners are therefore likely to have expected an eventual return to D at the end of the song.

The trajectory from F to D, mapped out by each of the pairs of lines in the *frons* and by the *cauda* as a whole, also dictates some of the music-text choices made by Bretel and Ferri. In the first four stanzas of the song, Bretel and Ferri both separate line 7 from line 8 by a significant syntactic break (see Fig. 1). In stanza 1, line 8 begins with the formulaic construction ‘and the other one’ (*et li autres*), a linguistic expression that in *jeux-partis* is used to introduce the second alternative of a dilemma question. In stanza 4, line 8 begins with the conjunction ‘but’ (*mais*), a device used in *jeux-partis* to mark a semantic and structural turning point. In stanzas 2 and 3, line 8 marks the start of a maxim that is distinct from what it precedes. The fact that the poets choose to separate line 7 from line 8 so strongly in the first four stanzas might suggest that their decisions were prompted by an important structural point in the melody at this moment.

1. Lambert, il sont doi amant
D'un sens et d'une poissanche,
S'aiment deus dames d'un grant,
D'un pris et d'une vaillanche.
Li uns aime en tel maniere
Qu'il n'a pooir qu'il requiere
Sa dame de vilounie,
**Et li autres** n'estudie
Fors a chou qu'il en ait ses volentés.
Li kieus est plus a droit enamourés?

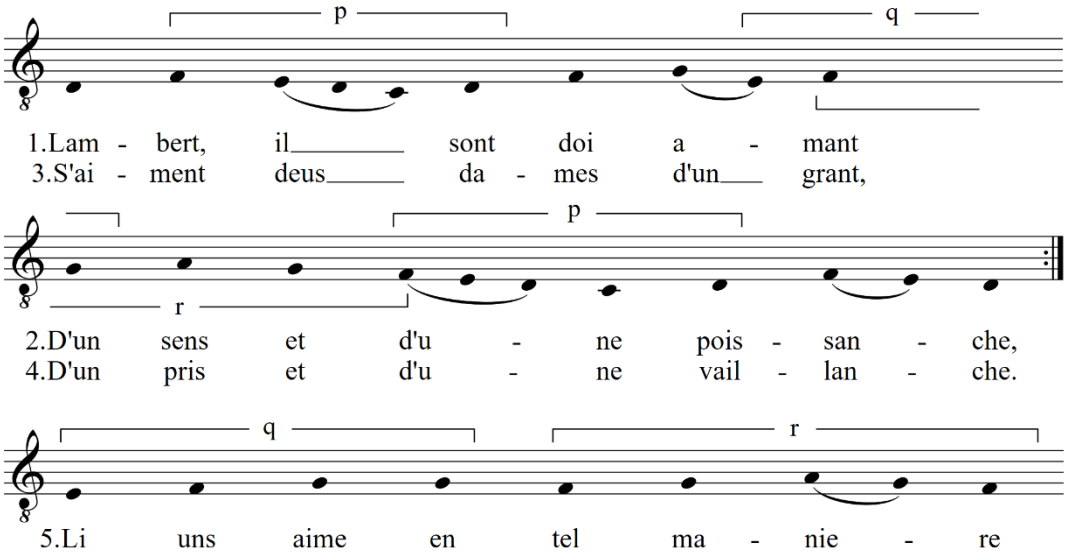
2. Sire Bretel, maintenant
Vous en dirai ma samblanche:
Mult a chil le cuer vaillant
Ki est de tel astenanche
Qu'il ne veut faire proiiere
Envers cheli qu'il a chiere
dont ele soit abaissie.
Je di, qoi que nus en die,
Que ses cuers est d'amours mieus achesmés
Que chil qui veut avoir de li ses sés.

3. Ferri, a guise d'enfant
Parlés par acoustumanche.
Qui se conbat en fuiant,
Il n'a que faire de lanche;
Ch'est une amour despovriere
Qant on fait d'amour grant chiere
Pour desirer a moitie.
D'amour qi n'est parfurnie
N'ert ja fins cuers paiiés ne saoulés;
C'est trop griés fais qui pent tout a un lés.

4. Sire Jehan, main sergant
Voit on fuïr par cremanche
Por ekiever peril grant
De qoi il sont en doutanche.
Qui fuit chou qui met ariere
Lui et autrui, par saint Piere,
Il ne fait mie folie;
**Mais** chil qui sa dame prie
Çou dont ses cors puet estre vergondés
N'aime pas tant con li autres d'assés.

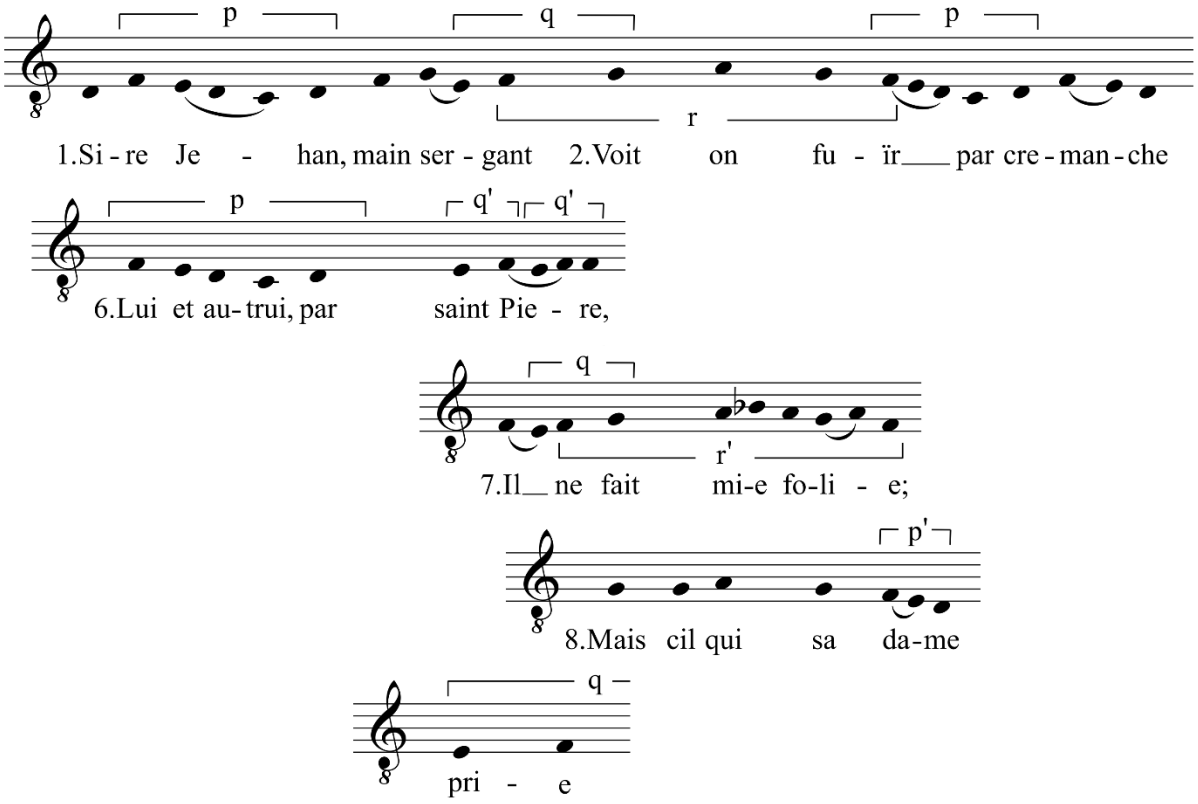
**Figure 1: Textual structure of RS 296, stanzas 1–4**

The structural importance of these moments can be seen from a motivic analysis, albeit an analysis that is inflected by the different texts that are set to the melody. As discussed above, the *cauda* of RS 296 might be seen to manipulate three principal pitch strings, labelled in Ex. 9 as 'p', 'q' and 'r'.




**Ex. 9: RS 296, ll. 1–5**

As I argued above, q and r seem at first to be inconsequential because they span the break between lines 1 and 2 (and between 3 and 4), and because they do not consist of discrete neume groups: q begins halfway through a two-note ligature, and r ends at the start of a three-note ligature. The text in lines 1–4 therefore obscures these pitch strings' significance, which becomes apparent when q and r are separated and stated in line 5. Whereas lines 1 and 2 consist of a self-contained unit (p–q–r–p), lines 3 and 4 are connected motivically to line 5 by the statement of q and r. Lines three to five cycle through the pitch strings thus: p–q–r–p–q–r. (Incidentally, only in stanzas 2 and 5 is this motivic enjambment matched by poetic enjambment; in other stanzas, there is a syntactic break at the end of line 4.) After line 5, the melody begins to cycle through the motivic material once more, as Ex. 10 shows.




**Ex. 10: RS 296, stanza 4, ll. 1–2 and 6–8 aligned by pitch**

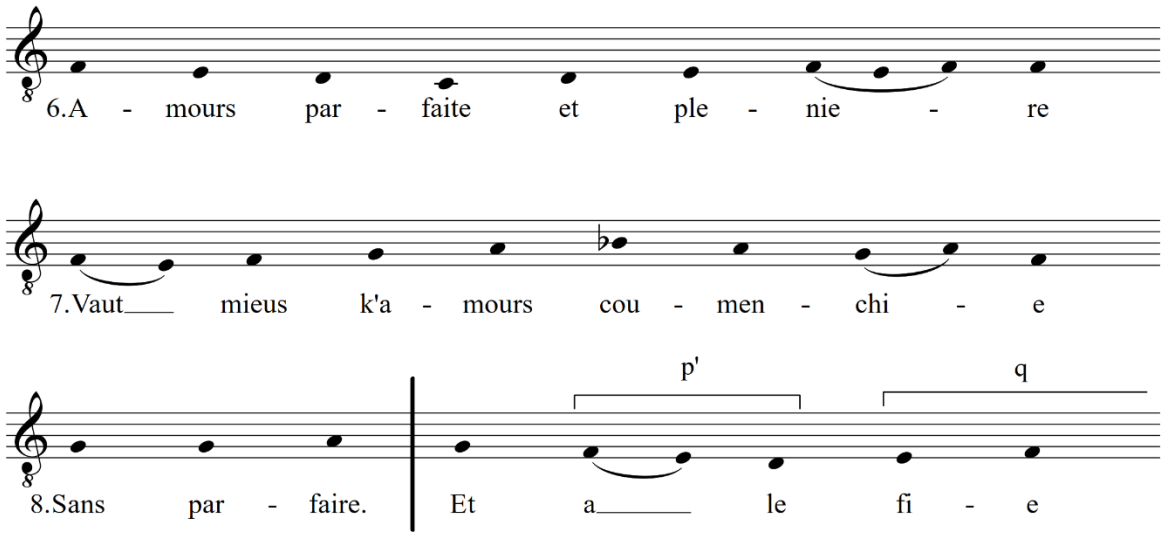
Line 6 begins by stating p syllabically, then oscillates around E and F in an abridged version of q; even if the pitch-string of two pitches does not have the significance of a motive, the

melody nevertheless repeats E and F to a surprising degree. Line 7 picks up this repetition of E and F, stating q and then an expanded version of r. This expansion in range is expected for the cauda, which conventionally has a larger ambitus than the frons. Tonally, lines 6 and 7 move from D (p) to F, which is reached in a long cadence (r) that fills most of line 7. Crucially, in tracking through and elaborating on the melodic material that is first presented in lines 1 and 2, lines 6 and 7 stop short of returning to p, which finishes line 2 and which would reinstate D as the tonal centre. At this point in stanzas 1–4, there is a break in the text. The end of a sense unit in the text coincides with the end of line 7, a cadence onto F.

In textual terms, the start of line 8 is a turning point: this is explicit in stanzas 1 and 4, through the use of conventional linguistic gestures (*et li autres* and *mais*), but also implied in stanzas 2 and 3. This is also a turning point melodically, since line 8 begins with melodic material that is highly reminiscent of the start of line 2 (see Ex. 10). In the *frons* of a *jeu-parti*, the poetic line is an important measure of melody; for this reason, the end of line 1 is an important structural moment. Starting in a very similar way to the start of line 2, the melody at line 8 makes reference to this structural point in the *frons*. Thus, the beginning of line 8 may be viewed as a turning point in the melody, an interpretation that is strengthened by the poetic choices made by Bretel and Ferri in stanzas 1–4. The placement of a syntactic break at the end of line 7 in the first four stanzas of RS 296 suggests that Bretel and Ferri viewed the beginning of line 8 as a key moment in the melodic structure of the song, whose potential they exploited through their addition of text.

But if the end of line 7 and start of line 8 held such structural potential for Bretel and Ferri, why is there enjambment between lines 7 and 8 in stanzas 5 and 6? Why in these stanzas do Bretel and Ferri choose not to exploit the structural potential of the melody? One answer to these questions could be the constraints of poetic form. The rhyme sounds of the song remain the same throughout, meaning that by the fifth and sixth stanzas, the poets must

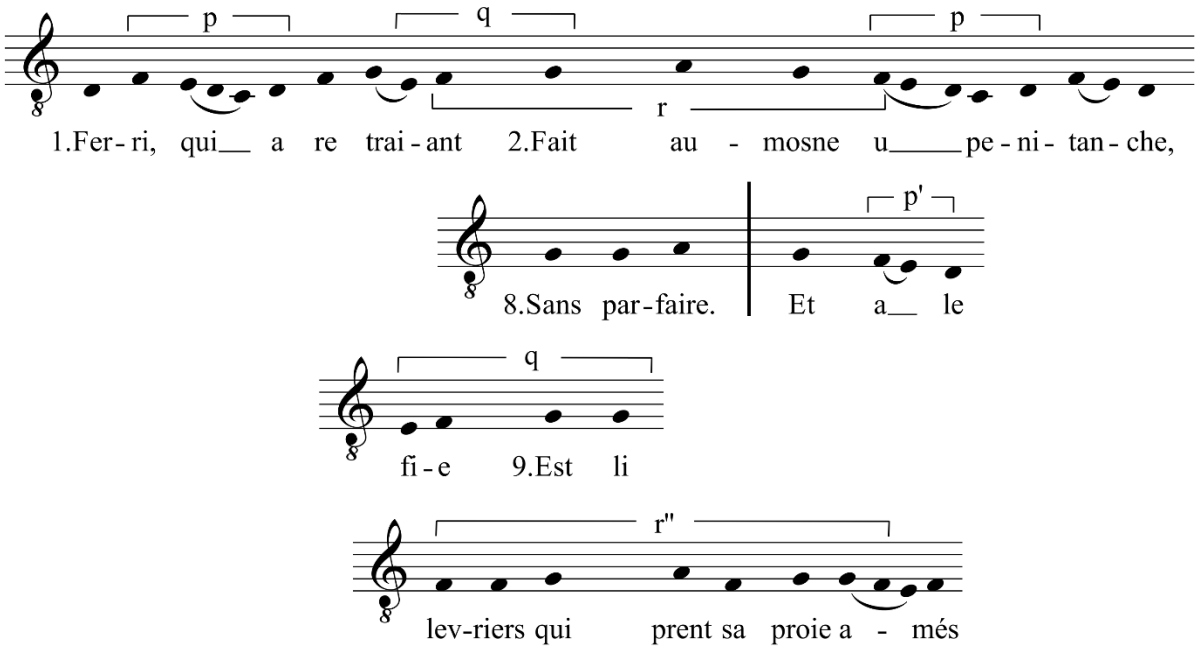
each find two more rhyme words for each rhyme sound; each rhyme sound by this point has been heard eight times. With these constraints and at this late point in the compositional process of the song, the poets were perhaps less able to maintain a structural break in their poetry at the end of line 7. But such a hypothesis assumes that stanzas 5 and 6 were composed after all the others, and while the stanzas would be experienced in performance at the end of the song, Bretel and Ferri may well have thought of alternative interpretations of line 7 in advance. There is, arguably, a discernible logic to their choices in stanzas 5 and 6. In stanza 5, for example, the clause of lines 6 and 7 continues into the start of line 8:




**Ex. 11: RS 296, stanza 5, ll. 6–8**

A new syntactic unit, a proverb about greyhounds, begins on the fourth syllable of line 8, marked in Ex. 11 by a line (although the syntax is unclear in the text here; ‘et a le fie’ could belong to the previous sentence, which would invalidate this reading). At this point, the motivic process of elaboration begins once again, starting with a very abridged form of p, after which follow q and a loosely related version of r (see Ex. 12). The sense that line 8 marks the start of a second process of elaboration is amplified by the treatment of pitch. In line 7 (see Ex. 10 above), the upper limit of the song’s ambitus of the cauda is expanded to b-

fa through an elaborated version of r. In lines 8 and 9, the highest pitch is a, after which line 10 pushes the upper limit of the melody even higher to c. Just as lines 6 and 7 expanded the ambitus of the melody, so too do lines 8–10, but only after a process of elaboration has occurred. By beginning the proverb in the middle of line 8, Bretel makes the new syntactic unit to coincide (almost) with the beginning of the new section of motivic elaboration, beginning with the shortened version of p.




**Ex. 12: RS 296, stanza 5, ll. 1–2 and 8–9 aligned by pitch**

The poetic enjambment between lines 7 and 8 also leads to the sentiment of the text being mirrored in the melody. In line 6, Bretel describes a love that is 'perfect and complete', which is set to a melody that begins and ends on F. Line 6 is almost a melodic palindrome, a self-contained musical unit that is, as its text states, (almost) perfect and complete. In line 7, Bretel argues that this love is better than a love that is begun in an imperfect state (*sans parfaire*). The melodic phrase set to the statement about imperfect love does not finish with the cadence on *F*, but continues into line 8, ending inconclusively on *a*. While stanza 5 does not divide the melody in the same way as the first four stanzas, there are nevertheless

meaningful text-music relations in stanza 5 because different structural possibilities of the melody are exploited.

Examining a *jeu-parti* through the different lenses of structure and process allows one to make a broad range of analytical observations. When constructing a melody, trouvères were negotiating the stylistic conventions of the genre, which constituted a structure of expectations for them and for other listeners. *Jeu-parti* melodies certainly exhibit some stylistic tendencies, such as the predominance of *pedes-cum-cauda* form, the use of melodic repetition in the *frons* and the *cauda*, or the construction of tonal space in the different sections of a melody. When a melody was created, the two trouvères had a range of choices available to them, afforded by the multiple and overlapping structures in the melody. These potential structures could be exploited in different stanzas and to different ends: simply by changing the number of syllables used to name one's opponent, a trouvère could alter the way the tonal space of the melody was constructed. By making textual breaks to coincide with potential structural breaks in the melody, trouvères could accentuate contrasting statements in their arguments. At the most local level, a short melodic segment could mirror a rhetorical construction, such as a comparison or a tricolon. The analytical constructs of structure and process therefore facilitate analytical readings of a *jeu-parti* as it unfolds in performance.

A question which this study has largely avoided but which is closely tied to the analysis of *jeux-partis* concerns the circumstances of *jeu-parti* composition. With no surviving historical accounts of the details of composition at the Arras *puy*, it is impossible to know whether *jeux-partis* were composed by two trouvères or only by one (although modern scholars tacitly assume that the *jeu-parti* was collaborative: see Saltzstein 2012, p. 148). If two trouvères composed a *jeu-parti*, they might have planned the melody and poetry together, or they might have been expected to extemporise poetry on the spot.[14] In performance,

though, the *jeu-parti* would have seemed a linear process, in which a new text replaced an older one for each new stanza. While this linear process may not reflect all of the possible ways in which trouvères could have composed *jeux-partis*, the analytic constructs of structure and process enable speculation on *jeux-partis* as they were experienced in real time. The different choices that two trouvères might make in response to the same melody were a central aesthetic consideration for the listeners and poet-singers of the *jeu-parti*: trouvères frequently end their *jeux-partis* by asking two judges to decide which trouvère has performed better. Given that several *jeu-parti* composers can be identified as members of the Arras confraternity of jongleurs and bourgeois, it is tempting to posit a discerning and sophisticated audience for *jeux-partis*. The analytical readings that can be reached through a methodology of structure and process perhaps provide the modern analyst with some of the evidence on which *jeux-partis* were judged and appreciated.

## Appendix 1: Data Collection Method

For each melody, the following data was collected:

Manuscript distribution: which of fourteen *jeu-parti* sources transmit the melody;

Formal structure: through-composed or *pedes-cum-cauda*;

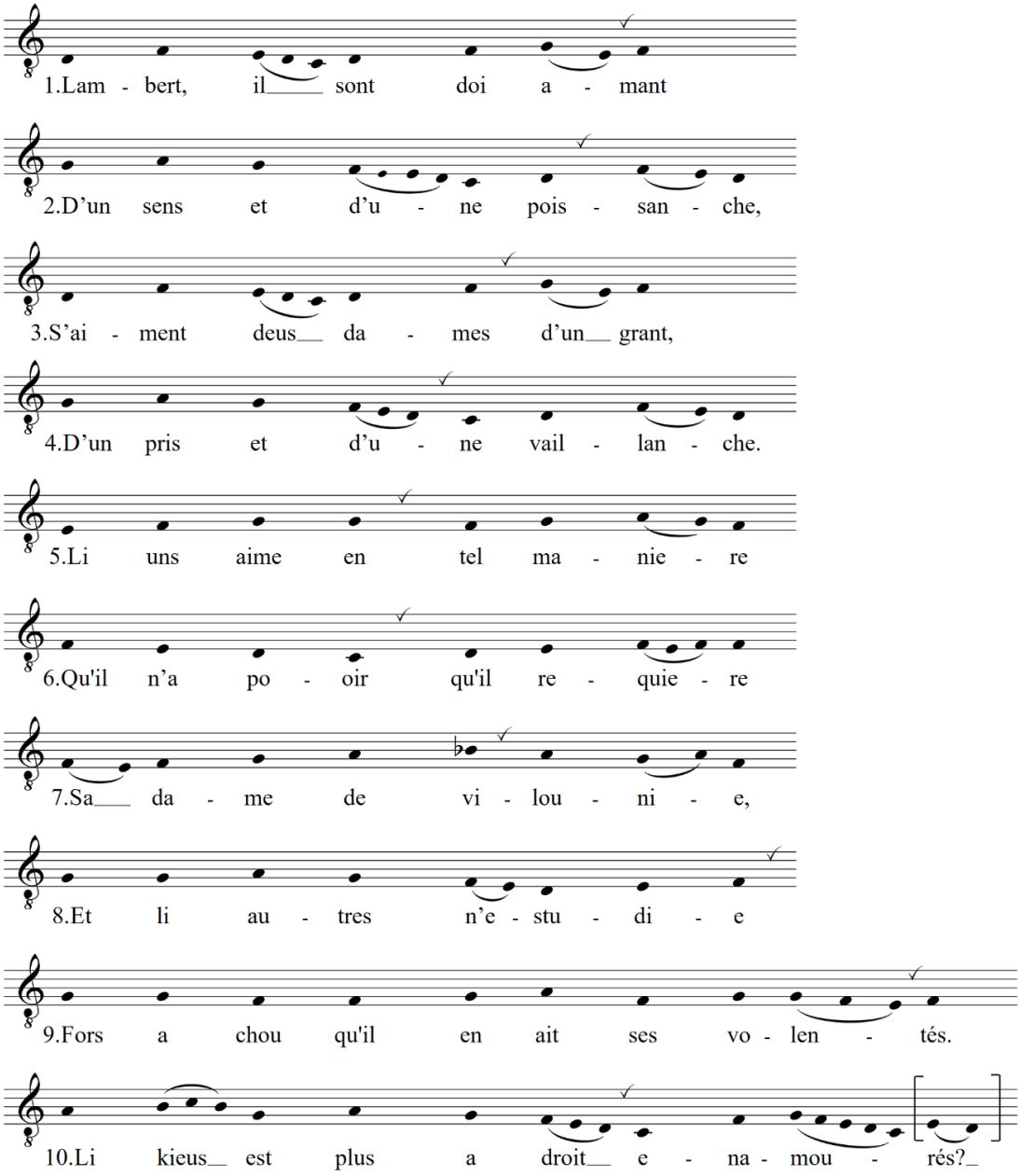
Primary pitch: the pitch that plays the most important role in defining the tonal space of a melodic section;

Ambitus: the range of a melodic section and the position of the primary pitch in that range;

Final pitch: the final pitch of a poetic line;

Cadences: only melodic gestures with the potential to act as cadences (when combined with a textual break) within the first line were recorded.

## Appendix 2: Edition of RS 296




Sources: Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1490, f. 149r [**a**];
Bern, Bürgerbibliothek, MS A.95 f. 3r [**c**] (text only). Staff breaks are marked by ticks. The final two pitches of the melody are editorial.

1. Lambert, il sont doi amant
D'un sens et d'une poissanche,
S'aiment deus dames d'un grant,
D'un pris et d'une vaillanche.
Li uns aime en tel maniere
Qu'il n'a pooir qu'il requiere
Sa dame de vilounie,
Et li autres n'estudie
Fors a chou qu'il en ait ses volentés.
Li kieus est plus a droit enamourés?

Lambert, there are two lovers of equal sense and power. Say that the two love a Lady of greatness, of great worth and valour. One loves in such a way that he only tries to defend his Lady from villainy and the other applies himself [to serving] only her in order to have his desire. Which is more right in love?

2. Sire Bretel, maintenant
Vous en dirai ma samblanche:
Mult a chil le cuer vaillant
Ki est de tel astenanche
Qu'il ne veut faire proiiere
Envers cheli qu'il a chiere
dont ele soit abaissie.
Je di, qoi que nus en die,
Que ses cuers est d'amours mieus achesmés
Que chil qui veut avoir de li ses sés.

Sir Bretel, now I'll tell you my opinion. Much has the one with a worthy heart, who is so abstinent that he does not yield to those who demean her. I say, whatever anyone says, that his heart is better adorned by love than that of the one who wants to be sated.

3. Ferri, a guise d'enfant
Parlés par acoustumanche.
Qui se conbat en fuiant,
Il n'a que faire de lanche;
Ch'est une amour despovriere
Qant on fait d'amour grant chiere
Pour desirer a moitie.
D'amour qi n'est parfurnie
N'ert ja fins cuers paiiés ne saoulés;
C'est trop griés fais qui pent tout a un lés.

Ferri, you're used to speaking as if you are a child. He who pretends to flee can only use his lance. It is an impoverished love if one gives love a fine welcome but desires [only] half of a love that is not complete. Truly, a fine heart is neither paid off nor sated. A burden is too heavy if it hangs on only one side.

4. Sire Jehan, main sergant
Voit on fuïr par cremanche
Por ekiever peril grant
De qoi il sont en doutanche.
Qui fuit chou qui met ariere
Lui et autrui, par saint Piere,
Il ne fait mie folie;
Mais chil qui sa dame prie
Çou dont ses cors puet estre vergondés
N'aime pas tant con li autres d'assés.

Sir Jehan, one sees many servants flee with fear to escape great peril that they fear. He who flees, putting her and others behind him, by Saint Peter, is not mad. But he who beseeches his lady, that she might disgrace her body, does not love to such an extent that the other [way of loving] is reduced.

5. Ferri, qui en retraiant
Fait aumosne u penitanche,
Ele ne li vaut pas tant
Que se de grant repentanche
Faisoit la bonté entiere.
Amours parfaite et pleniere
Vaut mieus k'amours coumenchie
Sans parfaire. Et a le fie
Est li levriers qui prent sa proie ames
Et cil qui faut fu pour nient descouplés.

Ferri, who in withdrawing does charity or penance? She is not worth so much that complete reward would be made from great repentance. Perfect and complete love is worth more than love that begins without completion. And, by faith, the greyhound who takes his prey is loved and the one who achieves nothing is separated away.

6. Sire, cil qui requerant
Vont a lor dames viutanche
Ne les aiment tant ne qant,
N'Amours n'a sur aus poissanche.
Ja, se Dieus plait, trouvés n'iere
En point k'amours droituriere
Ne soit en moi sans partie
Tous jours, ne ja en ma vie.
Ne requerrai ma dame fors ses grés
En cou morrai, car en tel piel fui nés.

Sir, the ones who, being needy, go to their lady with haste, do not love much, even when love has power over them. For sure, if it pleases God, I cannot find that loving justly means that you never leave your lover, not once in your life. And I would call upon my lady ardently for her favour, for whom I would die, for that's my character.

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Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 846. [**O**]

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 847. [**P**]

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 1591. [**R**]

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 12615. [**T**]

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 24406. [**V**]

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Français 25566. [**W**]

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**NOTES**

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[1] The possibility of trouvères singing different melodies in the same *jeu-parti* has been explored in Brumana Pascale 1975–6, p. 532.

[2] I consider this to be the most likely compositional and performance scenario for the *jeu-parti*, but discuss other hypothetical scenarios below.

[3] Some sources such as **a**, **A** and **Z** tend to transmit all surviving stanzas of a *jeu-parti*. Other sources such as **c**, **K**, **V** or **X** may transmit the first few stanzas but omit later ones. **I** frequently gives only the first stanza of a *jeu-parti*, sometimes presented in the form of a *demande d'amour*. I refer to manuscripts with their letter designation in Spanke and Raynaud 1955, pp. 1–11.

[4] RS designations refer to the number of a song in Spanke and Raynaud 1955. Punctuation and orthography of Old French quotations are taken from the complete edition of trouvère song, Tischler 1997. Translations are my own.

[5] The aspects of *jeu-parti* melodies that were recorded for this study are outlined in the appendix.

[6] Stewart and I differ in the number of melodies that we analyse because I consider some of her melodies, which Stewart treats separately, to be substantively the same.

[7] Of the 16 melodies in **W**, nine are through-composed, while in **V** nine of the ten melodies are through-composed, and only one of **R**'s three melodies has a *pedes-cum-cauda* structure. By contrast, of the 140 melodies transmitted in the other eleven sources, 81% have *pedes-cum-cauda* structure and only 19% are through-composed.

[8] In line 2, the fourth neume is copied with an extra liquescent E: F–E–E–D.

[9] See note 8.

[10] The rhythmic profile of the melody would undoubtedly make repetitions of a pitch string more or less obvious to a listener. Unfortunately, no clear rhythm is prescribed by the notation in manuscript **a**, and the question of rhythm in trouvère song remains unresolved. See, for example, Haines 2004, pp. 231–4.

[11] Although the terms 'authentic' and 'plagal' correspond to terminology used to describe the modes of Gregorian chant, the meaning of the terms is slightly different here. The description of a mode in plainchant as 'authentic' or 'plagal' describes both the range of a melody and a set of common melodic formulae that signal the mode to the singer or listener, as Stewart points out (1979, p. 90). Since *jeu-parti* melodies do not have define their tonal space through melodic formulae, and therefore do not strictly adhere to this definition of mode, I use the terms 'authentic' and 'plagal' here as a loose shorthand.

[12] Table 3 gives the percentage of the whole repertory that one combination of *frons* ambitus and *cauda* ambitus makes up. Table 4 measures each combination against the total of *pedes-cum-cauda* songs (114 melodies).

[13] **a**142r erroneously transmits parts of lines 2 and 3 a third higher. See discussion in Mason 2018, vol. 2, p. 5.

[14] On the question of improvisation in the *jeu-parti*, see Brumana Pascale 1975–6, p. 527; Gally 2004, pp. 67–79; Lavis 1991, p. 22; Saltzstein 2013, p. 148; Symes 2007, p. 225.