

**P. (Perotus = Pierre?) des Molins**, aka *de Mulino, de Molendinum, Molendini, di Molen van Pariis*.

## WERKE

### A. Vokalmusik

#### LIEDER

Balade *De ce que fol pensé souvent remaint* (PMFC XIX, CMM LIII/1, CMM LVII).

#### Manuscript sources

*F-CA 1328 (CaB)*, f.18v (new foliation, 5v old foliation) 4st. with different triplum. Text lines 1-7 only.

*F-CA 1328 (CaB)*, f.16 (new foliation, 10r old foliation). Illegible. Text lines 1-14 (text edition in Coussemaker).

*F-Pn 6771 (PR)*, f.71v, 4st. Text lines 1-10 only.

*F-CH 564 (Ch)*, f.53v, 3st with contratenor. Ascribed to *P. des Molins*. Full text.

*F-Pn 568 (Pit)*, f.124r, 3st with contratenor. Text incipit only.

*B-Gr 3360 (Gr)*, f.3v, 3st. Text incipit only; *I-Fn 26 (FP)*, f.87r-86v, 3st with contratenor. Text incipit only.

*GB-Lbl 41667(I) (McV)*, part I, f.26r, (number 2), 3st. with contratenor. Text lines 1-7 only.

*D-Mbs 15611 (Mu)*, f.229v-230r, 3st. with contratenor. Text incipit only.

*F-Sm 222 (Str)*, f.36v (number 52), 3st. with contratenor. Ascribed to *Wilhelmi de Maschandio*. Text incipit only; Latin contrafact underlaid beginning *Surge anima* (according to Coussemaker) or *Surge amica mea speciosa* (according to Wolf). MS destroyed.

*F-Pn 23190 (Trém)*, f.13 (number 88), incipit listed in index. MS lost.

*I-FZc 117 (Fa)*, f.40r-40v, 2st. instrumental intabulation (highly ornamented cantus part). Text incipit only.

*F-Pn n.a.f. 6221 (I)*, f.19v. Text only (full text).

Paris Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Inventory number Pe602: tapestry includes scroll that depicts incipit text with (impressionistic) musical notation of a single part.

Rondeau *Amis tout dous* (CMM 53/I and 53/iii; PMFC 22).

#### Manuscript sources

*I-IV 115 (Iv)* f. 3r-2v. 3st. Full text.

*F-Pn 568 (Pit)*, f. 4r-3v. 3st. Incipit text only in Cantus. *De mulino* written at opening of contratenor and tenor parts.

*CS-Pu XI E9 (Pg)*, f.251r (no. 20), 2st. No text. *Di molen van pariis* is title.

*F-Sm 222 (Str)*, 24r (no.33) 4st different contratenor with two different (mutually exclusive) ornamented versions of the cantus parts (first version written in red to show different mensuration). No text. *Molendinum de Paris* is given as the incipit text/title in the discantus; the second discantus has *Molendinum secundus discantus*. Tenor and contratenor have *molendini de Paris*. MS destroyed. Transcribed on a 6-line stave by Coussemaker in his copy of **Str**, now in Bruxelles, Bibliothèque du Conservatoire Royal de Musique.

*F-Sm 222 (Str)*, 79v (no.134) 3st. Incipit text only;

*F-Pn 23190 (Trém)*, f.10 (number 86), Listed in index (MS lost).

*I-GR 16 (Gr)*, f.1r. 3st, fragment, different contratenor.

*I-CORac* verso of single folio. 3st, fragment. Judging from its few surviving bars the contratenor is different again from the other two. No text. *Amis molin* is given as the incipit text/title NB: Ghisi's edition erroneously adds the texted voice of a different piece from the same folio (*Almifonis melos*) as a fourth part.

A fourteenth-century composer associated with two of the most widely circulated French-texted *formes fixes* songs: one balade, and one rondeau. P. de Molins' exact identity has been disputed and his first name is not given in the musical sources. Günther discusses a number of other possibilities, but the most likely candidate is the 'Perotus de Molyno' who was in the retinue of the King Jean II of France during his captivity in England, first in London and then in Hertford, following the French defeat at Poitiers in 1356. In 1359 Edward III reacted to a breakdown in negotiations with the Dauphin Charles by requiring the slimming down of the French court in exile. Perotus de Molyno was one of the court members sent home; he is named in a document of Safe Conduct dating from 21 July 1359, which cites his name in close proximity to that of Gace de la Buigne, who was *maistre chapellain* of the French royal chapel (from 1348-1384), and a friend of the composer-bishops Philippe de Vitry and Denis le Grant.

The widely disseminated balade *De ce que fol pensé souvent remaint* draws its incipit from a proverbial sentiment also expressed in one of Chaillou de Pesstain's interpolations into the *F-Pn fr.146* version of the *Roman de Fauvel*: 'Moult remaint de ce que fol pense' (line 613). The tag 'De ce que fol pense' also occurs on a scroll with musical notation in the second of a series of five tapestries from Arras (c.1420). The scroll is held up by a lady for a man playing a harp. The poem narrates the lover's exile from the lady, and the way in which the *souvenir* (mental image) of the lady that he carries both causes grief and inspires hope. In combination with the putative identification of the composer with the Perotus named on the Safe Conduct document, the refrain text 'D'ainsi languir en estrange contree' (to languish thus in a foreign land) has been interpreted as referring to John II's English exile. However, the balade as a whole represents a common topos deriving from the much earlier troubadour idea of 'love-at-a-distance', and the refrain closely resembles the incipit of Machaut balade *J'aim miex languir en estrange contree*, (*Loange des dames*, number 266 = Lo266), to which the whole poem is lexically and thematically similar. Furthermore, Pierre's balade was copied at the foot of an opening in **Trém** that contained Philippe de Vitry's motet, *Petre clemens/Lugentium siccentur/Non est inventus*, which was written for the 1343 visit to Avignon of the Roman ambassadors who had come to beg pope Clement VI to stop 'languishing thus in a foreign land'. Although the manuscript juxtaposition of Vitry's motet and Pierre's chanson may be fortuitous rather than representing a deliberate scribal initiative, it draws attention to the fact that the balade's message would be equally applicable to the Pope's self-imposed French exile as to Jean II's compelled English one. The phrase 'en estrange contree' also features in four other poems in Machaut's *Loange des dames*, including *Biaute parfaite* (Lo140), which was set to music by Anthonello da Caserta later in the century. Poems with this theme would have had valuable and multifarious uses as consoling songs in a period when the pope, royalty, the higher nobility, and their retinues were frequently

obliged to endure or justify being in countries strange to them. Its usefulness may go some way to explaining this song's popularity, which its large number of sources seems to reflect.

The rondeau *Amis tout dous* is almost a complement, poetically, to the lyric situation of the balade. Narrated in the feminine voice, the lady's refrain returns obsessively to the fact that she will not see the lover's face any more, although the text—especially that of the incipit—seems to have been subject to some variation, and most sources exclude it entirely. Several sources even eschew using the incipit to identify the rondeau, using instead the composer's alias and an additional toponym denoting Parisian origin *Molendinum de Paris* (**Str**), *Di molen van parais* (**Pg**) or *De mulino* (**Pit**), eliding the identities of the composer and the rondeau. The eponymous hero in Simone Prudenziari's *Il Sollazzo* mentions the 'Molin de Paris' among a list of other incipits denoting pieces played at a musical evening, which are described as being performed on a Flemish organ. This could easily be Pierre's rondeau, which is designated similarly in two sources, one of which (**Str**) also gives the top part in two differently ornamented and rhythmicized versions akin to those seen in instrumental intabulations. Perhaps, rather than vice versa, the composer gained the nickname from the title that his song acquired, which may or may not be programmatic, as Van den Borren has suggested. Although mills were ubiquitous in a society that based so much of its economy on grain—Paris had at least sixty along the Seine towards the Temple—the mill also functioned as a musical exemplum: the occasional accidental production of discretely pitched sounds by inanimate mill wheels is used to illustrate the musical practice of the unthinking cantor in a tradition of vocal pedagogy that places emphasis on understanding as a means of ensuring vocal consistency. It is possible that the implication of 'mechanical' production points to non-vocal, 'manual' performance; perhaps 'the mill' served as a title for a piece originally written for an instrument that only later acquired a text for singing.

One of the two versions of the uppermost part in **Str** is written in red ink and is cited, as the second discantus on 'Molendinum de Paris', by an anonymous theorist (Coussemaeker vol. III, Anon X) as an example of using red coloration to signal imperfect time, minor prolation. As in the works of Machaut, the value of the minim remains constant in P. de Molins' works, which show no features associated with the so-called *ars subtilior*. In addition both songs have three-part counterpoint with a contratenor, an arrangement that is standard from the middle of the century. The two triplums for the balade are probably later additions and neither makes good counterpoint in the (presumably corrupt) state each has been transmitted. The later addition of triplums, together with the use of melismatic and melodically sequential passages of 'musical rhyme' between the first and final sections of the balade, make it formally akin to a song such as Machaut's widely copied *De toutes flours* (B31), with which it appeared on the same opening in **Trém**. The use of sequence within these repeated melismatic sections of Pierre's balade is especially prominent and makes the work highly memorable. Both pieces probably date from the middle third of the century. The counterpoint of the rondeau is somewhat odd, and its use of immediate, exact repeats in all parts within phrases is also unusual. This aspect might also support the theory that this was originally an instrumental work.

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(Elizabeth Eva LEACH)