

Introductory remarks.

The first 'stelling' (thesis) of my dissertation in 1968 was: 'In the original notation of the melodies of the Gruuthuse manuscript there is in general an odd number of strokes between strokes that are repeated at the same level one or more times. This phenomenon, that is ignored by C.W.H. Lindenburg, and which leads to metrically arbitrary transcriptions of the melodies in question, can be explained by assuming that each stroke represents a metrical unit. See: K.Heeroma and C.W.H. Lindenburg, *Het Gruuthuse-handschrift*, Leiden 1966.' In the article from 1972 (see below) I elaborated this thesis. I presented my central thesis there in a fairly strict manner, which was borrowed from the exact sciences. Willem Elders, the editor of the journal, had originally, as he told me later, viewed this method with some unease, but was soon convinced by the clarity of this approach. From an article by Cornelis Lindenburg in the same journal a year later it appeared however that this author had completely failed to understand the force of my argument. He called my article 'a treatment based on statements which the author urges with consistency and conviction, but the statements have a mysterious character, or they are insufficiently justified, for which reason we totally and on principle reject the work'. In a response, that was printed in the same number of the journal, I pointed out that the certainty of my utterances is based on certain objective facts, which I had presented in all clarity in my article. I demonstrated with an example the regularities of notation on which my theory is based. No musicologist who deals with the musical notation of the Gruuthuse manuscript can now permit himself to ignore this phenomenon, or even to deny the facts.

That did not mean, however, that certain details of my argument could not be improved, and certainly not that the study of the melodies was now completed. For this reason in 1984, together with Kees Vellekoop, I again thoroughly discussed the stroke notation of the Gruuthuse manuscript in the article 'Aspects of Stroke Notation in the Gruuthuse Manuscript and Other Sources', *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* XXIII (1984), 3-25. There one can find a number of important additions and improvements. For example I gave an improved version of the famous Egidius song, now without the instrumental interludes which I had assumed in 1972.

THE MUSIC NOTATION OF THE GRUUTHUSE MANUSCRIPT AND RELATED NOTATIONS

Ehe wir eine solche Willkür des Schreibers annehmen, müssen wir alle Möglichkeiten, die von einem vernünftigen Gebaren des Schreibers ausgehen, erschöpft haben.

*Ewald Jammers*¹

Introduction

There appeared in 1966, on the occasion of the bicentenary of the Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde, a new edition of the Gruuthuse manuscript, prepared by K. Heeroma.² This manuscript³ contains ca. 150 songs dating from the last quarter of the 14th century, virtually all of which are preceded by a melody without a text. There are at the back of the new edition of the songbook photographic reproductions of the original music notations; the integral transcription and interpretation thereof is the work of C.W.H. Lindenburg. This interpretation immediately aroused my suspicion in that the result seemed to me improbable from a stylistic point of view and contrary to the most elementary laws of melody formation. I was consequently stimulated to a closer examination of the original notation and I saw that a few details thereof pointed to a solution of the problems lying in a completely different direction from that advocated by Lindenburg.

The music notation of the Gruuthuse manuscript has already attracted attention on various occasions. The father of the study of notation, Johannes Wolf, considered it in 1924. We find in the Basle Congress Report his transcription of ten melodies.⁴ Hélène Wagenaar-Nolthenius also recently published two rondeaus from this manuscript.⁵ I agree with her that the interpretation of the Gruuthuse songs will remain questionable and that a satisfactory answer to the many questions posed by the original notation could probably be given only by the contemporaries of the poet who knew the tune. I am, however, at the same time of the opinion that a number of problems is certainly soluble, that we can also progress in other respects and that in doing so we can avoid wrong paths which have been taken so far. It is definitely incorrect that the notation rarely leads to a reasonable melody which can be sung.⁶ I should like to show in the following pages what conclusions can be drawn from certain information offered by the manuscript itself and how the results obtained are confirmed and supplemented by comparison with similar melody notations from other manuscripts.

The melodies themselves

The notes in the Gruuthuse manuscript have in general the form of vertical dashes. Merely melodies 18, 135 and 147 are written using the normal forms of mensural notation, i.e. black brevis, semibrevis and minima. To what extent is this notation reliable? Is it intended merely as an *aide-mémoire* to the performer and is the course of the melody merely indicated sketchily? In that case, deciphering is an insoluble problem. Is merely the melodic line indicated and is the duration of the dashes indeterminate? Then, the rhythm is clear only for someone knowing the melody and is probably never to be discovered by us with certainty – since the text is not written below the melody and the number of syllables in a strophe in general deviates greatly from the number of dashes in the melody. Do the dashes represent notes of constant or possibly regularly alternating⁷ durations? In that case, the melodies themselves pose no problems and there remains merely the problem of placing the text. The notation itself can in fact provide an indication as to which of the three possibilities mentioned applies. The last can be distinguished from the rest since on the condition of a consistent notation the dashes occur as metric constructional units and only then definite regularities can be expected merely in their grouping.

The following now appears to apply, with the exception of melody 120, to melodies which are written completely in dashes. We encounter in the notation repeatedly groups of two or more successive dashes which are at the same level. In about 85% of all cases, the distance from the beginning of such a group to the beginning of a following group amounts to an even number of dashes and in about 15% of cases to an uneven number of dashes. If we count two uneven in succession as one even, then these numbers become as much as 95% and 5% respectively. If the notation were inconsistent or were to give merely melodic and no rhythmic indications, then the distance between successive groups of repeating notes would on the one occasion amount to an even and on the other to an uneven number of dashes, roughly in the ratio 50:50 according to the law of averages. We are consequently forced to the following conclusions:

- (1) The notation of the melodies has a high degree of reliability and consistency; we are not concerned with a completely inconsistent or sketchy indication of the melodies.
- (2) Each dash represents one unit of counting, thus the metric structure of the melodies is in principle established; there can be no question of the notation merely being limited to the indication of the pitch progression.

The significant «even» in the above observation makes it possible to interpret the melodies in a binary measure, the beginning of the groups of repeating notes predominantly falling on the

down-beat. I agree with Wolf and Lindenburg that double and multiple dashes can represent both a long note and a repeating note. The metric position of the groups in the binary measure then means that in general no syncopes occur and that in the case of repeating notes the first preferably falls on the down-beat. This implies an affirmation of the results obtained. As far as syncopes are concerned, this will be directly clear. With relation to the repeating notes, reference may be made to the following: there in fact holds for the old mensural melody – if we disregard up-beats at the beginning of melodic phrases – that in the case of a repetition of notes the first of the repeated notes almost always falls on a strong part of the measure.⁸ We must be in the Baroque or Romantic period for anticipating Seufzer figures, etc. The following conclusions can be added:

(3) The melodies are in general in a «two dash measure».

(4) The dashes have to be distributed over the «two dash measure» in such a way that with most of the groups of repeated dashes the beginning falls on the down-beat.

To what mensural value does a dash correspond? The manuscript itself provides a definite answer to this. In melody 86 we have to give the dashes the value of a semibrevis if the continuity of the binary measure is to be preserved where two minimae follow one another. In melody 146 we likewise have to give the dashes the value of a semibrevis in order to preserve the binary measure at the places where three white (= «coloured») semibreves occur in succession. In the case of melody 120, already referred to as an exception, we must in the first and third part divide the dashes into «three dash measures»; it appears once again from the tempus imperfectum sign indicated for the third part that a dash represents a semibrevis. We can now formulate the assertions (2) and (3) more strictly as follows:

(2') A dash has the value of a semibrevis.

(3') The melodies are normally in the tempus imperfectum.

With the exception of the initial refrain of melody 147, the melodies written in normal mensural notation are likewise in the tempus imperfectum. The refrain of melody 147 is in the tempus imperfectum cum prolatione majore. In the exceptional melody 120 tempus perfectum, tempus imperfectum cum prolatione majore and tempus imperfectum cum prolatione minore are explicitly indicated by mensural signs.

Wolf's transcriptions of the melodies 79, 5, 107, 23, 18, 27, 121, 137, 120 and 66 seem in general to be in agreement with the above assertions (1) to (4). He apparently takes (1) tacitly as a starting-point. He mentions (2) expressly: «Dieses Strichelchen stellt den Grundwert dar».⁹ Half-way through melody 79 he comes into conflict with (4), and his interpretation of

melody 121 is completely in conflict with (3) and, therefore, also with (4). This is connected with the fact that he has made some emendations in these melodies which are superfluous with a correct metric interpretation: the original notation is in accordance with (1) completely reliable. Although Wolf consequently proceeds properly almost throughout, he does not have any clear idea of (4) and he has in relation to (3) clearly been led astray by the exceptional melody 120 and perhaps the initial refrain of melody 147. «Die rhythmische Frage liegt weniger offen, wiewohl in den Verszeilen selbst die Verhältnisse ziemlich klar erkennbar sind bei Beobachtung zu verkürzender Wortformen wie frouw statt frouwe und bei Beachtung des Gesetzes der Elision. Misslicher ist es bereits, zwischen zwei- und dreiteiligem Rhythmus die Entscheidung zu treffen. Dass gerader und ungerader Takt unterschieden werden, beweisen die wenigen genau fixierten Melodien. Immerhin gibt der Text, wenn zwischen Hebungen mehrere Senkungen stehen, Anhalte. Weitere Stützpunkte liefern uns die Melodien selbst, die in der Art des Gebrauches der Notenstriche und ihrer Gruppierung erkennen lassen, ob es sich um zweiteiligen auftaktigen oder nicht-auftaktigen, oder aber dreiteiligen Rhythmus handelt.»¹⁰

In the case of Lindenburg and Wagenaar-Nolthenius, the dash does not have any fixed time value. Lindenburg speaks even in the case of the three completely normally mensurally written melodies of «pseudo mensural notation»¹¹, etc. He considers that an inconsistent transcription should be aimed at and finds its result generally satisfactory and the melodies acceptable.¹² I do not consider this latter to be the case at all. No wonder, the structure of the melodies is completely spoilt since notes which are intended for the heavy part of the measure frequently come on a light part of the measure and vice versa. When subsidiary notes become points of support in the melos and main notes are made rhythmically unimportant, the result is always an incoherent, undirected and meaningless melody. Obviously, we then do not get a high opinion of the composer any more than does Wagenaar-Nolthenius. She advances in defence of the melodies that we can but rarely form an idea of their rhythm.¹³ We can, however, do that and it changes the standing of the melodies considerably for the good as I hope to demonstrate by a number of examples at the end of this article.

The music notation of the Gruuthuse manuscript does not stand on its own. Important comparative material is offered by the manuscripts Berlin 922 with 12 melodies,¹⁴ Darmstadt 2225 with 5 melodies¹⁵ and Oxford Digby 167 with 3 melodies.¹⁶ Here, too, no text is written with the melodies and the notes have the form of vertical dashes. It appears that these music notations show the same peculiarity as that of the Gruuthuse manuscript: the dashes can,

virtually without interruption, be grouped in twos in such a way that in the majority of places where dashes are repeated the first of these dashes is the first of a pair obtained by the grouping. This criterion again leads to conclusions (1) to (4) above. In order to indicate the significance of this phenomenon – in other words to clarify the exact meanings of «virtually without interruption» and «in the majority» – there follow some figures relating to the notation of the melodies in Berlin 922:

Number of «measures», including the 7 defective measures below: 394 (3 melodies begin with an up-beat which has not been counted).

Number of places where the «two dash measure» is interrupted: 7 (4 cases in which a dash is missing, 1 case in which there is one dash too many, 2 cases in which we are concerned with a written out up-beat to be considered below).

Number of places where repeated dashes occur: 184.

Number of places where repeated dashes occur the first of which does not fall on the down-beat: 5.

In Oxford Digby 167 a mensurally notated discantus has been added to the melody *Quene note* notated in dashes. It seems irrefutable that a dash here represents a semibrevis. This leads once again to conclusions (2') and (3').

Let us consider from a number of transcriptions from these sources once again the extent to which (1) to (4) are confirmed, as was also done with a number of transcriptions from the Gruuthuse manuscript. In his transcription of Darmstadt 2225¹⁷ Wolf has changed up-beat and down-beat in the case of *Begirlich in dem hertzen min*¹⁸, except in the last line where things again turn out well as the result of an otherwise unnecessary emendation. In the case of *Gluck und alle selikeit* the text of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th lines is shifted in relation to the measure. It once again appears from this that Wolf did not have any clear insight into (4). Muller-Blattau assumes that the notation of the melodies of Berlin 922 indicates in some cases an exact mensural notation, while in others merely indicates the arses and thus the «melodisches Gerüst». His integral transcription of this manuscript¹⁹ is consequently in conflict with (1). For the rest, his transcriptions of the sections where he does not assume any «Gerüstnotierung» agree in general with (2) to (4).

The following can be stated in relation to Gennrich's transcriptions of five examples of mediaeval songs with a textless melody in *Mittelalterliche Lieder mit textloser Melodie*²⁰ in the present context. In the case of *Begirlich in dem hertzen min* from Darmstadt 2225 he has arbitrarily rhythmised the «Initialmelisma» and the «Kadenzmelisma» and the last line

lies incorrectly in the measure as a result of an omitted emendation. The fact that Gennrich interprets the melody in ternary rhythm is not directly reprehensible. It is always possible to perform a melody in binary measure in a ternary manner by, as it were, replacing the normal tactus in which down-beat and up-beat have the same duration by the tactus proportionatus in which the durations of down-beat and up-beat are in the ratio of two to one. The structure of the melody remains unaffected as a result. Yet, Gennrich likewise did not discern the characterising peculiarity of the notation, that peculiarity which necessarily leads to the conclusions (1) to (4): «Unentschieden ... ist oft, ob die Notation mensural gedacht ist oder nur den linearen Ablauf der Melodie angeben will». And in the case of the song just discussed: «Die Notation lässt keine Mensurierung erkennen».

Jammers integral transcriptions of Berlin 922 and Darmstadt 2225²¹ are exemplary. I shall, however, be returning to his well-considered emendation of the final notes of a number of instrumental lines. In the case of Jammers' transcriptions the melody lines lie well in the measure since he believes in the following principle which is in itself correct and which he formulates as follows in connection with the notation of the Ansbach 161 manuscript: «Wir haben also bei der Übertragung den letzten Ton, auch wenn er verdoppelt oder verdreifacht wird, als den Ton der letzten Hebung zu betrachten, und von ihm aus rückwärts zu rechnen. Das gilt, solange nicht besondere Gründe entgegenstehen, und ist m. E. auch bei ähnlichen Handschriften als nächstliegende Art der Übertragung zu versuchen, solange es angeht.»²² Since in the Gruuthuse manuscript the melody lines are not separated from one another by dashes over the whole staff, this is little assistance in our own case. Moreover, the criterion from which conclusion (4) emerged provides us with the possibility of recognizing «ähnliche» notations without being entirely dependent on «versuchen».

The text underlay

How are the text and melody to be fitted together? This is certainly the major problem of the Gruuthuse songs, a problem which will probably never be able to be brought to a completely satisfactory solution. There are many kinds of questions. Has the melody been written out completely or must sections of it be repeated? How do we distribute the notes over the lines, where do the melodic caesuras lie? Are there sections which have to be performed instrumentally only? Do melismas occur? May notes also be sub-divided by the text?

In the manuscripts Berlin 922 and Darmstadt 2225 the notes are divided into groups by vertical dashes, these groups clearly corresponding as a rule either to a line of the text or an

instrumental section. This can be seen most handsomely in the case of the song *Ich stand in ellend naht und tag* from Darmstadt 2225 (see the facsimile in Wolf, *Handbuch* I, p.179). The melody breaks up through the dashes into 13 periods; there is with 9 of these the versus sign *V*. The numbers of notes of these periods: 888848488 corresponds exactly to the numbers of arses of the 9 lines of the text: 444424244. The lines with the *V* sign are clearly intended for vocal, the remainder for instrumental performance. Wolf strangely enough does not take any account of this, whereas Jammers does.

In the case of the song *Begirlich in dem hertzen min* from the same manuscript (see the facsimile in Wolf, *Handbuch* I, p.179), the *V* sign is not present. The number of notes is inadequate for the text, parts of it consequently having to be repeated. Which parts? Wolf arranges it in such a way that successive verses with the same rhyme are given the same melody. Gennrich criticizes this rightly: «Denn im Strophenverband haben nur ganz ausnahmsweise alle gleichreimenden Verse die ihnen entsprechenden gleichen Tonreihen, weil die Reimverkettung einen völlig anderen Zweck verfolgt als der strukturelle Aufbau der Strophe, in dem der einzelne Vers eine ganz untergeordnete Rolle spielt.»²³ First of all, Gennrich pays attention to possible symmetries in the course of the melody: repetitions, sequence formation. He then discusses the melodic «Anknüpfung», i.e. the guarantee of an undisturbed melodic continuity. This is guaranteed in that a new line begins with the same note as that with which the previous one ends, or a second higher or lower than the final note of the preceding line. This principle can be broken in order to underline the main articulation of a verse melodically. Thus in the canzona form the Abgesang frequently begins with the repercussion or even higher, while the Gegenstollen e.g. ends on the finalis. Gennrich does not, any more than does Wolf, take into account completely the separating dashes in the melody notation of *Begirlich in dem hertzen min*. He cannot do this either, since he refuses to leave open the possibility of purely instrumental sections. He is, therefore, also forced to introduce an «Initialmelisma» and a «Kadenzmelisma». His melody construction is undoubtedly correct, and the main caesuras in the melody correspond to the main caesuras in the text. The distribution of the separate lines of the verse over the melody nevertheless remains problematical. The stress which he lays on the fact that a stanza does not consist of a loose joining of separate, independent verses/distinctions, but is one whole, i.e. is more than the sum of the parts – see the end of the previous quotation – sounds therefore very much like an oratio pro domo: «Das Leben im Innern der einzelnen Gruppen, die Verflechtung der Verse bzw. Distinktionen durch Rhythmus und Reim ist ohne Zweifel interessant, aber all das ist für den strukturellen Aufbau der Strophe nicht von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung.»²⁴

Jammers adheres to the original notation and introduces instrumental sections. There is scarcely any possible doubt that his interpretation of the stanza construction is the correct one.

Compare :

text	melody with Wolf	melody with Gennrich	melody with Jammers
4a	$\alpha + 1\beta$	$\alpha + 1\beta + 1\gamma$	α instrumental
4b	$1\gamma + 2\beta$	$2\beta + 2\gamma$	$1\beta + 1\gamma$
4a	$\alpha + 1\beta$	$\alpha + 1\beta + 1\gamma$	$2\beta + 2\gamma$
4b	$1\gamma + 2\beta$	$2\beta + 2\gamma$	α instrumental
4c	$2\gamma + \delta$ first half	δ	$1\beta + 1\gamma$
4c	$2\gamma + \delta$ first half	$\varepsilon + \zeta$ first half	$2\beta + 2\gamma$
4d	δ second half + ε	ζ second half + η	δ
4E	ζ	δ	ε instrumental
4E	ζ	$\varepsilon + \zeta$ first half	ζ
4D	η	ζ second half + η	η

Gennrich seems in his article quoted above to have set himself against the method of Müller-Blattau in his transcription of Berlin 922. «Wenn bei den bisher besprochenen Stücken noch Denkvorgänge festzustellen waren, so tritt nun das Raten und Ausprobieren an die Stelle reiflicher Überlegung.» «Es hat keinen Sinn, beispielsweise zu versuchen, eine nicht als Teil einer Strophenmelodie erkannte Tonreihe so lange zu quälen, bis sie endlich unter Zuhilfenahme von <Gerüstnotierung> sich auf eine ganze Strophe ausdehnen lässt; oder umgekehrt so lange instrumentale Vor-, Zwischen- und Nachspiele abzusondern, bis schließlich eine Übertragung zustande kommt, deren Fragwürdigkeit bereits Laien zu erkennen vermögen.»²⁵ In fact hardly anywhere does Müller-Blattau arrive at a convincing stanza construction. Gennrich shows from two examples how a better result can be achieved. Since he, however, again abandons possible instrumental sections, he comes again into conflict with the separating dashes in the original melody notations. The way in which Müller-Blattau introduces instrumental sections is completely arbitrary. Jammers shows convincingly in his article *Deutsche Lieder um 1400* that it can be done in another way. His integral transcription of Berlin 922 and Darmstadt 2225 scarcely leaves questions unanswered.

In the Gruuthuse manuscript songs 146 and 147 are the only ones in which the distribution of the lines over the melody is given. The initial words of the lines of the text are in fact written with the music. They are ballads, and the melodies are notated in the customary way for these. In the case of 146: Stollenmelodie plus apertum, double dash, clausum, single

dash, melody for Abgesang with refrain. In the case of 147: melody for initial refrain, Stollenmelodie, melody for Abgesang. In the case of song 146 the last lines of the Abgesang and refrain rhyming with one another appear to have the same melody. (Lindenburg did not notice this.) For the rest, there are not present in the Gruuthuse manuscript any dashes for indicating the division into separate verses and possible instrumental sections, as in Berlin 922 and Darmstadt 2225. Merely the main division into refrain and verse or Stollen and Abgesang is rendered clear by dashes or double dashes respectively. The question is whether the problem of the coordination of text and melody can in fact be solved. Gennrich answers thus: «Man kann diese Frage positiv beantworten, sobald die Voraussetzungen dazu gegeben sind, nämlich sobald man vermag, den Aufbau der in einzelnen Fall vorliegenden Form, die natürlich aus Text und Musik gemeinsam ermittelt werden muss, zu erkennen».²⁶ Lindenburg's interpretations are, as far as the form is concerned, particularly awkward. The arbitrariness with which he sets to work equals that of Müller-Blattau in relation to Berlin 922. This arises from Lindenburg's refusal «to have a last recourse to instrumental passages.» His argument runs as follows: «The fundamental reason for avoiding ... instrumental participation ... is the cogent question: what are the criteria for instrumental soli?»²⁷ However justified the asking of this question may be, the lack of criteria does not give us the right to exclude the possibility of instrumental sections. Although no use is made of purely instrumental sections in the case of the songs just referred to, this is certainly the case with other ballades and particularly with rondeaus. This had been correctly seen by Wolf in principle, although his solutions are in general not very sound.

(5) The possibility of instrumental sections should be left open.

In the transcriptions given below the sections where the singer is silent have the character of instrumental introductions, instrumental conclusions and possibly interludes. We find instrumental sections with the same function in the polyphonic chanson of about 1400.

Is there an explanation of the phenomenon that the melodies are written without a text? Jammers points, in my view correctly, to the role of the instrument. «Eine zweite Frage wäre, warum die Noten über dem Text für sich stehen. Weil so die Aufzeichnung sparsamer oder leichter ist? Das scheint mir zu oberflächlich geantwortet zu sein. Die getrennte Strichweise setzt voraus, dass die Musik als etwas vom Text Gesondertes zu verstehen ist. Das ist sie aber nicht für den Sänger. Ein Sänger oder ein für den Sänger Schreibender wird stets die Noten mit dem Text verbinden. Anders der Instrumentalist. Man muss also wohl annehmen, dass die Noten vom oder für den Instrumentalisten geschrieben sind. Dann erklärt sich auch die

Vernachlässigung des Auftaktes, der in der Komposition zwar eine geringe Rolle spielt, da er oft fehlen, wegfallen darf und der kurz vorgetragen wird – den der Sänger aber doch im gegebenen Fall vortragen muss, während der Instrumentalist ihn nicht braucht: er halt Seine lange Note aus.»²⁸ It seems to me reasonable that we must here in the first place think of the fiddle. We know, inter alia from Johannes de Grocheo that it was preferred to use the fiddle for the secular song.²⁹ The fiddle is mentioned in the text of the Gruuthuse songs.³⁰ Furthermore, the notation using dashes is particularly in keeping with a stringed instrument: the alternating binary rhythm of the melodies corresponds to the alternating up- and down-bow of equal duration.

(6) The notation of the melodies points to the accompaniment by a stringed instrument in the performance of the songs; the «two dash measure» corresponds to the alternating up- and down-bowing, the fixed rhythmic value of the dashes corresponds to the most primitive ways of bowing in which up- and down-bow have the same duration.

We consequently have to imagine that the fiddle played the whole melody. The fiddler and singer could be the same person. Short up-beats and sub-divisions of the basic value were performed solely by the singer.

The following can be stated in relation to the up-beats. Gennrich points out that an up-beat frequently treated optionally in Middle High German can be introduced naturally in the course of the melody. Müller-Blattau, too, had already done this. According to Jammers, it is in general a question of having to borrow a missing up-beat from the final note of the previous line. A final note of a line is in most cases written as long with two dashes. He also shows in the case of the song *Gluck und alle selikeit* from Darmstadt 2225 that in cases where there is seemingly one dash too many in two lines, it is a matter of an up-beat, not having been borrowed from the final note of the previous line. Müller-Blattau and Jammers give, with the retention of the double value of the previous final notes, to the up-beats the basic value also used for the remaining syllables. As a result, the binary measure is interrupted at the line transitions. Bearing in mind the optional character of these up-beats, the cases just mentioned in which the up-beat is notated separately after a final note nevertheless indicated as long, and the examples of mensurally notated song melodies – still in the 16th century in the case of Luther melodies – I propose that these up-beats be taken as *minimae* from the final note *breves*, as a result of which the continuity of the rhythm is guaranteed.

(7) Up-beats with the value of half a dash (a minima) can be added by the singer, their value being taken from the preceding note.

There can be taken as external proof the comparison of melody 90 from the Gruuthuse manuscript with the contrafactum in the Utrecht manuscript (see p. 250).

Jammers wonders whether the instrumental lines, consisting of four dashes, in the above-mentioned *Begirlich in dem hertzen min* have to be emended rhythmically. «Fraglich bleibt noch, wie das instrumentale Stück zu übertragen ist? Beginnt es mit Auftakt, so fehlt die Schlussdehnung. Beginnt es mit Hebung, so schliesst es mit unbetontem Tone; das ist aber unwahrscheinlicher».³¹ «Plus royalist que le roi» – see the quotation at the beginning of this article – I should like here to stick to the notation of the manuscript. A long final note with a short up-beat taken from it is necessary if the transition from one line to the next is executed vocally; necessary in fact in order to be able to take a breath without disturbing the measure. The need nevertheless disappears after an instrumental introduction. A non-concluding instrumental introduction also promotes the unity of the melody. In addition to Jammers' explanation of the superfluous 3rd and 4th dashes in the melody notation of the song *Begirlich in dem hertzen min*³² I should like to give another. If these dashes are missing, the instrumentalist could make a mistake in the measure since there would then occur at those places two dashes at the same level in succession, the first of which does not however fall on the down-beat. See conclusion (4). The dashes indicate where a measure begins.

Before discussing a number of transcriptions from the Gruuthuse manuscript, I shall first present a transcription of the song *Begirlich in dem hertzen min*, which has been considered in greater detail, from Darmstadt 2225 (see the facsimile in Wolf, *Handbuch* I, p. 179). It is only in the rhythm of the combination final note/up-beat and in the metric position of the instrumental sections that I deviate from Jammers' interpretation. The following remarks apply to my own method of transcription. The dash (semibrevis) is reproduced by the crotchet and the original clefs have been replaced by the transposed G clef. Tactus dashes and ties have been added by me, as well as the notes and accidentals in brackets. The repetitions to be gathered from the numbering of the verses are also indicated with repetition signs above the stave.

2/4

1-2. Be-gir - lich in dem her - tzen min mit reh - ter lieb in
3-4. hab ich ge - daht din eigen zü sin das weis - tu nit das

ste - ti - keit 5. doch müs ich al - so li - den mich 6-7. bis
ist mir leit 8. ich wolt du wis - test min be - gir 9-10. wie

das ich in - nen brin - ge dich das als min hof - fen an dir lit
gar sen - lich ver - lan - get mir min ei - gen hertz er - kön - nen git

Transcription of a number of Gruuthuse songs

The Gruuthuse manuscript contains rondeaus, ballades and chansons not having a fixed form. Alongside courtly songs we find ten pairs of a noncourtly kind. I shall be showing examples of each of the categories below. A few general preliminary remarks might be in order.

- The modus of a melody can be derived from the frequencies of the notes on the various places of the stave, the position of the finalis and that of the confinales in so far as the melodic phrases can be clearly distinguished. Merely in a few cases is in fact a clef notated.
- The text rhythm is in principle alternating. Just as the up-beat can be missing at the beginning of a verse, there can sometimes be an optional unstressed syllable at the end of a verse. Because of the consequences this has for the melody, we must in the cases of the verses with a feminine rhyme make a distinction between the following two cases. If (.)//./ alternates with (.)//./ the first verse is, as it were, a lengthening of the second verse. If (.)//./ alternates with (.)//./ the first verse is, as it were, a shortening of the second verse: (.)//./ → (.)//./, the second-last syllable is skipped. The first form with a feminine rhyme has been indicated by me with 4⁺, the second with 4⁻ (in place of 3⁺).
- Attention has been paid in the analysis of the melodies to melodic coherence and cadences. For clarifying the relationship of the various phrases to one another it frequently seemed fruitful to operate with the mediaeval theory of hexachords.

Song 74. *Als alle dingen sijn ghesaecht* (rondeau)

2

1,6,11. Als al - le din - ghen sijn ghe -
 4. Daer omme en doet geen noot ghe -
 8. Een wijf - lic beeld mi so be -

saecht
 vraecht
 haecht

2,7,12. So heb - bic liefst dat
 5. Of ye - men an - ders
 9. Al truer - det al dat

men ghe - waecht
 li - den draecht
 dach be - daecht

3,13. Van huer die
 10. Ic loughē wa -

mi ver - bli - den can
 ric haer lief - ste man

This is the only rondeau in the Gruuthuse manuscript in which in the text the refrain is also written out completely in the repetition and is not indicated merely by the initial words.

The octave of the finalis does not play any part, but the seventh does. It is very likely that the melody is in the D modus. This then means that the tenor clef is intended.

Text scheme for the refrain: 4a 4a | 4b

In the melody notation the two sections are separated by a dash.

Melodis phrases:

4 measures (ending with long final note c, hex. durum)

4 measures (cadencing to long finalis D, hex. naturale)

4 measures (cadencing to dominant a, hex. durum)

4 measures (cadencing to plagal dominant F, hex. molle or hex. naturale with fa super la) |

5 measures (cadencing to upper second of finalis E, hex. durum and hex. naturale)

4 measures (ending with dominant a, or plagal mediant F, hex. molle or hex. naturale with fa super la)

4 measures (cadencing to finalis D, hex. naturale)

It is obvious to allocate the irregular phrase of 5 measures at the beginning of the second part to the instrument. This is then followed by the final verse with a concluding formula for

the instrument. The first two verses must be distributed over 4 phrases. An alternation of instrument and sung text is obvious, it being reasonable that the instrument leads the way.

Compare the interpretation of Wagenaar-Nolthenius in TVer XXI/2 (1969), p.65.

Song 126. *De hoogste staet der vroilicheit* (rondeau)

The octave of the finalis does not play any part, but the seventh does. The melody can be in the D modus. That means that the tenor clef is intended.

Text scheme for the refrain: 4a 4⁺b | 4a

In the melody notation the two sections are separated by a dash.

Melodic phrases:

7 measures (cadencing to dominant a, hex. durum)

5 measures (cadencing to plagal dominant F, hex. naturale) |

4 measures (cadencing to dominant a, hex. durum)

4 + 2 measures (cadencing to plagal dominant F and finalis D respectively, hex. naturale)

All cadences are of the same type: cba, aGF; cba, aGF and FED. It is obvious, as in the case of the previous song, to begin in the second part with an instrumental phrase. There then follows the final verse with a concluding formula for the instrument. The first part has for the first two verses two melodic phrases. We can split the first phrase, which is too long, into three measures for the instrument alone and four measures for the verse. The second phrase, which is too long, offers the possibility of singing out the feminine rhyme completely.

Compare the interpretation of Wagenaar-Nolthenius in TVer XXI/2 (1969), p.65.

Song 98. *Edigius waar besta bleven* (rondeau)

1-2,9-10,17-18. E - gi - di - us waer bes - tu
6-7. Nu bes - tu in den troon ver -
12-13. Nu bidt vor mi ic · moet noch

ble - ven Mi lanct na di ghe - sel - le mijn
he - ven Claer - re dan der zon - nen scijn
sne - ven Ende in de wee - relt li - den pijn

3,11,19. Du coors die doot du liets mi tle - ven
8. Al' - le vruecht es di ghe - ghe - ven
14. Ver - ware mijn ste - de di be - ne - ven

4,20. Dat was ghe - sel - scap goet ende fijn
15. Ic moet noch zinghen een lie - de - kij
5,21. Het
16. Noch -

sceen teen moeste ghe - stor - ven sijn
tan moet emmer ghe - stor - ven sijn

Both D modus and F modus are possible. In the first case the tenor clef is intended, in the second the alto clef. I have chosen in favour of the D modus in connexion with the character of the text.

Text scheme for the refrain: 4⁺a 4b 4⁺a | 4b 4b

In the melody notation the two sections are separated by a dash.

Melodic phrases:

7 measures (cadencing to plagal dominant F, 3 measures hex. durum and 4 measures hex. naturale)

4 measures (cadencing to finalis D, hex. naturale)

6 measures (ending with upper second of finalis E, 2 measures hex. durum and 4 measures hex. naturale)

6 measures (cadencing to dominant a, 2 measures hex. naturale and 4 measures hex. durum)

9 measures (cadencing to finalis D, 2 measures hex. durum and 7 measures hex. naturale)

The number of phrases corresponds to the number of verses. The second phrase has the correct length. In the case of the first, third, fourth and fifth phrase it is obvious to regard the

Text scheme: 4⁺a 4⁺b | 4⁺a 4⁺b | 4⁺b 4⁺b 4c 4C

The dash in the melody notations indicates the end of Stollen plus apertum. The clausum following the dash is notated from different places in the melody in the two melodies.

Melodic phrases:

melody 1

8 measures (Stollen + apertum, cadencing to dominant c)

8 measures (Gegenstollen + clausum, cadencing to finalis F)

4+2 measures (cadencing to dominant c and upper second of finalis G respectively)

4+3 measures (cadencing to plagal dominant a and finalis F respectively)

6 measures (cadencing to dominant c).

melody 2

8 measures (Stollen + apertum, cadencing to dominant c)

9 measures (Gegenstollen + clausum, cadencing to finalis F)

4 measures (cadencing to dominant c)

5 measures (cadencing to finalis F)

6 measures (cadencing to dominant c)

The verses of the Stollen fit the Stollen melodies without further problems. The three melodic phrases of the Abgesang have to serve for four verse lines. It is obvious to sing the refrain line rhyming with the preceding verse to the repeated last phrase. The 9 and 5 measures respectively in the second melody where the first melody has 8 and 4 measures respectively point to a widened cadence. Of interest are the two and three measures which the first melody has in excess of the second melody. They both contain a cadence motif with a characteristic falling fourth and are clearly intended for the instrument alone. In the last phrase the head of two measures is likewise intended clearly instrumentally; in the case of the second melody, the instrument anticipates the melodic movement e g f of the verse.

Song 79. *Dijn troost allein* (ballade)

2 4
 { Dijn troost al - lein In trau - wen rein So
 { Vor di ne gein No groot no klein Wilt
 1 2
 bem ich dijn vroi - lic zijn } Dijn lief - lic scijn Mi
 { Die hert - ze mijn Es
 1 2
 al - le pijn Ver - dri - ven can Mijn lief - ste man
 dijn ei - ghijn
 In wil di num - mer scei - den van

The sixth of the finalis does not play any part. The melody can be in the D modus. That means that the tenor clef is intended.

Text scheme: 2a 2a 2b ÷ 2a 2a 2b ÷ 2b 2b 2c ÷ 2b 2b 2c ÷ 4C

The first double dash in the melody notation indicates the end of Stollen plus apertum. After the following clausum is a single dash, this being followed by a second Stollen plus apertum, concluded by a double dash. There then follows the clausum plus refrain. If instrumental introductions are provided at the beginning and before the refrain line, the placing of the text to this song presents no difficulties.

Compare Wolf's interpretation in the Basle Congress Report (1924), p.378.

Song 113. *God groetu, lieflic beilde zoet* (ballade)

2 ♯

God groe- tu lief - lic beil - de zoet An de - ser zuet - zer mor - ghin
 stont Ende al - so me - nich min - lijc groet Als di mach wein - schen
 ee - nich mont Daer - toe so es mijn
 hert - zen gront Dijn ei - ghin woonst so waer ich bin
 Ont - doe dijn hertze ende laet mir in

The note frequencies point to the G modus, possibly to the E modus, the ending being on the third of the finalis, or to the C modus, the ending being on the fifth of the finalis.

Text scheme: 4a 4b ÷ 4a 4b | 4b 4c 4C

The dash in the melody notation indicated the end of Stollen plus apertum. This is not, as is customary, followed by the clausum, but by the Gegenstollen plus the clausum. The melody is consequently written out in full. With an instrumental introduction – note the non-vocal leaps – at the beginning of the Abgesang and before the refrain, the placing of the text likewise offers no difficulties here.

Song 86. *Ic sach een scuerduere open staen*

Ic sach een scuer-duere o-pen staen { Ic sach-er
 Eens a-vonts als de ma-ne sceen { Daer zagh-ic
 Als ick-er bin-nen waen-de gaen
 Stac ic mi je-ghen e-nen steen

nie-men dan hem twee De-vo-te-like te Go-de
 twe-e wit-te been

waert { Peinst om mi zus-ter Lu-te
 { Gher-ne broe-der Lol-laert orig. ?

This is a first example of a non-courtly song. Characteristic of various songs of this genre is that there are many repetitions of the melody. Note the expressive minimae (quavers) of the refrain.

Song 27. *Het soude een scamel mersenier*

Het soude een sca-mel mer-se-nier Coop-man-scei-pe le-ren

Hi hiet An-nin Tu-te-bier Hi conste hem wel ghe-

ne-ren Daer hi si-nen ca-nis drouch Een

jonc-frauwe rie-pen ende soe louch Comt hier na goet meer-se-man

Nael-den spel-len trom-pen bel-len Ic wil mijn merse hier

ne-der-stel-len Laet zien of ic ver-co-pen can

The octave of the finalis plays such an important role that F modus or C modus is most

likely. That means that the alto clef or soprano clef is intended.

Text scheme: 4a 4^b | 4a 4^b | 4c 4c 4d ÷ 4⁺E 4⁺E 4D

Melodic phrases:

4 measures (ending with finalis, thereafter octave leap)

4 measures (repetition of the first 4 measures)

6 measures (ending with finalis, thereafter octave leap)

7 measures (ending with finalis)

The melody scheme and the text scheme correspond if we give each semibrevis one arsis, in other words two syllables. This song then has a rapid declamation in minimae corresponding to its jocular character. The accompanying fiddle bows however continuously in semibreves. The superfluous measure in the last period is used to prolong the paenultima and antipaenultima into a semibrevis. The melody could be provided with an F-C bourdon.

Compare the two interpretations by Wolf in the Basle Congress Report (1924), p.381 and 382.

Song 85. *Wi willen van den kerels zinghen*

2/4

Wi wil-len van den ke - rels zin - ghen Si zijn van
 Si wil-len de ru - ters dwin - ghen Si draghen enen

qua - der aert {Haer cleedren die zijn al ont - nait Een
 lan - ghen baert {Tca - proen staet al ver - drayt Haer

hoedekijn up haer hoofd ghe - capt { Wrong - len
 cousen ende haer scoen ghe - lapt { Daer-omme es de

wey broot ende caes Dat heit hi al den dach
 kerel so daes Hi he - tes meer dan hijs mach

A final example of a non-courtly song. In this song, too, the semibrevis has frequently to be sub-divided into minimae. We are concerned here by way of exception with an arsis verse (Hebungsvers): /. can be replaced by /.. or /... The melody could here be provided with an alternating bourdon: G-D for the first phrase and the refrain, D-A for the intervening section.

Song 90. *Du haens mijn hertze vrouwe mijn*

2/3

{ Du haens mijn hert - ze vrou - we mijn Dune wil - se niet be -
 { Een an - der heift die hert - ze dijn Nu laet de mijn dan

wa - ren ren Twee ic niet ver - wa - ren can

Gheift mi mijn hert - ze we - der dan Ich

wil - se ghe - ven dien ics jan Ende le - ven voort in

vruēch - den vro { So doe al - so
 { So sal - ic jo
 { In wil niet lan - gher spa - ren

The only song from the Gruuthuse manuscript for which a contrafactum is known, namely the sacred song *Ay lieue ihesus myn troist alleen* from the so-called Utrecht manuscript.³³ The music notation of the contrafactum indicates that the up-beats have the value of a minima. In the melody from the Gruuthuse manuscript the short lines towards the end of the stanza have to be sung to the same notes, as can be seen from comparison with the version of the melody in the Utrecht manuscript. This occurs frequently, e.g. in the refrain of the non-courtly song 16.

Text scheme of song 90 is: 4a 4[̄]b | 4a 4[̄]b | 4c 4c 4c 4d 2d 2d 4[̄]b.

Note the hexachords: DN ÷ DN | D DN DN D N N N.

Summary

I hope by the above analyses to have indicated that the rhythmic notation of the melodies in the Gruuthuse manuscript is sufficiently unambiguous to arrive at acceptable rhythmic transcriptions. Musicologists such as Wolf and Lindenburg were led astray in that they did not notice that the regularity with which the double dashes occur suggests the rhythmic character of the melodies and in that they did not use or not sufficiently consistently the possibility of interpreting certain sections of the melodies instrumentally.

The conditions seem present for venturing once again upon an integral transcription of

the melodies of the Gruuthuse manuscript. Now that the division into measures of the melodies scarcely presents any further problems, there is more reason to compare the melodies amongst themselves and with those of the manuscripts Berlin 922 and Darmstadt 2225 in order to trace the caesuras.³⁴ It is likely that a computer can be used with good effect for this.

1. Ewald Jammers, *Deutsche Lieder um 1400*, in: AMI XXVIII (1956), p.37.
2. *Lieder en gedichten uit het Gruuthuse-handschrift I*, edd. K. Heeroma and C.W.H. Lindenburg (Leiden 1966).
3. Currently in possession of baron Ernest van Calcoen, castle Ten Berghe at Koolkerke near Bruges.
4. Johannes Wolf, *Altflämische Lieder des 14./15. Jahrhunderts und ihre rhythmische Lesung*, in: Kongress-Bericht Basel 1924, pp.376-386.
5. Hélène Wagenaar-Nolthenius, *Wat is een rondeel?*, in: TVer XXI (1969), pp.64, 65.
6. Cf. Wagenaar-Nolthenius, *op. cit.*, p.63.
7. For this possibility, see my remark in connection with Gennrich's transcription of the song *Begirlich in dein hertzen min*. On the other hand, see conclusion (5).
8. This can be checked statistically. It holds good up to the 16th century, e.g. in the melodies of the Geneva Psalter.
9. Wolf, *op.cit.*, p.376.
10. *Ibid.*, p.377.
11. *Lieder en gedichten uit het Gruuthuse-handschrift I*, p.269. Cf. Lindenburg's remarks, *ibid.*, pp.224, 226 and 528.
12. *Ibid.*, p.227.
13. Wagenaar-Nolthenius, *op. cit.*, p.64.
14. See Margarete Lang/Müller Blattaau, *Zwischen Minnesang und Volkslied* (Berlin 1941), pp.68-71.
15. See Johannes Wolf, *Deutsche Lieder des 15. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Festschrift zum 90. Geburtstage Rochus von Liliencrons* (Leipzig 1910), pp.409-416.
16. See John Stainer, *Early Bodleian Music* (London 1901), plate 98.
17. Wolf, *op.cit.*, p.409-416.
18. This song can also be found in Wolf, *Handbuch der Notationskunde I* (Leipzig 1913), pp.178-180.
19. Lang/Müller Blattaau, *op. cit.*, pp.71-77.

20. Friedrich Gennrich, *Mittelalterliche Lieder mit textloser Melodie*, in: Af Mw IX (1952), pp.120-136.
21. Jammers, *op. cit.*, pp.28-54.
22. *Ibid.*, p.29.
23. Gennrich, *op. cit.*, p.122.
24. *Ibid.*, p.126.
25. *Ibid.*, pp.130, 122.
26. *Ibid.*, p.122.
27. *Liederen en gedichten uit het Gruuthuse-handschrift I*, p.228.
28. Jammers, *op. cit.*, pp.36, 37.
29. Among the instruments which are used in the «*musica vulgaris* », Johannes de Grocheo holds the viella in highest esteem: «*Et adhuc inter omnia instrumenta chordosa, visa a nobis, viella videtur praevalere.*» «*Bonus autem artifex in viella onnem tantum et cantilenam et omnen formam musicalem generaliter introducit.*»
30. Song 121 (in the Heeroma/Lindenburg edition): De vedele es van so zoeter aert / Al ware een hertze jonc bezwaert / Dat spel soudze verbliden.
31. Jammers, *op. cit.*, p.31.
32. *Ibid.*
33. See *Monumenta Musica Neerlandica VII* (Amsterdam 1963).
34. It appears that the analogies mentioned in MMN VII, p.XXI, don't hold: the melodies compared lie counter to the up- and down-beats.