

## Draft of Editorial Principles for Du Chemin Project. May 27, 2010. Freedman/Besson/Chater

The Chansons of Nicholas Du Chemin  
Editorial Guidelines for Modern Editions  
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In order of importance, our editions of the Du Chemin chansonniers follow three basic principles:

1. To follow the original source, in this case the base text given in the Chanson nouvelles;
2. To harmonize differences among the partbooks by majority rule, in places where the individual partbooks diverge from one another in the presentation of musical repeats and endings; or spelling, punctuation, and other aspects of the poetic texts;
3. When there is no clear majority reading among the parts, or some major error in the text or music, to apply editorial judgment of style or interpretation to resolve the conflict or problem.

### A. Music

1. **Variants and Emendations.**
2. **Incipits**
3. **Mensuration**
4. **Clefs**
5. **Accidentals**
6. **Musica ficta**
7. **Ligatures**
8. **Repeat signs**

**1. Variants and Emendations.** The base text in all cases is taken from Du Chemin's Chansons nouvelles series. By far the majority of the works issued in this series were first editions; many appear uniquely in this set. Critical reports on variant readings for those pieces that appear in other 16th century sources are available on in electronic form via our project. Emendations and corrections suggested by modern editors appear in brackets, with explanation in the critical reports. In each case we retain the following convention of references: "S 14.4" designates "superius bar 14, fourth beat."

[Note: the Music Encoding Initiative ([www.mel.org](http://www.mel.org)) will eventually make it possible to combine features of the single-text approach with those of a critical edition, at least for those compositions appearing in other sources of the sixteenth century.]

**2. Incipits.** These give the original clefs, background system, mensuration sign, and musical notation up to and including the first tone of each voice part. The original notation can in any case be seen via the links to the electronic facsimiles.

**3. Mensuration.** In the musical transcriptions we have retained the original note values, and of course both added bar lines and arranged the individual parts in score format. Tempus imperfectum diminutum ("cut C") is the prevailing mensuration throughout these compositions, and thus one tempus in the original notation normally corresponds to one measure in the modern transcription. In some transcriptions it has also been necessary to use isolated irregular bars of one semibreve duration, especially in conjunction with alternative endings or internal repeats. Since these are not distinguished in the original source, we have refrained from marking a temporary change in mensuration. Singers can simply follow these as an extra tactus (semibreve) within the phrase. Tempus perfectum in the original sources are indicated by "3". We have preserved both this sign and the "cut C" in the modern transcriptions.

**4. Clefs.** Modern clefs are used in the transcriptions; original clefs can be seen via the incipits. The contratenor parts use the modern treble or the (transposing) tenor G clef, according to the needs of spacing and alignment with text.

**5. Accidentals.** Flat and sharp signs appearing on the staff lines themselves correspond to signs given in the original sources. As in modern practice, any sign appearing at the start of a bar is considered valid for that part for the duration of the measure.

**Sharps and Naturals:** same symbol is used for both natural and sharp in Du Chemin's prints. Sixteenth-century typesetters and scribes normally did not conceive of these signs in the same way that modern readers do. They did not indicate absolute pitch, so much as relative position in a half-step relationship ("mi-fa," in the system of solmization). The flat sign (b-mollum) designated the upper ("fa") position; the sharp sign (b-durum) designated the lower ("mi") position. Sixteenth-century singers understood F-sharp and B-natural each as a "mi" (since they stood directly adjacent to G and C respectively). Scribes and editors of the period thus made no distinction between the sign for a sharp and a natural (as modern readers would understand them). For the convenience of modern readers, we differentiate these functions according to modern practice. All such accidentals are understood to be valid for all the notes for a given voice appearing in a given bar, as in modern practice.

**6. Musica ficta.** Accidentals appearing above the staff in the modern transcription are implied by contrapuntal contexts—in order to avoid forbidden intervals with other signed alterations, or in order to create complete cadences. Such changes have been determined by the editors in accordance with sixteenth-century theoretical practice (further on these see the "Practical and Theoretical Aspects of the Du Chemin Chansonniers" in the Commentaries). These signs are valid only for the note over which they appear.

**7. Ligatures and minor coloration.** Ligatures have been marked with a continuous horizontal bracket above the notes they connect, and serve to confirm text underlay by preventing a change of syllable. Minor coloration (a darkened semibreve and darkened minim) has the same notational significance as a dotted minim followed by a crochet. Sixteenth-century typesetters used these two forms interchangeably. We nevertheless indicate the use of minor color with a pair of open horizontal brackets above the notes in question, since such information could have importance in determining relationships among sources.

**8. Repeat Signs.** Repeat signs in the original parts have been retained in the modern transcriptions. First and second endings have been regularized among the voice parts, normally to provide a common point of alignment. As noted above, in some cases it has been necessary to introduce an irregular bar (the equivalent of half the duration of the usual tempus imperfectum diminutum) in conjunction with such repeats. In a few cases Du Chemin's editors have used a repeat sign for the last phrase in two voices (such as superius and tenor) but written out this repeated phrase in full for the other two parts, depending on how much room was available to the typesetters. In such cases we have realized the full repeat without special comment in the edition, since the two ways of presenting the text result in the same sounding result.

## **B. Literary Texts**

- 1. Variants and Critical Notes**
- 2. Capitalization**
- 3. Orthography**
- 4. Punctuation**
- 5. Text Repetition and Character Styles Used in the Modern Transcriptions**
- 6. Text Underlay Principles**
- 7. Syllabification**
- 8. Elisions and Liaisons**

## 1. Variants and Critical Notes.

Critical commentaries on textual variants among the voice parts, and the relationship of these texts to other editions of poetry and music will be part of the literary companion to this project. The text of the transcriptions thus follows as carefully as possible the texts given in Du Chemin's chansonniers (according to the principles detailed below).

Du Chemin's typesetters were particularly careful in their presentation of literary texts, capitalizing the first word of each new poetic line, preserving the general alignment of words with the notes that set them, and often showing surprisingly precise placement of syllables, especially for line endings and musical passages repeated with different words. Yet modern editors must make a number of interpretive decisions as they present the texts for modern musical readers.

**2. Capitalization.** Here we follow the general system used by Du Chemin's typesetters, who used a capital (majuscule) for the first letter of each new poetic line. We preserve this capitalization for repetitions in cases where the first word of a line is repeated. In some poetic forms (for instance those with 12-syllable lines) Du Chemin's editor capitalized the start of each half of the line. We follow this, too. As in the case of orthography and punctuation we adopt a majority rule approach to differences among the various voice parts.

**3. Orthography.** Spellings have been regularized according to majority rule, unless the variant spelling(s) suggest some potential alternative meaning or word play.

- Abbreviations are realized without explanation or comment.
- U/V and I/J, normally represented each by a single character in Du Chemin's editions, have been differentiated from each other.
- Accents follow Du Chemin typography; we have nevertheless added accents to avoid semantic ambiguity (such as "a" for "à").

**4. Punctuation.** Punctuation follows that given in the original sources, either at line endings, or for medial pauses and repetitions of individual words. As in the case of spellings, here, too, we have opted to regularize punctuation according to majority rule. In the case of a tie between rival readings, we have chosen to include punctuation rather than omit it.

- If there is no punctuation at the end of a line in Du Chemin's print, then none appears in the transcription.
- Punctuation for text repetitions (either indicated in the source or based on editorial suggestions) follows this rule: the first statement of a line or part of a line is separated from the repetition by a comma. Subsequent repetitions are also separated from each other by a comma. There is no additional comma between the repetition and the continuation of the line to which it belongs. The original punctuation (whether comma, colon, or period) appears at the end of the text of that line.

## 5. Text Repetition and Character Styles Used in the Modern Transcriptions:

- Roman type indicates texts written out in Du Chemin's editions.
- Italic type indicates editorial realizations of text repetitions plainly intended by Du Chemin's typesetters with "ij" .
- Roman type in square brackets "[ ]" indicates emendations, interpolations, or suggestions of the modern editor.

## 6. Text underlay principles.

- Phrases proceed syllabically, saving extra notes for the penultimate syllable of the line. The last note of each phrase normally receives the last syllable of the poetic line (even when this results in the distortion of French prosody as a final mute syllable is vocalized by the singer).
- Repeated pitches normally imply a change of syllable, since to do otherwise would result in awkward vocal articulations.
- Semi-minims rarely receive their own syllable. The major exception to this guideline is the first note of a melismatic line of short notes (semi-minims), which often is marked with a new syllable. Otherwise the next syllable after that is reserved for the note *\_after\_* the minim that follows this series. Thus the *\_first\_* minim after a series of short notes does not normally get a new syllable, nor should the intervening short notes. Except in pieces with a great deal of nonsense syllables or other declamatory gestures, singers were advised against putting a new syllable on each of a series of notes less than a semi-minim. There are nevertheless instances in the Du Chemin chansonniers where this practice was obviously intended.
- Syncopations and melodic leaps are often good places to change syllables, particularly in long phrases.
- Other choices are dictated by editorial judgment, based on the style and possibilities for convincing presentation of the text. In some cases the editor has chosen a particular alignment of text and tone in order to coordinate declamation among voice parts, echo similar phrasing elsewhere in the piece, or to emphasize and even represent an important word. Modern singers will want to refer to the original sources and consider other possibilities. Further on practical aspects of text underlay, see "Practical and Theoretical Aspects of the Du Chemin Chansonniers" in the Commentaries.

**7. Syllabification.** The careful alignment of text and tone depends of course on the careful placement of particular syllables with particular notes. And this in turn depends on a systematic approach to the division of words themselves into their constituent syllables. Our general approach has been to follow the conventions suggested in modern reference works such as Maurice Grevisse, *Le bon usage*, 11<sup>th</sup> rev. edn, 2e tirage, Duculoy, 1980. But these principles need to be adapted to the problems at hand in sixteenth-century orthography (where spellings differ considerably from modern equivalents) and for the case of poetry destined for musical performance in particular, since spoken French might well avoid certain articulations that are in fact necessitated by musical renderings of the same words. Solutions for special problems include:

- To divide between s and t in words containing this pair together: "es-tre" "tes-tes" "es-taindre";
- To refrain from dividing between c and t in words containing this pair, since they are often written in sixteenth-century sources as one character and in any case reflect Latin roots: "re-trai-cte";
- To break words with "y" as part of a three-vowel combination with the preceding vowel it modifies: "loy-au-té" "soy-ons".

**8. Elisions and liaisons.** French poets of the sixteenth century often experimented with ways to extend and manipulate standard metrical and versification forms. Most important of these for our musical transcriptions are the many instances in which the final vowel of one word was meant to be elided into the first vowel of a following one (such as "el-le\_ai-me", which would thus be sung as three syllables instead of four). As explained in the Commentaries, such elisions or liaisons can appear in

various positions in the poetic line. No matter where they appear, they present special challenges and solutions for the modern editor. Our modern editions use two different ways of indicating these elisions:

Syllables connected with "\_" denote places where Du Chemin's typographers used the "slash e" [FIGURE] to show singers the conjunction of the mute "e" with the *first* vowel of the next word, all over the same note.

Syllables appearing under the same note but *without* a connecting figure indicate the decision by the modern editor to elide two adjacent syllables. Often the melodic line in question has been crafted with this in mind, since observing the elision often simplifies other aspects of text underlay in the same phrase.

Images from Regnes, "Helas mon oeil", showing incipit, emendation

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Helas mon oeil" from Regnes. It features four vocal parts: Superius, Contraltus, Tenor, and Bassus. The lyrics are: "He - las mon oeil n'as ta pas trop grand". The score includes musical notation with various elision markings. The Superius part has a long note under "grand" with a horizontal line underneath. The Contraltus part has a long note under "oeil" with a horizontal line underneath. The Tenor part has a long note under "oeil" with a horizontal line underneath. The Bassus part has a long note under "oeil" with a horizontal line underneath. The score is in common time (C) and the key signature has one flat (B-flat).

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ô - ma - ge, N'en a - voir et ja - mais  
 et d'en - ma - ge, N'en a - voir et  
 et ô - ma - ge, N'en a - voir et ja -  
 mon grief et d'en - ma - ge, N'en a - voir et

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mords, J'ay - mar - se mords ven, mon grief et  
 mords, J'ay - mar - se mords ven mon grief  
 J'ay - mar - se mords, J'ay - mar - se mords ven mon grief  
 mar - se mords J'ay - mar - se mords ven