RECURRING MUSICAL AND POETIC STRUCTURES IN GUILLAUME DE MACHAUT’S LAIS

by

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ABSTRACT

Analysis of the poetry of Guillaume de Machaut’s lais reveals that a surprisingly large number of metric structures are repeated. This study focuses on two of these repeated metric structures and examines the musical settings to determine if there are corresponding musical structures that recur, thereby indicating a compositional approach to the setting of like poetic forms.

The musical analyses reveal that, aside from a few instances of reused melodic and rhythmic material, the relationship among verses of like metric structure is purely formal. Each metric structure is set to a fixed pattern of musical phrases which, in the examples discussed, operates parallel to the poetic structure, obscuring some aspects of the poetic structure while highlighting others.

The recurring musical/poetic structures which, in some cases, pervade Machaut’s collection of lais, provide a glimpse at Machaut’s compositional approach to the lai. The musical phrase, as suggested by Göllner, is analogous to the poetic line in that a verse’s musical structure is developed by a combination of musical phrases. A verse’s phrase structure is reused when a verse’s metric structure is repeated suggesting that, for Machaut, these two structures bear an important, perhaps inextricable, relationship. The formal design of a lai must be considered, as mentioned above, as a cycle of formally unrelated structures on a given theme. Further, Machaut develops a repertoire of formal structures specific to the lai and reuses them throughout his lais. Some of these structures provide the foundation for quite a large number of lais.
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Microfilm copies of the following Machaut manuscripts, held at the University of British Columbia library, were consulted in the preparation of this thesis (letters in the left-hand column refer to the commonly used sigla established by Hoepffner).¹

A Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 1584  
B Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 1585  
C Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 1586  
E Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 9221  
F-G Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 22545-22546

The musical transcriptions used throughout this essay are based on the material found in MS A with the exception of the transcription of the lai from the Remede de Fortune which was made from the version found in MS F. The text portions are taken from a combination of the material found in MS A and the edition of Machaut's poetry by V. Chichmaref.²


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INTRODUCTION

Guillaume de Machaut's lais represent a segment of this composer's works that has received relatively little attention from musicologists and literary scholars alike. As predominantly monophonic pieces they have been passed over by musicologists in favour of the polyphonic chansons, and as songs, literary scholars have not paid as much attention to them as has been reserved for Machaut's narrative poetry. One of the key obstacles to a thorough study of the lais is the complexity of the poetic form itself. The fourteenth-century lyric lai, as a poetic form, consists of twelve verses, each of which is metrically unique except for the twelfth verse which is identical to the first. Each verse is divided into two or four versicles, each of which is metrically identical. A musical setting for a poem of this nature requires eleven different musical units, each of which has a unique form to accommodate the metrically distinct poetic units. The lai, even as a monophonic piece, requires a great deal of music and is the longest of the secular musical forms of the period.

This study takes as its starting point a general examination of the poetic metrics of Machaut's lais. The term "metric" here refers to the superficial structure of a poetic verse, determined by rhyme scheme and syllable count.

While the metric structures of all of Machaut's musical pieces were published recently in Lawrence Earp's comprehensive guide to Machaut research, making this information readily available to musicologists, Chapter 2 of the present study discusses some of these concepts in summary. For each of the lais, as with the other musical forms, Earp has presented the entire rhyme scheme of each piece, obscuring somewhat the independent nature of the metric structure of each verse. The examination of the

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3 The term "versicle" ("little verse") is commonly used to refer to metrically identical sections which make up a poetic verse. See David Fallows, "Lai," in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. by Stanley Sadie, (London: Macmillan, 1980).
metrics of the lais conducted for this study included all of the lais, even those not set to music. For reasons that are explained in the chapters to follow, each verse was considered in isolation rather than being considered as a component of a larger structure. This led to a realisation that a surprising number of the metric patterns occur in more than one lai. Since the poet reused fixed metric patterns throughout the poetry of the lais, it appeared reasonable to assume that corresponding musical patterns might also be reused in the same manner. After several attempts to find corresponding melodic and rhythmic motifs in verses that shared metrics, it became clear that, for the most part, melody and rhythm were not reused in multiple lais. Marie-Louise Gollner’s study of the relationship between music and text in the refrain forms of Machaut provided the solution to the problem. In her assertion that a musical phrase was analogous to a poetic line in Machaut’s music, one way of discussing the composer’s approach to the complex lai form was presented.

A re-examination of the repeated metric patterns showed that, at the somewhat abstract level of the musical phrase, the correspondences between lais were unmistakable. Machaut, in composing the musical settings for these verses, created a parallel structure to the poetry: the poetic line is to the poetic stanza as the musical phrase is to the musical stanza. The term “musical stanza” is simply a convenient term for the abstract musical form that provides a setting for a poetic stanza.

The results of this study not only confirm Gollner’s assertion in a non-refrain form, but show further that Machaut inextricably associated the musical stanza with the poetic stanza by demonstrating that when multiple poetic verses make use of the same metric structure, the musical settings make use of a corresponding phrase pattern.

In terms of a musicological approach to the lais, this study provides a step toward an understanding of Machaut’s compositional approach to these pieces by discussing two heretofore unrecognized fixed musical/poetic forms that are used extensively throughout Machaut’s lais.

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CHAPTER 1
POETIC STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

The lai, as developed and practiced by Machaut, is a poetic tour de force. The form that Machaut uses in all but two of the lais that are set to music consists of twelve verses, each of which is distinct in terms of length of line, number of rhymes, and rhyme sounds, except that the twelfth (or last) verse has the same poetic structure as the first. In Machaut's lais, poetic verses are always broken up into two or four parts which are identical in structure. The term "versicle" will be used for these subdivisions of a verse. In this study, the versicle will always be the governing poetic unit as it is the versicle's structure that is the basis for this examination.

The labelling of examples or excerpts within this study will consist of several levels of specificity. When referring to a lai as a whole, Ludwig's numbering of the lais will be followed. This numbering system closely follows the order found in the major Machaut manuscripts and is generally chronological, with some exceptions. Ludwig's system includes the lais which have no musical accompaniment and is, therefore, preferable in this circumstance to Schrade's, which only includes the lais with music. Ludwig's system does not include the lai from the Remede de Fortune, which will be referred to by its first line, Qui n'aroit autre deport, as is customary with untitled poetry or song. When referring to one or several verses within a lai, a number will be assigned to the verse denoting its position within the order of verses in the lai (most often within the range from one to twelve). A versicle number within the verse specifies which


of the subunits within the verse is being discussed, and again refers to a position within the order of versicles (1 or 2 in double-versicle verses, 1 through 4 in quadruple-versicle verses). Finally, a line number will be the most specific label given, and will refer to a given line within a versicle.

This study is principally concerned with two distinct poetic structural components: rhyme sound and line length. Each line within a versicle will be symbolised by two elements relating to these components. Rhyme sound is denoted by a letter (a, b, c and so on, depending on how many different rhymes are contained within a verse). Line length is denoted by a number representing the number of syllables found in the line.

The syllable count for a line is contingent upon whether the final sound, the rhyme sound, is feminine or masculine. A concise explanation of gender in rhyme is provided by Clive Scott:

Rhymes in French verse are called feminine when the tonic vowel is followed by a mute syllable. Those without a terminal mute syllable are correspondingly called masculine. The feminine rhyme sound, the mute "e," is not counted as a syllable, and is denoted by an apostrophe.\(^8\)

As an example, the line "En qui tout bien est compris"\(^9\) could be described structurally as a\(_7\), as the rhyme sound (prjis, the first rhyme sound of the verse, is a masculine rhyme, and the line is made up of seven syllables. In contrast to this example, the line "Par vo tres douce maniere"\(^10\) would be described as b\(_7^*\) as its rhyme sound is the second of the verse and the line contains seven syllables with a terminal mute syllable and, thus, a feminine ending. While the masculine and feminine rhyme endings in these examples happen to correspond to grammatical gender, this is not always the case.

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9 From Lai 23, Verse 2, Versicle 1, Line 3.
10 From Lai 23, Verse 2, Versicle 1, Line 4.
Versicle Structures

An examination of the structures of all of the versicles in Machaut's lais reveals a notably diverse catalogue of combinations of rhyme scheme and line length. Further study reveals that certain poetic structures are reused throughout the collection of lais. Appendix 1 provides a list of repeated versicle structures and the number of times they appear among Machaut's lais.

Two of these versicle structures will provide the focus of this study. These are both relatively long, and sufficiently complex that their reappearance in multiple lais is remarkable.

The first versicle structure to be discussed is by far the most commonly used in the lais, appearing twenty times. Since this number includes the occasions when this versicle form is used both as the opening and closing of a single lai, it is perhaps more appropriate to note that it appears in a total of fourteen of the 25 lais (including those with and those without a musical setting).

The poetic structure of this form is: $a_7a_7b_4b_7a_4$. This structure is slightly varied in some of its occurrences, and these variations have been noted in the list of lais in which this form occurs.
Table 1: OCCURRENCES OF VERSICLE FORM a7a7b4b7a4b7b7a4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lai No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Verse(s)</th>
<th>Variants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Par Trois Raisons</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>a-a-b-a-a-b-a-b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.*</td>
<td>Le Paradis D'Amour</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Le Lay des Dames</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.*</td>
<td>Se Quanke Diex</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.*</td>
<td>Maintes Fois Oy Recorder</td>
<td>1 &amp; 12</td>
<td>7-7-5-7-5-7-5-7-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Le Lay de L'Image</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Nostre Dame</td>
<td>1 &amp; 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Le Lay de la Fontinne</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7-7-5-7-5-7-5-7-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Confort</td>
<td>1 &amp; 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Bonne Esperance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Plour</td>
<td>1 &amp; 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Malgre fortune)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.*</td>
<td>Le Lay de la Soucie</td>
<td>1 &amp; 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Le Lay de la Rose</td>
<td>1 &amp; 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Plour</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Qui bien aimme)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Lais without musical setting

- Canonic lais

The three lais that show variations of the basic pattern are close enough in form that their inclusion is justified. If Ludwig's numbering is generally chronological, nearly all of the later lais (from 9 to 22) make use of this versicle form. Of the later lais, only Nos. 23 and 24, which are the lais revealed to have sections which combine to be polyphonic, do not use this form.\(^{11}\) This versicle structure is used for the first and last verses of a lai six times, or nearly one-fourth of Machaut's lais. That this structure held some importance for the composer is unquestionable. The rhymes used in the verses containing the versicle structure \(a_7a_7b_4b_7a_4b_7b_7a_4\) are all masculine, as is evident from the notation of the number of syllables per poetic line. The verses containing this structure are all of the double-versicle type and therefore all contain

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two iterations of this versicle structure.

The second of the versicle forms of interest in this study is $a_7b_3b_4c_4a_3a_4b_4c_4c_4a_4$. There are some variations which remain close enough to the "model" form to be included here. Table 2 presents a list of the poems in which this form appears.

Table 2: OCCURRENCES OF VERSICLE FORM $a_7b_3b_4c_4a_3a_4b_4c_4c_4a_4$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lai No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Verse(s)</th>
<th>Variants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.*</td>
<td>Se Quanque Diex</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-3-4-5-7-5-3-4-5-7-5-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Nostre Dame</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7-3-4-5-7-5-3-4-5-7-5-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Confort</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Bonne Esperance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Plour (Malgre Fortune)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.*</td>
<td>Le Lay de la Soucie</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7-4-3-4-7-4-4-3-4-7-4-4-3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Le Lay de Plour Qui n'aroit autre deport (from Remede de Fortune)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1&amp;12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Lais without musical setting
- Canonic lais

The use of this stanza-form is restricted to the "later" lais and, as was true with the form discussed earlier, it does not appear in Nos. 23 and 24. Even though this form is only used half as often as the first one, nonetheless it appears in seven, or one-third, of the lais.

All of the rhymes in the versicles with the structure $a_7b_3b_4c_4a_3a_4b_4c_4c_4a_4$ are of the masculine variety, as is evident from the notation of line lengths. The verses containing versicles with this structure are all of the double-versicle variety.

In summary, analysis of the poetic structures found within the verses of Machaut's lais reveals a certain amount of repetition in the poet's approach to this genre. While every lai, according to its form, is
composed of verses of differing versification, a number of metric structures are reused in different lais. Many of these metric structures are too complex to be "accidentally" reinvented, and must have been deliberately repeated. Several of these structures are repeated often enough, and are of a sufficiently complex nature, that they require closer examination. The two versicle forms mentioned in this chapter, $a_7b_3b_4c_4c_7a_4a_4b_7c_4c_4a$ and $a_7a_7b_4b_7a_4a_7b_4b_7a_4$ are among the longest and most often repeated of these structures. They will therefore be considered in more detail in the chapters to follow.
CHAPTER 2
MUSICAL STRUCTURE

The lai as practiced and developed by Machaut is an extended poetic form, marked by a singular complexity of poetic structure created by the juxtaposition of verses containing different, and unrepeated, versification. It is perhaps no surprise that, with this focus on the poetic aspects of the form, Machaut set almost all of his lais monophonically. Two of the lais are set canonically either partially or entirely (Nos. 15 and 16), and two have polyphony created by the combination of successive musical sections (Nos. 23 and 24). There has been some debate concerning these possible opera dubia. One or both of the two verse forms under consideration in this essay appear in all of the “later” lais, including the two canonic lais, but do not appear in these two controversial lais.

In spite of the fact that the lais are set monophonically, the settings display a remarkable complexity and variety of melodic invention to rival the accompanying poetry. Each verse, because of its unique poetic structure, requires a musical setting of unique structure as well, which nonetheless must relate to the lai of which it is a part. This leads to a piece which, by character, must consist of a collection of formally distinct, musically related sections.

The purpose of the analyses to follow is to demonstrate that not only were the lais of Machaut collections of formally distinct units of poetry and music, but that when a poetic verse structure was repeated, certain musical elements were retained in the new setting. To provide a starting point for the analyses in the next sections, it is necessary to describe the musical context of the lais.

OVERVIEW OF MUSICAL ELEMENTS

NOTATION

The characteristics of the notation of Machaut’s music in the various manuscripts is described adequately in Apel, and it is therefore not necessary for this study to examine the idiosyncrasies that are presented in this oeuvre. The lais are notated in the French Ars Nova style, with either duple or triple division of the longa, brevis and semibrevis according to context. The shortest note value used is the minima. The manuscripts do not contain coloration in the notation of the lais. Virginia Newes discusses two notational levels, one at the modus (notation chiefly in longs and breves) and the other at the tempus (notation chiefly in breves and semibreves). Both of these levels are used in the notation of the lais.

MENSURATION

In general, a single mensuration is used for all of the verses of a given lai. However, there are several instances where that is not the case. In Nos. 6 and 7 the changes from duple division of the breve to a triple division and back again are signalled by a symbol containing the appropriate number of vertical slashes: ||| for triple division, || for duple. In Lai No. 17, a similar example occurs at the level of the semibreve. There is some variation among the manuscripts in the actual form these symbols take, possibly hinting at confusion of their meaning by the scribes, but the number of vertical slashes is consistent regardless of what further adornment or positioning is used.

In almost all cases, the “governing” duration (long in modus notation, breve in tempus notation) is in triple division. The second and third levels in the mensural hierarchy display an interesting variety of combinations of duple and triple division. The instances where there is a change of mensuration, as


mentioned above, are exceptions to this rule. Lai No. 21 is characterised by duple division throughout.

AMBITUS

The ambitus of a given lai is usually contained within two octaves, with c'" (the C above middle C) being the highest note ever used and B (the second B below middle C) the lowest. The individual verse, however, usually only occupies a range from an octave to a tenth. That the range occupied by successive verses varies up to a fifth (No. 4, Verses 5 and 6, for example) leads to the impression that each verse is musically set apart in its tonal compass. This impression is further strengthened by the fact that a tonal goal, and a series of open (not having this tonal goal as the finalis) and closed endings (having the tonal goal as the finalis) is often readily discernible within a given verse, and this goal might be different from those of neighbouring verses. The use of the term “tonal” is meant here only to convey a single focal note, or tone, and not an anachronistic application of the concept of tonality that governs musical relationships in later music.

The fact that a verse within a lai might have a very different ambitus than a neighbouring verse, and that it might also have a different tonal goal, reinforces the assumption that the verse functions as a semi-autonomous unit within a lai.

RHYTHM

The consideration of melody and rhythm as separate musical elements, possibly arising from the tradition of the rhythmic modes and particularly the development of the motet with a tenor line adhering to a particular rhythmic mode,\textsuperscript{15} eventually led to the development of isorhythm early in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The separation of melodic and rhythmic elements, similar to the isorhythmic color and talea, is readily noticeable in Machaut's lais, as will be seen in later analyses, by the

use of rhythmic motifs, some the length of an entire musical phrase, that recur with entirely different melodies. These rhythmic motifs create a great deal of unity in the declamation of the verses, and are often used as important structural elements. In the verses under consideration, the rhythmic element is not consistent enough to be termed isorhythmic, though it is of clear structural importance and often functions independently of the melodic element.

MELODY

The melodies of Guillaume de Machaut’s lais, constrained as described above within the range of an octave, or a tenth at most, might be described as conservative. For the most part they progress in a step-wise fashion, with occasional small leaps. The canonic lais take more liberties with voice movement, with a greater frequency of wider leaps and syncopation which, when realised polyphonically, are not as striking as such effects might be in a monophonic presentation. The verses of the lais often make use of repeated melodic motifs, sometimes in conjunction with rhythmic motifs, sometimes separately, to enhance the formal musical structure or to emphasize poetic elements.

PHRASE

While it will become obvious in the analyses to follow that melody and rhythm as separate elements play important roles in the musical language of Machaut, their combination into the musical phrase, and the collection of phrases that make up a verse, are the true focus of this study. The musical phrase, as will be seen, is the musical analogy in Machaut’s settings to the poetic line. Marie-Louise Göllner describes this situation as it relates to Machaut’s music in general:

By viewing poetic line and musical phrase as individual elements, to be combined or separated at the composer’s will, Machaut was able to form new structures, possible only through the union of both components yet enhancing each other in the process. Although he is primarily concerned with individual formal characteristics of his poems when setting them to music, the musical fabric does not serve simply to reinforce features of the poetry, but rather sets up a structure of its own to counterbalance that of the text. Thus a particular symmetrical and regular poetic/rhyme scheme
may be set against an irregular musical phrase structure and vice versa.\textsuperscript{16}

While melodies, rhythms, and patterns of open and closed endings vary within the verses which make use of the two fixed poetic forms described in Chapter 1, the overall phrase structure remains constant for verses with the same poetic structure. As the analyses to follow will demonstrate, Machaut deliberately maintained a fixed phrase structure when re-setting these poetic verses (with minor variations for the canonic pieces).

The term "phrase," as it is used in this essay, will refer to longer rhythmic and melodic units which, occasionally, contain several sub-phrases which may or may not be separated by rests. In the lais, as will be shown in the analyses to follow, each verse is generally divided into a number of phrases which are approximately equal in length. As was suggested above, these "phrases" are more closely related to the isorhythmic concept of "talea" than of our modern understanding of a "phrase" as "a unit of musical syntax, usually forming part of a larger, more complete unit sometimes termed a period."\textsuperscript{17} In the transcriptions of Machaut's lais in the following chapters, it will be noted that a phrase, as defined above, always ends with the final note being the only note in one measure. Thus, while some sub-phrases are marked off by rests, the rest is always short (usually of a quarter- or eighth-note duration in these transcriptions) and there are always multiple notes in the measure where the rest occurs.

In summary, the verses within an individual lai are semi-autonomous in nature, though relating to the lai as a whole. Poetically, the verses are set apart by their metric structures (patterns of line length and rhyme scheme) as discussed in Chapter 1. Musically they are set apart by voice range, tonal goal or center, phrase structure, and occasionally mensuration. Examination of these pieces has demonstrated that


Machaut considered melody and rhythm as separate elements in the settings of the lais, and made use of motivic repetition of both elements. The musical phrase can be compared to the poetic line in its function as a sub-unit of the musical verse, as the poetic line is a sub-unit of the poetic verse. The composer used the musical phrase to subvert, redefine, or emphasise elements of the poetic structure. In the verses which make use of established, or fixed, poetic structures, Machaut also uses fixed phrase structures. All of these elements will be demonstrated in the analyses to follow.
CHAPTER 3
ANALYSES OF VERSES WITH METRIC FORM

The poetic structure of this verse form, as discussed in Chapter 2, is highly asymmetrical in character. Not only is the rhyme scheme asymmetrical, but the line lengths present another asymmetrical pattern contrasting with the rhyme scheme: 7-3-4-4-7-4-3-4-7-4-3-4-4. This is almost a triple repetition of the five line pattern 7-4-3-4-4, however it is made asymmetrical by the fact that there are only fourteen lines and therefore one of the iterations, in this case the first, must be incomplete. With a poetic versicle of such length, and such an intrinsic lack of symmetry, it might be assumed that the musical setting of such a verse would be highly dependent on the textual form. The analyses to follow will show that, while the musical settings for this verse type certainly accommodate the poetic form, it nonetheless has a fixed form quite independent of that poetic form.

Rather than attempt to sort through the various inconsistencies and debates on the chronology of Machaut’s works, it is perhaps easiest to continue following Ludwig’s numbering and simply discuss the lais in numerical order. It is important to keep in mind that, despite the general chronological ordering of this numbering system, there are exceptions and the matter is certainly still open for debate. Virginia Newes suggests that “Modus notation, primarily in longs and breves, is generally a reliable indicator of an early date of composition in Machaut’s works, while tempus notation in breves and semibreves, duple meter, and

syncopation are associated with his later compositions. While this may be generally the case, it does not appear to hold true with the lais and there are pieces that are notated on the level of the \textit{Modus} which have been assumed to date from quite late in Machaut's career, and other pieces notated on the level of the \textit{tempus} from earlier periods.

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Figure 1: "Qui n'aroit autre deport (Remede de Fortune), Verse 1"
The verse form $a_1b_1c_1d_1e_1a_2b_2c_2d_2e_2$ was chosen by Machaut for the first and last verses in the lai inserted into the *Remede de Fortune*, a work which serves as a catalogue of the lyric poet’s repertoire of genres. That this is the only time this verse form is used for the framing verses of one of Machaut’s lais would appear to lend this example a certain importance. As it is set apart by its position in the *Remede de Fortune* from the related examples contained within the general collections of lais in the manuscripts, it will serve as a starting point for the discussion of the six examples of this verse form that exist with musical settings.

On a general note, this is one of the verses that is notated on the level of the *modus*. As is frequently the case in Machaut’s lais, the musical setting for the final verse is a simple transposition of the setting for the first verse. In this case, the twelfth verse is transposed up a fifth to begin on e.  

The transcription provided in Figure 1 situates each musical phrase on a separate staff to facilitate discussion of the form of each setting. The setting for this verse consists of six musical phrases of varying lengths. The relationship of musical phrases to poetic lines is as follows:

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Musical Phrase: 1 2 3 4 5 6  
Poetic Line: a7 b3b4c4 c7a4 a3a4b4 b7c4 c3c4a4
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The musical setting for this verse sets the first line of poetry to a single phrase, with the remaining lines elided to produce musical phrases that set 11 syllables of poetry each. Not only does this subvert the metric structure of the poetry, as the distinction between lines is blurred in the musical declamation, but it provides a third level of asymmetry to the verse by introducing a musical form of unequal lengths both in terms of the number of syllables that each phrase sets, but also in the way that the different combinations

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20 As there are no further differences between the verse settings, only the transcription for the first verse will be provided. This approach will hold for the next section of analyses as well.
of lines are set. The phrases that set three short lines of poetry are slightly shorter than those that set two lines of seven and four syllables. This asymmetry is further enhanced by the pattern of open and closed endings used in the phrases:

Phrase 1-closed
Phrase 2-open
Phrase 3-closed
Phrase 4-open
Phrase 5-open
Phrase 6-closed

This pattern would suggest a possible two-part form, with the closed ending of phrase three serving as a divider.

The rhythmic element of this music, as discussed in Chapter 2, plays a very important role in the structure of this musical setting. Figure 1 is marked with three distinguishable rhythmic motifs: R(a), R(b) and R(c). The setting for this verse is constructed from exact repetition of these motifs, or some degree of variation or combination. Motif R(a) is used in the settings for all of the seven-syllable poetic lines, with a less ornamented version of the motif used in phrase 5. Motif R(b) is used in the setting of the first seven syllables of the phrases that combine the three short poetic lines (of 3+4+4 syllables). There is more variation in this motif than in R(a), though it is the contrast between R(a) and R(b) that gives the beginning of successive phrases their distinction, and makes clear which phrases begin with a longer line, and which with a shorter line. R(c) and its variant R(c') are used to set the final four syllables of every phrase. This motif originates as a component of R(a) and is clearly used to provide rhythmic unification for all phrase endings. There is one instance where the poetic lines are set apart by a rest (phrase 4), but this serves only to reinforce the pattern presented in phrases 2 and 3 of setting the final four syllables apart from the first seven of an eleven-syllable phrase.

While there are some repeated melodic gestures (the beginnings of phrases 2 and 4, and phrases 3 and 5, for example), there is not a group of melodic motifs that is used in the same way as the rhythmic

21 For the remainder of the analyses, rhythmic motifs will be denoted R(x) and melodic motifs denoted M(x).
motifs. The melody is contained within the octave d-d', with a final on g. Conjunct motion is generally employed, although there are occasional leaps of a third within a phrase and particularly in the second half of the verse, some distinctive leaps of a fifth. There are also leaps of a third between phrases 2 and 3, 3 and 4, and 5 and 6, and of a fourth between phrases 1 and 2.
Figure 2: Lai No. 15, Verse 11

Phrase 1
1. De gras • ce ri • mere et pas
2. Vier • ge vo • gras • ce ne pas

Phrase 2
ques • pa • ser huns par pu • ser
se • pri • ser ne trop pri • ser

Phrase 3
ne po • se • mal • is • ment
car en un mo • ment

Phrase 4
et de nos • tre sus • ve • ment
cinq mil • fois plus en des • cent

Phrase 5
le sou • re et le du • is
plus de cinq cent mois

Phrase 6
bien est di • as qui sus de • du
d'en ès cas jai sus des • tras

Phrase 7
prunt de cœur en • tier
ser a droit ju • gier

Phrase 8
au vous ser • vir et pri • er
vos chers Fils e • ma zis chier

Phrase 9
tre de • vo • ra • ment
sans li et brief ma • ment

Phrase 10
et sou • ven • ce vrai • ra • ment
pour ce pren • m'ose hom • ble • ment

Phrase 11
plus ce voy • ne
a vous ses re • ßais
Lai No. 15, Verse 11

Lai No. 15, Verse 11 is composed of eleven musical phrases. The relationship of these phrases to the poetic structure of the verse is as follows:

Phrase: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Line: a7 b3b4 c5 c7 a5 a3a4 b5 b7 c5 c3c4 a5

The first seven-syllable line is set by the first musical phrase. Thereafter the phrases, in some cases simply short segments, alternate settings for seven and five syllables. This means that the three- and four-syllable lines are always elided, and that the five-syllable lines are always set separately, as are the seven-syllable lines. The musical setting is, therefore, closely tied to the poetic structure. While it is true that the short three- and four-syllable lines are elided, the lines are always separated within the phrase by a semibreve rest, thus the distinction of poetic lines in the declamation of the verse is always maintained.

The pattern of open and closed phrase endings for this versicle is as follows:

Phrase 1 - Closed
Phrase 2 - Open
Phrase 3 - Open
Phrase 4 - Open
Phrase 5 - Closed
Phrase 6 - Open
Phrase 7 - Open
Phrase 8 - Open
Phrase 9 - Open
Phrase 10 - Open
Phrase 11 - Closed

This pattern of endings suggests a bipartite form divided roughly in the middle of the section, at the end of the fifth phrase.

Rhythmic motifs play an important structural role in this verse. The motif labelled R(a) (■■■■′■■■′■) is always used in the phrases containing the elided three- and four-syllable poetic lines.
R(b) (♦■□♦ ■ l) serves for the settings for the five-syllable lines using the “b” or “c” rhymes, but not for those five-syllable lines with the “a” rhyme.

An exact repetition occurs in the final line with a recapitulation of the melody and rhythm of the first eight notes of the first phrase. Aside from this, melodic repetition does not appear to play a strong role in the musical design of this setting. The verse is in the modus notation described previously. The finalis of this melody is on c', and the ambitus is the octave b to b'.

This is the only example among the six verses with this poetic form that differs so greatly in musical form. It is possible that Machaut considered this form to be different enough, because of the alternate line-length scheme discussed in Chapter 1, to be treated in a different fashion. A second possibility is that this verse was an early, possibly preliminary, version of the form. The elision of the three- and four-syllable lines, along with the single closed ending in the middle of the verse, show an affinity to the other settings of this verse form that might mark it as a precursor.
Figure 3: Lai No. 17, Verse 2

Phrase 1

Phrase 2

Phrase 3

Phrase 4

Phrase 5

Phrase 6
Lai No. 17 is one of Machaut’s two canonic lais and is notated on the level of the tempus. It might be expected that the musical structure of this verse is even more independent of the poetic structure than some of the strictly monophonic pieces. As Virginia Newes has pointed out, the canonic melodies in both of the canonic lais have been carefully crafted. Verse 2 of Lai No. 17 is divided into six equal segments of a length of six perfect breves each. These canonic segments are the structural equivalent of monophonic phrases and, in this instance, are identical to the phrase structures of most of the monophonic examples of this verse form.

An examination of the relationship of poetic lines to musical phrases demonstrates that the phrase structure of this setting is identical to that of the first and last verses of the lai from Remede de Fortune:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line:</td>
<td>a7</td>
<td>b3b4c4</td>
<td>c7a4</td>
<td>a3a4b4</td>
<td>b7c4</td>
<td>c3c4a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first poetic line is set in isolation. All of the following poetic lines are combined into eleven-syllable groups of two types (3+4+4 syllables and 7+4 syllables).

Rhythmic and melodic motifs constitute an important element of the musical structure. R(a), the rhythmic motif used in the setting of three seven-syllable sections (in phrases 2, 5 and 6), is varied in its two repetitions, but maintains a basic rhythmic character and fixed length:

R(a) - Phrase 2: 11.. 11.. 11.. 11.. 11.. 11..
R(a') - Phrase 5: ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
R(a'') - Phrase 6: 11.. 11.. 11.. 11.. 11.. 11..

The use of this rhythmic pattern to set two different types of seven-syllable poetic sections (3+4 syllables and 7 syllables) is possibly explained by the deemphasis of text declamation produced by a polyphonic and, it might be assumed, polytextual performance.

R(b) and the variant R(b') are used for the settings of the final four syllables of four of the five eleven-syllable phrases (c4, c4 and a4). The b4 poetic line, when it appears at the end of a phrase, is set to a rhythm similar to the last four syllables of R(a).

There are two broad melodic gestures: M(a) and M(b). M(a), found in phrases 2 and 5, follows a basic outline which can be discerned by a note-to-note comparison of the two phrases:

M(b), in phrases 3 and 6, follows a different outline:

The first and fourth phrases, while not so closely related as phrases 2/5 and 3/6, nonetheless show some correspondences:
These are clearly similar phrases, although some of the related notes are at an octave remove.

The phrases, or canonic segments, have the following pattern of open and closed endings:

- Phrase 1 - Closed
- Phrase 2 - Open
- Phrase 3 - Closed
- Phrase 4 - Closed
- Phrase 5 - Open
- Phrase 6 - Closed

This pattern suggests a bipartite formal design, with a division occurring after the third phrase. In fact, due to the nature of the melodic lines as described above, this verse is divided into two melodic sections Aa, each comprised of three phrases. It is important to stress that these are melodic sections, for the rhythmic motifs at work subvert this neat formal design and provide declamatory (and polyphonic) interest that strict repetition would fail to produce.

Finally, with a final on f' and an ambitus of one octave (f-f'), there is a great deal of conjunct motion in the melodic line, and not a significantly great amount of disjunct motion. There are few large leaps within the phrases (none greater than a fifth), with more significant registral changes occurring between phrases helping to provide distinction between the phrases.
Figure 4: Lai No. 18, Verse 9

Phrase 1

1. La sont mis tuit mi plaisir
2. D’a ne me puis te nir

Phrase 2

la mortoy la porter foy weil bonne ment
quant je voy la main tieng coy de son corps gent

Phrase 3

la well ama-reusement vivre et mo nir
a qui je sui li- gement sans re tol lir

Phrase 4

la me - tir la mi de - sier sont la m’en ploy
sans par - tir sans re pen - tir faire le doy

Phrase 5

la maint tous li cuers de moy en - tien - ment
car cent mai - le hons re - coy contre un tour - ment

Phrase 6

douce - ment et hum - ble - ment pour li servir
so - tre - ment cer - tein - ne ment s’ay a sou - ffer
Lai No. 18, Verse 9

Lai No. 18, Verse 9, is written in a monophonic texture and notated at the tempus level. The musical setting is divided into six phrases which bear the following relationship to the poetic structure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>a3a4b4</td>
<td>b7c4</td>
<td>c3c4a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first poetic line is set to a single musical phrase, while the following lines are grouped into eleven-syllable phrases of two types (3+4+4 syllables and 7+4 syllables).

The rhythmic structure of the first three phrases of this setting is remarkably similar to the first three phrases of Lai No. 17, Verse 2:

Phrase 1

No. 17, v. 2:  
No. 18, v. 9:  

Phrase 2

No. 17, v. 2:  
No. 18, v. 9:  

Phrase 3

No. 17, v. 2:  
No. 18, v. 9:  

It is not likely that this level of similarity is coincidental, and it is safe to assume that a large degree of modelling occurred in the setting of these two verses, although it would be difficult to determine which had priority.
There is a high degree of motivic activity, both rhythmic and melodic, in the setting for this verse. The rhythmic motif R(a) and its two varied repetitions are used in the setting of the elided three- and four-syllable lines. Rhythmic motif R(b) is used for the setting of the seven-syllable lines when they occur within eleven-syllable phrases. Motif R(c) and its variant R(c') are used to set the four-syllable lines that make up the final four syllables of the eleven-syllable phrases. This motif first appears as the setting for the final four syllables of the first phrase and provides a unified gesture of closure for all six phrases.

The melodic structure, like the rhythmic structure, is highly motivic. On a formal level, the pattern of open and closed phrase endings is the same as that found in *Qui n’aroit autre deport*, verses 1 and 12:

Phrase 1 - Closed  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Closed  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Open  
Phrase 6 - Closed

This suggests a bipartite form with a division after the third verse. It is apparent from this outline that the musical form of Lai No. 17 Verse 2 is in fact Aa, as the closed-open-closed pattern present in the first three phrases of the current example is repeated for the second half of the verse in the canonic example.

M(a), a leap of a fifth from e’ to a is repeated three times (phrases 1, 4 and 5) in the same metrical location within each phrase. In its first occurrence it provides a break between the third and fourth syllables of the seven-syllable line. In the two other occurrences it is used to set the last four syllables of the seven-syllable lines c7 and b7. In each case, however, the break between the third and fourth syllable of a seven-syllable line is emphasized.

M(b), which is the melody of the second phrase, is repeated in a varied form in phrase 4:
M(c), a section of M(b) used to set the final four syllables of phrase 2, is repeated exactly in the closing of phrase 5. On both occasions it is the setting for a c4 poetic line.

While the musical phrase structure is at odds with the metric structure of the poetry, Machaut has maintained many of the poetic structures through the use of repeated melodic and rhythmic motifs which, as in the cases of R(a) and M(b), can be the length of an entire phrase.
Figure 5: Lai No. 19, Verse 10

Phrase 1

1. Et pour cela mouvement
2. Nom-pas si ouvertement

Phrase 2

en durer les mains d'amer weil sans desroy
soupirer et demener sans sal arroy

Phrase 3

et certes faire le doy tres humblement
je par ro le contre moy car vraiment

Phrase 4

qu'au bement pas longement ne puis durer
le tourment que jay souvent par de

Phrase 5

car qui veut honneur gar der et bonne foy
me fait tellement par ler ves ci pour quoy

Phrase 6

son a noy suefle en re coy ce lement
onques n'oy mercy n'etroy n'aliement
Lai No. 19, Verse 10

Lai No. 19, Verse 10 is notated on the *modus* level. The musical setting consists of six phrases which have the following relationship to the poetic structure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<td>a3a4b4</td>
<td>b7c4</td>
<td>c3c4a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The now familiar form of an individual phrase setting for the first poetic line followed by eleven-syllable groupings is once again used in this verse.

The pattern of open and closed endings is as follows:

Phrase 1 - Closed  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Closed  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Open  
Phrase 6 - Closed

This pattern suggests a bipartite form with a division at the end of the third phrase, and is the same pattern of endings as seen in two previous examples (*Qui n'aroit autre deour*, Verses 1 and 12, and Lai No. 18, Verse 9).

The rhythmic motif R(a) (\(\text{\texttt{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}\)), introduced in phrase 1 as the closing four notes, is used three more times with no alteration (phrase 3, twice in phrase 5). Phrase 3 also contains a related repetition of R(a) (\(\text{\texttt{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}}\)). While the ligature used clearly represents two breves in descent, the fact that it was notated in this way, as opposed to individually notating the breves as occurs throughout the verse, clarifies the text underlay as well as emphasising the rhythmic accent (\(\text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet}\)) typical of this rhythmic motif. Two varied repetitions of this motif occur at the end of phrases 2 and 4. This motif is used for closure for every seven-syllable poetic line in the verse, as well as for every four-syllable poetic line that
closes an eleven-syllable phrase.

R(b) is used in the settings for the elided three- and four-syllable poetic lines:

Phrase 2: [notation]
Phrase 4: [notation]
Phrase 6: [notation]

These two motifs provide the rhythmic structure for the greater part of the verse.

M(a) is a short melodic motif introduced in phrase 1. M(b) is another short motif used in the closure of phrase 1. These two motifs are recapitulated in phrase 6 and provide a unifying link between the beginning and end of the verse. The beginning of Verse 5 is a combination of the M(a) motif and the second measure of phrase 3.
Figure 6: Lai No. 22, Verse 8

Phrase 1

1. Deus a - mis tant fort me duudil
2. Deus a - mis seuur ton sar - cueil

Phrase 2

tant te plaint tant te com - plaint le cuer de noy
sont mi plaint et mi com - plaint la m'es - ba - noy

Phrase 3

tant ay grief que par ma foy tout mal re - cueil
par pense - e la te voy plus que ne sueil

Phrase 4

dont mi oueil que sou - vent mueil et cuer es - tremt
la me vueil la sont mi vueil la mes cuers mant

Phrase 5

vi - sai - re pa - li et taint gar - ni d'af - froy
la Mort pa - que la me man - tier, car la m'ot - troy

Phrase 6

et d'a - noy sans es - ba - noy mon - strent mon duudil
la ce croy de la mort doy pas - ser le sueil
Lai No. 22, Verse 8

Lai No. 22, Verse 8 is notated at the level of the tempus. The musical setting is divided into six separate phrases which are related to the poetic structure in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<td>b3b4c4</td>
<td>c7a4</td>
<td>a3a4b4</td>
<td>b7c4</td>
<td>c3c4a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first poetic line is set individually while all subsequent lines are collected in eleven-syllable groups as seen in the previous examples.

The pattern of phrase endings is as follows:

- Phrase 1 - Open
- Phrase 2 - Open
- Phrase 3 - Closed
- Phrase 4 - Open
- Phrase 5 - Open
- Phrase 6 - Closed

This pattern, variant from the previous examples by its open ended first phrase, nonetheless suggests a bipartite form like the other examples, with a division after the third phrase.

As has been observed in the previous examples, rhythmic and melodic motifs play an important role in the organisation of the musical setting. R(a) is introduced in phrase 2 and is repeated in phrases 3, 4 and 6 with some variation as shown below:

Phrase 2:   . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Phrase 3:   . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Phrase 4:   . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Phrase 6:   . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
The use of this rhythmic pattern in four of the six phrases provides a declamatory rhythmic unity, bordering on isorhythm, that is only altered in the first and fifth phrases, and then only partially. R(b), the rhythmic motif used for closure in all six phrases links even phrases 1 and 5. R(b) is introduced in the first phrase and then repeated, with some variation, in every other phrase:

Phrase 1: \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\)
Phrase 2: \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\)
Phrase 3: \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\)
Phrase 4: \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\)
Phrase 5: \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\)
Phrase 6: \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\) \(\bullet\)

This ensures that the final four syllables of every phrase receive the same rhythmic treatment.

\(M(a)\) is a melodic fragment introduced in phrase 2 and repeated exactly in phrase 6. \(M(b)\) is introduced as the closing melody in phrase 3 and is repeated as the closing section of phrase 6. Phrase 6, therefore, is composed of previously heard melodic and rhythmic material and combines the opening of phrase 2 with the closed ending of phrase 3 thus recapitulating a large section of the first half of this verse in its entirety and providing musical closure to the verse.

One final motif links phrases 4 and 5, and makes use of both rhythmic and melodic elements:

The preceding analyses have demonstrated several important aspects of Machaut's compositional approach to the settings of verses sharing the poetic structure \(a_7b_7b_4c_4c_7a_4a_4a_4b_4b_7c_4c_3c_4a_4\). Machaut utilised a musical form of six phrases for this verse type, wherein the first phrase is used to set the first line
of poetry, and the subsequent five phrases provide settings for groupings of poetic lines of eleven syllables each. The eleven syllable phrases are formed either by the elision of three poetic lines (3+3+4 syllables) or two poetic lines (7+4 syllables).

This musical phrase structure is consistent in all but one of the verses of versicle form: a7b3b4c4c7a4a3a4b7c4c3c4a4. The one exception, Lai No. 15, Verse 11, differs slightly in its poetic structure and is thus set apart from this group of verses poetically as well as musically, in spite of its overall structural similarity. This musical/poetic form is so stable that even when the music is manipulated to form a three-voice canon (Lai No. 17, Verse 2), the basic phrase structure remains unaltered.

Another characteristic of the phrase-structure of this verse type is a closed ending on the third and sixth phrases (and in all but one example, Lai No. 22, Verse 8, on the first phrase as well). This basic bipartite form may have suggested its use in the canonic lai which, as described above, is a three-phrase statement followed by a three phrase section repeating the melodic material of the first section (Aa). The first section of Lai No. 18, Verse 9, presents an almost identical statement of the rhythmic material of the first section of Lai No. 17, Verse 2, suggesting a likely instance of modelling, with a focus on a form divisible into two sections, as only the first half was used in Lai No. 18, Verse 9.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSES OF VERSES WITH METRIC FORM

\[ a_1 a_2 b_1 a_4 a_3 b_4 b_7 a_4 \]

The metric form \( a_1 a_2 b_1 a_4 a_3 b_4 b_7 a_4 \) is, like the form \( a_7 b_3 b_4 c_4 a_4 a_3 b_4 b_7 c_3 c_4 a_4 \), asymmetrical in nature. The two verse forms are also similar in that there is an emphasis on the seven-syllable poetic line, as well as an emphasis on lines that combine to produce eleven syllables. As discussed in Chapter 1, the metric form \( a_1 a_2 b_1 a_4 a_3 b_4 b_7 a_4 \) is used in over half of Machaut's lais and, in six cases, is used as the form for the first and last verses of a lai.

As will be demonstrated in the analyses to follow, this metric form has a highly consistent musical form throughout the lais. It is repeated so often, and is treated in a fixed manner so regularly, that it becomes a signature verse form for Machaut.
Figure 7: Lai No. 6, Verse 10

Phrase 1

1. Et si n'est qui me confort
2. Pour celle que j'aim si fort

Phrase 2

ne plus requier confort n'ais ligement
que j'ay tant de des confort et de tourment

Phrase 3

ciens endured le mal que port
que mors sui certainement sans mal de port

Phrase 4

com eil qui veil sans de port tres humblement
se Petite qui enli dort proximelement

Phrase 5

languir amoureusement jus qu a sa mort
ne met son core autrement de mon acort
Lai No. 6, Verse 10

Lai No. 6, Verse 10, notated at the tempus level, has a five phrase musical form. The relationship of musical phrases to poetic lines presents an individually set first line of seven syllables, followed by paired groupings of seven- and four-syllable lines:

Phrase:  1  2  3  4  5  
Line:  a7  a7b4  b7a4  a7b4  b7a4

This verse has a finalis on d' and an ambitus of c'-c". There are two major tonal foci around a and d, signified by the use of accidentals on g and c when leading to these goals. If one considers a closed phrase ending to be a phrase which ends on the finalis d', the following pattern of phrase endings occurs:

Phrase 1 - Open  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Closed  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Closed

This pattern implies an emphasized closure at the end of the third phrase and, of course, at the end of the fifth phrase.

As was noted in the previous chapter, rhythmic and melodic motifs play a large role in the musical organisation of the verses of the lais. R(a) is introduced as the rhythmic setting for the final five syllables of the first phrase. It is used again in phrase 2 as the setting for the final five syllables of the seven-syllable poetic line. This motif, along with its melodic component M(a) is used again as the setting for the four-syllable line that concludes phrase 4. R(b) and M(b) are the opening seven notes of phrase 2 and are used again as the opening for phrase 5. R(c) is the rhythmic setting for the four-syllable poetic line in phrase 2. This motif is reused for the four-syllable poetic lines in phrases 3 and 5 as well. M(c), the melodic element of the setting for the four-syllable line in phrase 3, is used again in phrase 5 to conclude
the verse. M(d) is a melodic fragment \((g-f-e-f-d-c-d)\) that appears first in phrase 2, but is repeated in phrases 3, 4 and 5 as well. M(d), in each case, is used as a melisma toward the end of the seven-syllable line in each phrase and, in phrases 2, 3 and 5, it is used to link the seven- and four-syllable poetic lines.

The motivic activity in this verse serves, at times, to demarcate recurring poetic structures which are obscured by the musical phraseology. It also serves the purely musical function of creating a series of structurally significant points of musical repetition that are apparently not related to the poetic text but function in the development of a somewhat independent musical form. Thus while R(c) serves to rhythmically distinguish the four-syllable lines in Phrases 2, 3 and 5, M(c) marks the points where larger musical structures end. The combination of R(a)/M(a) and R(b)/M(b), ending Phrases 1 and 4 and beginning Phrases 2 and 5 respectively, serves a similar musical function of recapitulation while not being rigidly linked to the poetic structures they are introduced with.
Figure 8: Lai No. 10, Verse 11

Phrase 1

1. Bien croy que le grant désir
2. Ce te fait teindre et palir

Phrase 2

que tu as de revenir a fait bensaut
demen ter plourer germir et en tres saut

Phrase 3

de ton euer et quil l'as saut par grant a ir
fai re meint tour et meint saut et meint soupir

Phrase 4

et quil trait pour li hon nir dont il tres saut
bien m'en scay a quoy tenir car tel as saut

Phrase 5

gar ros de fruit et du chant par sou vemir
tous les jours souffrir me faut et sous tenir
Lai No. 10, Verse 11

Lai No. 10, Verse 11, notated at the *tempus* level, is comprised of five musical phrases. The first poetic line is set individually and all subsequent lines are paired in eleven-syllable groupings:

Phrase: 1 2 3 4 5  
Line: a7 a7b4 b7a4 a7b4 b7a4

This verse has a *finalis* on *d*’, and shares a similar pattern of phrase endings with Lai No. 6, Verse 10:

Phrase 1 - Open  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Closed  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Closed

The use of *d*’ at the end of phrase 3 provides an emphasized internal closure in the stanza, and effectively divides the musical form into two sections.

This verse also makes use of a motif introduced at the end of the fourth phrase in Lai No. 6, Verse 10 for the close of the fourth phrase (R(a)).

R(b) is the rhythmic setting for the final four syllables of the first phrase. This motif is used again for the four-syllable poetic lines in phrases 3 and 5. In fact, the rhythmic settings for phrases 3 and 5 in their entirety, and the setting for the beginning of phrase 2, are very similar:

Phrase 2:  
Phrase 3:  
Phrase 5:  

M(a), the melodic element of the opening of phrase 2, is repeated at the beginning of phrase 5.

R(c) is the rhythmic setting for the four-syllable line in phrase 2. A similar motif, R(c’), is used for the
setting of the four-syllable line at the end of phrase 4. The seven-syllable line in phrase 4 also uses R(b) and R(b') in close succession.
Figure 9: Lai No. 14, Verse 9

Phrase 1
1. Si me doy mout con-for-ter
2. Et quant par li re-gar-der

Phrase 2
et dou ce-ment es-pe-rer joi-ne et de-port
voy les mil-leurs a-men-der ce se-roit tort

Phrase 3
de ces y-ma-gue por-ter et veuil gar-der
puisque de tout mon ef-fort la veuil lo-er

Phrase 4
en mon cuer ser-vir lo-er jus-qu’a sa mort
et des-sus tous a-ou-ter s’au-cun con-fort

Phrase 5
ei a-pres se-ron mi for-t en li a-mor
n’a-vot-e pour a-mer for-t et de-si-ver
Lai No. 14, Verse 9

Lai No. 14, Verse 9 is notated at the tempus level, has a finalis on d', and is comprised of five musical phrases. The relationship of musical phrases to poetic lines is the same as has been observed in the two previous examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line:</td>
<td>a7</td>
<td>a7b4</td>
<td>b7a4</td>
<td>a7b4</td>
<td>b7a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pattern of open and closed phrase endings, however, differs significantly from the previous examples:

Phrase 1 - Closed
Phrase 2 - Open
Phrase 3 - Open
Phrase 4 - Closed
Phrase 5 - Closed

This may signify a heightened interplay with the poetic context of the verse as the rhyme words for those phrases with closed endings (conforter, mort, amor) are key thematic ideas and are further stressed by the repose granted by a phrase ending on the finalis.

R(a) is the rhythmic element of phrase 1. This rhythmic pattern is used again for the settings of the seven-syllable poetic lines in phrases 4 and 5:

Phrase 1: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩
Phrase 4: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩
Phrase 5: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

A portion of this rhythmic pattern, R(b), which is used as the setting for the final four syllables of phrase 1 (and of the seven-syllable line in phrase 5), is also used for the setting of the four-syllable poetic line in phrase 2. R(c), the rhythmic setting for the final four syllables of the seven-syllable poetic line in
phrase 2, is used to set the four-syllable lines in phrases 3, 4 and 5. \( M(a) \) is the melodic opening for phrase 1 and is reused in the opening of phrase 4.
Figure 10: Lai No. 15, Verse 1

Phrase 1

1. Construe ce doux mois de mayo
2. Ne suis dignes bien le say

Phrase 2

pour savoir le cœur plus gay et plus joli
de li loer c'est le ray qui en be li

Phrase 3

et pour cel lecia qui mot tri vueil faire un lay
nous ha tous et est clary dou soleil vray

Phrase 4

mais comment je le fer ray m'est ba hi
si que ma fi ance a vray si ferme en li

Phrase 5

car trop petit soens en mi pour le faire say
tou dis qu'a son neur ein si corn men se ray
Lai No. 15, Verses 1 and 12

Lai No. 15, Verses 1 and 12 represent the first occurrence of the metric form $a_7a_7b_4b_7a_7b_4b_7a_7$ being used in the first and final verses of a lai. The verses are identical except that Verse 12 is transcribed upward by a fifth. This discussion will, therefore, only take into account Verse 1, although all observations are equally applicable to both verses.

Lai No. 15, Verse 1, notated at the *modus* level, has a musical setting consisting of five phrases.

The relationship of musical phrase to poetic line in this verse is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line:</td>
<td>a7</td>
<td>a7b4</td>
<td>b7a4</td>
<td>a7b4</td>
<td>b7a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This verse has a *finalis* on $f$. The pattern of open and closed phrase endings is different from the previous examples:

Phrase 1 - Closed
Phrase 2 - Open
Phrase 3 - Closed
Phrase 4 - Open
Phrase 5 - Closed

Two significant rhythmic motifs permeate the setting of this verse. R(a) is repeated for the final four syllables of every phrase:

Phrase 1: \[\text{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\]
Phrase 2: \[\text{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\]
Phrase 3: \[\text{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\]
Phrase 4: \[\text{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\]
Phrase 5: \[\text{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\]

Phrases 3 and 5 end on perfect longs, followed by perfect long rests. However, as Newes
suggests, in a monophonic setting it is not absolutely necessary to consider a rest at the end of a phrase to be given its full notated value. The rests at the end of the other phrases all serve to fill out a perfection, and are thus rhythmically significant. It would seem likely that the rests concluding phrases 3 and 5 do not signify a perfect long, but suggest a pause to divide the phrases. Whether or not these rests should be taken at full value, they suggest a formal division of the verse after the third phrase having an equal weight as the pause at the end of the fifth phrase. This notational division coincides with the closed phrase endings of phrases 3 and 5 to enhance the impression of formal division.

M(a), the closing four syllables of phrase 1, is repeated exactly at the end of phrase 5. R(b), the rhythmic element of phrase 3, is repeated in phrases 4 and 5 in varied, but related, forms:

Phrase 3: \[\text{Patterns}\]
Phrase 4: \[\text{Patterns}\]
Phrase 5: \[\text{Patterns}\]

Phrases 4 and 5 begin with the same melodic gesture \(c'-b-c\).

The use of R(b) for the final two phrases which, as has been shown form one formal unit, provides a sense of development for a motif introduced in the first formal section. The recapitulation of M(a) at the end of the verse enhances the impression that the final two phrases act as a musical summary of the first three phrases.

Figure 11: Lai No. 16, Verse 2

Canonic Segment 1

Canonic Segment 2

Canonic Segment 3

Canonic Segment 4

Canonic Segment 5

Canonic Segment 6
Lai No. 16, Verse 2

Lai No. 16 is one of two canonic lais written by Machaut. As Newes has described, the musical structure of each canonic verse is carefully designed to contain a given number of combinable segments of equal length. The verses in other lais which take for their metric structure the pattern \( a_7a_7b_4b_7a_4a_7b_4b_7a_4 \) have phrases of varying lengths wherein the first phrase is invariably the shortest while the remaining phrases may or may not be of equal length, but longer than the first. Lai No. 16, Verse 2 is constructed from six canonic segments, each of which is six breves in duration (six measures in the transcription).

This structure appears to set Lai No. 16, Verse 2 apart from other verses of a similar metric form which are consistently set to five musical phrases. Newes distinguishes seven musical phrases within the six canonic segments. However, the six canonic segments appear to be a structurally altered version of the basic five phrase paradigm found in the other examples of this metric form. Figure 12, a rearrangement of the musical material of Figure 11, demonstrates this. Square brackets denote potentially altered segments including areas of prolongation and the addition of textless notes:

---

24 Newes, “Turning Fortune’s Wheel,” 95-121.

Figure 12: Lai No. 16, Verse 2, Underlying Phrase Structure

Phrase 1
Ex ou por -roit en que -rir
Mais a -me ne peut pe -rir

Phrase 2
la joie qui-amen -rir ne peut ne fi -rir
n'a dem -nation ve -rir qui son temps u -ser

Phrase 3
et qui ne fait que dou -bler en joie -sus plai -rir
en li ser-vir et lo -er vuet sans re -pen -rir

Phrase 4
tous li mon-des sans men -rir non por -roit fi -rir
car qui sans sans re tol -rir vuet tous de -mou -rer

Phrase 5
sans la dan -ce qui n'a per -rir
en gloi -refes-tuet reguer qui ne peut fail -rir
Text and music interact in two different ways in this verse, when one considers the relationship of poetic line to canonic segment and the relationship of poetic line to underlying musical phrase:

Canonic Segment: 1 2 3 4 5 6
Line: a7 a7b4 b7a4 a7 b4b7 a4

and:

Phrase: 1 2 3 4 5
Line: a7 a7b4 b7a4 a7b4 b7a4

The relationship of poetic line to canonic segment and to musical phrase is the same for phrases/canonic segments 1 through 3. The major difference between canonic structure and underlying phrase structure occurs during canonic segments 4 through 6 where two expected phrases are extended into three canonic segments, accompanied by a splitting of the usual pairing of poetic lines a7b4 and b7a4 into two single lines and one pair of lines: a7 b4b7 a4.

The matter of open and closed phrase endings is confused by the canonic nature of the verse. There are two tonal centres in the verse on g and d. The canonic segments have the following endings:

Canonic Segment 1 - g
Canonic Segment 2 - g
Canonic Segment 3 - d
Canonic Segment 4 - g
Canonic Segment 5 - g
Canonic Segment 6 - d

The underlying musical phrases, however, have a somewhat different pattern:

Phrase 1 - g
Phrase 2 - g
Phrase 3 - d'
Phrase 4 - d'
Phrase 5 - d'
Every one of the five underlying phrases is set apart by a perfect breve followed by a *punctum divisionis*.

There are very few repeated motifs in the setting of this verse. It is possible that the lack of rhythmic motivic action is due to the increased number of rests used to break up the lines rhythmically to add polyphonic interest.\(^{26}\)

Aside from the *d*-g juxtaposition inherent in this verse, and made explicit in this verse in phrases 1 and 3 (measures 1-2 and 2-3 respectively), there are two motifs of importance. R(a), in phrase 1, recurs later in the verse as the beginning of canonic segments 5 and 6. In both instances, it is used as the beginning of a four-syllable poetic line. M(a), a motif consisting of a melodic fragment *g-f-e-f-d*, first occurs in phrase 2. It is then combined with R(a) in canonic segments 5 and 6.

\(^{26}\) Newes, "Turning Fortune's Wheel," 110.
Figure 13: Lai No. 17, Verse 1

Canonic Segment 1

1. S'on ques do-le-reusement
2. Qu'en ter re n'a e-le-ment

Canonic Segment 2

scens fai-re ne triste-ment lay
ne plante en firmament qui

Canonic Segment 3

ou chan-son ou chant

Canonic Segment 4

a do-le-reus son qui sente-ment
face et sans rai-son mon cuer do-lent

Canonic Segment 5

ait de plour et de tour-ment temps et sai-
et for-tu-ne m'a dou vent d'un tour-bil

Canonic Segment 6

son ay dou faire et o-coi-son pre-sen-te-ment
lon tu-me jus de sa mai-son en fon-de-ment
Lai No. 17, Verses 1 and 12

Lai No. 17 is another of Machaut's canonic lais and, unlike Lai No. 16, every verse of the lai is canonic. Verses 1 and 12, which use the metric form \( a_7a_7b_4b_7a_4a_7b_4b_7a_4 \), are identical musically, with no transposition setting Verse 12 apart from Verse 1. As Newes has pointed out, the canon in these verses is constructed from six combinable segments, each of which is four imperfect breves in length. The relationship of canonic segments to poetic lines is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canonic Segment:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line:</td>
<td>a7</td>
<td>( a_7b_4 )</td>
<td>( b_4b_7 )</td>
<td>( b_7a_4 )</td>
<td>( a_7b_4 )</td>
<td>( b_4b_7a_4 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relationship of canonic segments to poetic lines, aside from the first line, is highly asymmetrical. However, it is possible to discern an underlying phrase structure in this verse that bears a closer resemblance to the other verses of this form than might be expected given the canonic structure of the verse (Fig. 14):
Figure 14: Lai No. 17, Verses 1 & 12, Underlying Phrase Structure
As can be seen in Figure 14, the basic five phrase structure of this form, with an individually set first line followed by paired 11-syllable lines, is basically intact:

Phrase: 1 2 3 4/5  
Line: a7 a7b4 b7a4 a7b4/b7a4

In phrases 2 through 4, the seven- and four-syllable lines are separated by two minim rests. Each of the four-syllable lines is set to R(a) or a variation thereof. The neat five-phrase model is subverted by the fact that the final two eleven-syllable groups have been elided into one musical phrase.

As in Lai No. 16, Verse 2, the definition of open and closed endings is blurred somewhat by the need for a combination of tones inherent in the canonic structure. In this case, as in Lai No. 16, Verse 2, two tones, separated by a fifth, play an important role: c' and f. In Lai No. 17, Verses 1 and 12, the pattern of canonic segment endings follows a similar pattern to that found in Lai No. 16, Verse 2:

Canonic Segment 1 - c'  
Canonic Segment 2 - c'  
Canonic Segment 3 - f  
Canonic Segment 4 - c'  
Canonic Segment 5 - c' (on the downbeat of the final meas.)  
Canonic Segment 6 - f

Lai No. 17, Verses 1 and 12, are permeated by one rhythmic motif R(a): ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

This motif appears at least once in every canonic segment and, when the segments are combined, is heard almost continuously. Canonic segments 1 and 3 are almost identical rhythmically. Each is made up of two iterations of R(a). M(a) and M(b), two melodic gestures used in canonic segment 3, are reused as endings for canonic segments 5 and 6.

In Lai No. 17, Verses 1 and 12, a similar approach to melodic structure can be seen as was found in Lai No. 17, Verse 2, in that the second three canonic segments are a melodic variation of the first three (solid lines in this example illustrate tonal correspondences that share a structural position within the canonic segment).
Lai No. 16, Verse 2, and Lai No. 17, Verses 1 and 12, show elements of the five-phrase structure demonstrated in the other examples of metric form $a_7a_7b_4b_7a_7b_4b_7a_7$. In both cases, this phrase structure has been altered to fit the canonic form, but sufficient similarities remain to suggest that the "fixed" form provided a compositional starting point.
Lai No. 18, Verse 8

Lai No. 18, Verse 8, notated at the *tempus* level, consists of five musical phrases. The first poetic line is set individually, while the subsequent phrases set eleven-syllable pairings of poetic lines as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>a7</td>
<td>a7b4</td>
<td>b7a4</td>
<td>a7b4</td>
<td>b7a4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The verse has a *finalis* on *d'.* The pattern of open and closed endings is identical to that of Lai No. 15, Verses 1 and 12:

Phrase 1 - Closed  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Closed  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Closed

While the formal division after the third phrase is not as clear in this example as it was in Verses 1 and 12 of Lai No. 15, analysis of the motivic activity reveals a subtle division at this point.

R(a), the rhythmic element of phrase 1 is reused in phrase 3 and, in a truncated form, as the opening gesture of phrase 2:

Phrase 1: ♩♩♩♩♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ |
Phrase 2: ♩♩♩♩♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ |
Phrase 3: ♩♩♩♩♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ |

M(a), the first two measures of the transcription, is repeated as the opening of phrase 3. This, combined with the rhythmic motif discussed above, gives a strong feeling of similarity to phrases 1 and 3 and acts as a type of premature recapitulation, thus providing a sense of closure with phrase 3. Phrases 4 and 5 start in a quite different manner from phrases 1 through 3, thus the formal distinction between the two sections is highlighted by an abrupt change of opening rhythms.
R(a') appears again in phrases 4 and 5 (measures 3 and 4 of phrases 4 and 5 in this transcription). This use of a familiar rhythmic motif links the two formal sections, without occupying the structurally important position of the beginning of a phrase. The melody for this segment, M(c), is repeated exactly in phrase 4 and in a slightly varied version in phrase 5.

R(b) is the rhythmic motif used for the setting for the four final syllables of each eleven-syllable phrase. It is introduced as the setting for the final four syllables of the seven-syllable poetic line in phrase 2, and is then repeated exactly for the closing of phrases 2 through 5. M(b), the melody for the first occurrence of R(b) in phrase 2, is reused at the end of phrase 4.

R(c), the beginning of phrases 4 and 5, is more remarkable in its difference from R(a) than as a fixed motif:

Phrase 4 R(c): ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Phrase 5 R(c): ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

This section links the two phrases melodically, particularly in measure 2. While the first measures in phrases 4 and 5 are different, the basic gestures are quite similar. Phrase 5 has two perfect semibreves, an emphasis on prolonged single notes not seen in the beginnings of phrases 1 through 3. Phrase 4 uses the same basic gesture, though with an ornamented second note (f' prolonged by the lower-neighbour e').

This verse, densely motivic in nature, still supports the assumption that the basic formal design for this verse type is bipartite. The first three phrases are set apart, this time by recapitulation, as a section where the basic musical elements are introduced. The final two phrases, set apart by the related phrase beginnings, make use of both melodic and rhythmic material from the first section in a recapitulatory, or summary, manner.
Figure 16: Lai No. 19, Verse 1

1. Malgré fortune et son tour
   Car faîre vuel sans de mour

mon amour se clameur publie ray
   de mon amour la tour un piteaux lay

et par tout me plein de ray de fine amour
   que je nommee et nomme ray le lay de plour

que sufighter en moy tel tres tour et tel es may
   de mes larmes en des tour l'ar rouse ray

que ja mais joie n'a ray stein si de mour
   n'au tre con fort ne quer ray de ma dou lour
Lai No. 19, Verses 1 and 12

Lai No. 19, Verses 1 and 12, are notated at the *modus* level and consist of five musical phrases. Verse 12 is identical to phrase 1 except that it is transposed upward by a fifth. The discussion in this section will refer to Verse 1, but the observations apply equally to Verse 12.

The first musical phrase provides a setting for the first poetic line. All subsequent poetic lines are paired into eleven-syllable segments, each of which is set by one musical phrase:

Phrase:  1  2  3  4  5  
Line:   a7  a7b4 b7a4 a7b4 b7a4

Verse 1 has a *finalis* on /f/. The pattern of open and closed phrase endings is the same as that found in Lai No. 6, Verse 10 and Lai No. 10, Verse 11:

Phrase 1 - Open  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Closed  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Closed

This pattern, as has been noted in previous examples, suggests a bipartite form wherein the first three phrases form one section and the final two phrases from a second section.

R(a) is the rhythmic element of phrase 1. This rhythmic pattern is repeated exactly in measures 2 through 5 of phrase 2. R(b), the rhythmic element of phrase 3, is repeated almost exactly in phrase 4:

Phrase 1:  
Phrase 2:  
Phrase 3:  
Phrase 4:  

R(c) is the rhythmic unit used to set the final four syllables of each phrase, including the first. It is
used twice in phrases 3 and 4 to conclude both the seven- and four-syllable poetic lines:

Phrase 1: 
Phrase 2: 
Phrase 3a: 
Phrase 3b: 
Phrase 4a: 
Phrase 4b: 
Phrase 5: 

While the short-short-long-short motif is quite generic, its use as a rhythmic gesture of closure marking off so many poetic lines is notable. 

M(a), a melodic motif occurring in the first half of phrase 2, is repeated in the first part of phrase 5. M(b), the melodic motif closing phrase 2, is repeated in the closing of phrase 4. While M(c), the melodic closure for phrase 3 is repeated exactly (both rhythmically and melodically) in phrase 5.

While rhythmic and melodic motifs permeate the musical setting of this verse, the final two phrases act as a recapitulatory section to the first three phrases. At the same time, these two sections are linked by the rhythmic pattern R(b) which is used in phrases 3 and 4, in an echo of the rhythmic relationship between phrases 1 and 2 (R(a)).
Figure 17: Lai No. 21, Verse 1

Phrase 1

\[ \text{1. Pour vivre joyeusement} \]
\[ \text{2. Je l'ay si tres ferment} \]

Phrase 2

\[ \text{nettement joyeusement et sans souci} \]
\[ \text{et si a mouvement longtemps nourri} \]

Phrase 3

\[ \text{ne faut qu'espoir de mercey tant seulement} \]
\[ \text{tout en mi le coeur de my que vraiment} \]

Phrase 4

\[ \text{et je l'ay si ferment que j'en mercey} \]
\[ \text{il me promet bonnement et sans nul sy} \]

Phrase 5

\[ \text{a mours et ma dame sus si tres humblement} \]
\[ \text{que j'ay le nom d'a my prochainement} \]
In Lai No. 21, both Verses 1 and 12 are notated at the tempus level and each consists of five musical phrases. The first poetic line is set to a single phrase, while all subsequent lines are paired into eleven-syllable groupings each of which is set to one phrase as follows:

Phrase: 1 2 3 4 5  
Line: a7 a7b4 b7a4 a7b4 b7a4

The first verse has g as its finalis, while the twelfth verse, set a fifth higher, has a finalis on d'.

The pattern of open and closed phrase endings deviates from previous examples by the use of an open ending on the third phrase.

Phrase 1 - Closed  
Phrase 2 - Open  
Phrase 3 - Open  
Phrase 4 - Open  
Phrase 5 - Closed

The motivic density seen in other examples is also lacking in this verse. Most of the rhythmic activity in this verse is generated from the repetition or variation of R(a). R(a'), the setting for the last four syllables of phrase 1, is used for the setting for the final four syllables of all five phrases. R(a''), an elaboration of R(a'), appears as the setting for the final four syllables of the seven-syllable poetic line in phrase 2 and is used also for the final four syllables of phrase 5 (where the semibreve duration becomes a repeated minim). R(a) is used intact for the opening of phrase 3, and thus incorporates R(a') for the final four syllables of the seven-syllable poetic line. R(a') is also used for the final four syllables of the seven-syllable line in phrase 4.

There do not appear to be distinct melodic motifs in this verse setting. However, there are some non-motivic elements that have structural importance. There are rhythmic similarities in the beginnings of
phrases 1 and 5, and of phrases 3 and 4. Phrases 1, 3 and 5 are of equivalent lengths, while phrases 2 and 4, also of equivalent length, are one "measure" longer than the other three. These two phrases (2 and 4) distinctly separate the seven-syllable poetic line after the third syllable.

Poetically, in the first verse, this separation acts as a punctuation between the words *nettement* and *joieusement*. In the fourth phrase it separates *et je l'ay* and *si fermement*, emphasising *l'ay*, possibly to highlight the pun created by the homophones *l'ay* and *lai*. These possible declamatory effects, however, hold only for the first versicle of the first verse.

The formal structure of five phrases, found in previous examples of the metric structure a₁a₂b₁b₂a₃a₄b₃b₄a₅, is apparent again in Lai No. 21, Verses 1 and 12. However, some of the subsidiary formal elements, notably a closed ending to the third phrase, are not present in this example.
Figure 18: Lai No. 22, Verse 5

Phrase 1

1. Aussi voit on clairement
2. On se voit certainement

Phrase 2

que li cuer qui loyau - ment et sans for - lour
que mienne estoit li - gement la dros - te flour

Phrase 3

aim - ment de tres fine a - mour oii - dent sou - vent
de ceux qui ont plus d'amour quars tou - te gent

Phrase 4

qu'en mil - leur et en plus gent aii - ent se jour
di - soii - ent com - ma - ne - ment et li mil - lour

Phrase 5

car plai - sence et sa ri - gour ce leur a - prent
qu'il a - voit tou - te va - leur en tie - re - ment
Lai No. 22, Verse 5

Lai No. 22, Verse 5, notated at the *tempus* level, contains five musical phrases. The first phrase provides a setting for the first poetic line. All subsequent phrases provide the setting for eleven-syllable groupings of poetic lines. This relationship can be described as follows:

Phrase: 1 2 3 4 5
Line: a7 a7b4 b7a4 a7b4 b7a4

This verse has g for its *finalis*. The pattern of open and closed phrase endings is familiar from Lai No. 15, Verses 1 and 12:

Phrase 1 - Closed
Phrase 2 - Open
Phrase 3 - Closed
Phrase 4 - Open
Phrase 5 - Closed

This verse makes use of a limited number of rhythmic motifs and only a few melodic gestures. R(a), the rhythmic structure of phrase 1, provides the basic material for the entire verse. R(a) is used again for the seven-syllable lines in phrases 3 and 5 and, in a slightly altered form (R(a')) for the seven-syllable line in phrase 4. R(b), the setting for the final three syllables in phrase 1 is, of course, used again in all the phrases where R(a) is repeated. R(b') is a slight variation which provides a rhythmic setting for the four-syllable lines in phrases 2 through 4. It is also the rhythmic variation that marks the difference between R(a) and R(a'):

R(b): ★★★★★
R(b'): ★★★★

R(a) and R(b) are so pervasive that only two small sections in this verse are not constructed from one or the other: the setting for the seven-syllable line in phrase 2 and the setting for the four-syllable line.
As has already been noted, phrases 1, 3, 4 and 5 begin with the same rhythmic structure. Phrases 1, 3 and 4 also begin with the same melodic gesture: b-g. In phrase 5, the melodic gesture of e-f-g, introduced in the closing notes of phrase 3, is repeated twice, emphasising the final goal g, and acting as an extended gesture of closure.

The preceding analyses have shown that, in spite of numerous surface differences, a basic formal design is used for all of the verses of metric form aT^b^a^b^ai. This design consists of five musical phrases, and a division of the poetic form into five units, the first of which is seven syllables in length while the remaining four are eleven-syllables in length. While this form is subverted in the canonic lais to allow for the necessary polyphonic combination, some basic elements remain that suggest this form provided the starting point in the compositional process for these verses as well.
CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated two important elements of Machaut's approach to the lai form: it has been shown that certain metric forms are reused, at times extensively, throughout Machaut's lais; it has also been shown that, in two of the repeated metric forms, Machaut developed a corresponding musical form made up of a fixed number of musical phrases used in the setting of consistent groupings of poetic lines. This observation provides an insight into Machaut's approach to the complexities of the lai form in both its poetic and musical aspects. As a result of this observation, it is possible to consider the lai, as practiced by Machaut, in a category quite different from the other *formes fixes* used by fourteenth-century composers. The fixed forms of the shorter songs are quite specific about the poetic structures that must be used. The lai, on the other hand, has simply an organizational procedure. Every verse of a lai must have a different metric structure, except the first and last verses which must use the same structure. As a fixed form, this is quite vague. However, such an organizational approach can be seen in later musical forms like the suite or the song-cycle. This leaves the versicle structures, as considered in Chapter 1 of this study, in the same category as the fixed forms like the rondeau or virelai. It has been noted that some of the metric structures in the lais are present in nearly all of the later lais and it may be observed that many of the later lais make use, to a large extent, of previously used metric structures. It is possible that the composer was attempting to provide a repertoire of fixed forms for individual verses within a lai. Further examination of other repeated metric structures within the lais, and their musical settings, may shed further light on such a possibility.

This study confirms Göllner's suggestion that Machaut treated the musical phrase within a verse in an analogous way to the poetic line within a verse. Where a fixed metric pattern is reused, a fixed phrase pattern is also reused, with the two being quite clearly linked. Further examination, particularly of the lai tradition preceding Machaut, may help to clarify whether this is common compositional procedure or
specific to Machaut.

This study also demonstrates the great importance of motivic interplay to the independent musical structure of the individual verses, as well as to the musical/poetic form of each verse. The latter is particularly evident when melodic or rhythmic motifs highlight an element of the poetic structure that is otherwise obscured by the musical phrase structure. The independence of melodic and rhythmic elements in these verses is notable. Once again, further study of both the monophonic and polyphonic repertoires of Machaut and other fourteenth-century composers may determine whether this compositional approach was typical or idiosyncratic.

Finally, Machaut's lais are deserving of a highly detailed study. Such a study must undertake to illuminate the compositional approach to tonal organization in these large-scale works. It must also examine closely the relationship between poetry and music at all levels, not simply the most basic structural levels of metrics and phrase structure. A future study could also examine interrelationships between the lais, several of which have been observed in Chapters 3 and 4 of this essay.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


# Appendix: Metric Structures in Machaut’s Lais

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