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Four Lyrics from the *Antwerp Songbook* (1544)

Introduction

During the early sixteenth century, Antwerp came to play an increasingly dominant role in the trade and culture of north-western Europe. As Donald Harreld writes, between 1484 and 1585, 'Antwerp was the undisputed commercial metropolis of the Western World...a truly international marketplace'.¹ An important factor in this economic supremacy was the new technology of printing. The city had become an early and extremely important centre of book production, as its resident printers exploited lucrative markets both at home and abroad.² In 1544 one such printer, known variously as Jan Roulans or Jan Roelants, published the text which concerns the present article. The original title of this volume was *Een Schoon Liedekens-Boeck*, although it is now more generally known as *Het Antwerps Liedboek* – 'The Antwerp Songbook'. The *Songbook* contains a series of two-hundred and twenty-one lyrics, printed without musical notation in quarto format. Its contents are arranged alphabetically, although the sequence restarts at items 172 and 210, suggesting that the book may combine three previous collections.³ Despite its meagre and rather humble dimensions, the songbook gives an unrivalled insight into popular musical tastes at the end of the Middle Ages.⁴

It would certainly appear that the *Songbook* enjoyed a wide currency in the sixteenth century. At least three editions were produced in the 1540s, and of these only one copy has survived.

Given the nature of this type of publication, the lack of extant copies may well reflect the general popularity of the collection. The *Songbook*, like other books of its kind, was produced as cheaply as possible, and for a basically utilitarian purpose: such volumes were designed for use in taverns, in the fields, or in the home, not to be preserved in private libraries. It may therefore be inferred from the lack of copies that the book was frequently read in its day, and the vast majority of imprints were damaged or destroyed by heavy usage. In fact, the book would not have survived at all if it were not for the deliberate efforts of a collector, the seventeenth-century bibliophile Duke August of Brunswick-Wolfenbuettel (1579-1666). The only extant copy of the songbook is still held at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbuettel.⁵ Further evidence of the *Songbook's* popularity is given by contemporary and later song-anthologies. These often refer to the melodies in the *Songbook* as models for their own songs, in much the same way that English broadsides indicate that they should be sung 'to the tune of *Watton Townes end*' or 'to the tune of *Cupid's cruell torments*'.⁶ For the lyrics to act as exemplars in this way, the *Songbook* must have been widely known: if it was confined to a relatively small readership, such references would make little sense. Allusions to the melodies of the Antwerp songs occur well into the seventeenth century.⁷

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The songs were written by many different poets, and quite a few were handed down orally and changed over time by many different singers. Only two songs in the anthology can be traced back to an identifiable writer. The first of these is item 2, which contains the name 'Aegid Maes' as an acrostic. This may well refer to the author of the piece, since such devices are common among Dutch poets of the period.⁸ Unfortunately nothing further is known of Maes, so it is not even certain that the acrostic does represent a writer's name. However, one other piece in the volume can be attributed with much more conviction to a specific author. Item 49 is clearly the work of Matthijs de Castelein (c.1485-1550), playwright and poet at Oudenaarde.⁹ It also occurs among his collected works, under the title *Ghepeys, ghepeys, vol van envijen* ('Worry, worry, full of envies'). This fact is highly suggestive, and it sheds some light on other entries in the *Songbook*. The name of De Castelein is almost synonymous with the *rederijderskamers*.¹⁰ These 'Chambers of Rhetoric' flourished in the Low Countries in the later Middle Ages: broadly speaking, they were lay fraternities, typically comprised of middle-class citizens, which were dedicated to the composition of poems, songs and plays. They also aimed to provide some tuition for the young in the principles of rhetoric, and to propagate the study of classical mythology; Herman Pleij has described them as a sort of amateur wing of Dutch humanism.¹¹ The literary output of the chambers is characterised by its extremely formal style, with its 'distinctive and repetitive motifs' and intricate rhyme-schemes.¹² De Castelein was a figure of great importance for these groups: not only was he a prolific member of a chamber at Oudenaarde, but his handbook *De const van rhetorike* (1548) did much to promote

the ornate style cultivated by the chambers.¹³ Since De Castelein is so firmly linked with the *rederijderskamers*, the presence of his work in the *Songbook* suggests that other poems in the collection are also drawn from this source.

Connecting the *Songbook* with the chambers also explains some of the features that recur throughout the volume. In particular, it makes clear why several songs should be modelled on the *refereyn*, a poetic form which was especially favoured by the chambers.¹⁴ Typically *refereynen* conclude with a stanza dedicated to the *prins* or 'Prince' of the chamber, its symbolic leader or administrator.¹⁵ At the end of each *refereyn*, there is inevitably a direct address to this figure. A similar approach is used in the Antwerp songs, as thirty-three pieces end with an address to a 'prince' of some form. However, in many cases this custom is altered in an interesting way. The word *prins* is replaced by *princesse* or 'princess', which becomes an epithet for the narrator's mistress. The conventional prince-stanza is thus turned into an extension of the narrator's address to the woman he desires: rather than disrupting the narrative by turning it towards a third figure, it continues its overall direction. Again, this suggests some link between the songs and the *rederijderskamers*, as the lyrics reproduce – but also reinvent – one of the most central characteristics of the chambers.

However, pieces with a locatable source are the exceptions. The *Songbook* does not seek to represent any particular poet or specific trend in poetry. In fact the opposite is closer to the truth: the *Songbook* is chiefly notable for the extreme miscellany of its contents. This diversity is even

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advertised by Roulans himself. The collection carries the subtitle *in den welcken ghy in vinden sult veelderhande liedekens, oude ende nyeuwe, om droefheyt ende melancolie te verdrijven*: 'here you shall find several songs, old and new, to drive away sadness and melancholy'. This mixture of the 'old and new' is evident throughout the volume. Those lyrics that are designated *nyeu liedeken* were in most cases composed shortly before the volume was published. Nearly all seem to have been produced after 1525, with a few others dating from after 1510. At the other end of the scale, several of the *oudt liedeken* bear evidence of considerable antiquity. Of particular note are a group of about twenty ballads which have close analogues in other European literatures, especially in German.¹⁶ Several nineteenth-century scholars assumed that these ballads were fourteenth- or even thirteenth-century in origin.¹⁷ While this is almost certainly an overestimate, at least two lyrics may predate the fifteenth century.¹⁸ Item number 83 in the *Songbook*, also known as *Van den ouden Hillebrant* ('On Old Hillebrant'), is an abridged version of the ninth-century epic *Hildebrand*, on one of the heroes of the *Nibelungenlied*. Likewise item 16, *Van cort Rozijn*, may be adapted from a fourteenth-century exemplar – 'Cort Rozijn' is Zeger van Kortrijk, who was beheaded by Count Lodewijk of Nevers at Rupelmonde in 1338.¹⁹ However, it is often difficult to establish the exact date of many songs. Roulans is occasionally unreliable in his labelling, sometimes describing old songs as 'new': since many texts have survived only in the *Songbook*, it is impossible to validate or falsify his claims in many cases. But it remains broadly true to say that the *Songbook* presents texts from a range of dates.²⁰

In terms of the themes and genres of the poems, the same level of variety is apparent. The compiler seems to have included whatever songs were available to him at the time, with little selectivity or sense of design. Owing to this lack of discrimination, the songbook gives a unique snapshot of popular musical forms in the first half of the sixteenth century. A wide range of subjects are represented, as the songs cover an assortment of themes and topics.²¹ Foremost amongst these, however, is love.²² The *Songbook* contains about fifty love lyrics, most of which are complaints in various forms, dealing with such well-rehearsed themes as unrequited love, love-sickness, or the general treachery of women. Many of these take the form of the aubade, lamenting the approach of dawn, which heralds the separation of lovers. There are of course countless precedents for this type of verse in the medieval period, such as the *alba* of the troubadours and the *tagelied* of the Minnesänger – but in the *Songbook* the setting is often shifted away from the traditional royal court, towards a more urban locale.²³ Another important group of songs, which also includes about fifty examples, is the ballad. The *Songbook* contains several narrative songs, both of a tragic and a comic cast: some recount tales of suicide and murder, while others feature adultery, trickery, and the escapades of sexually proficient characters. A particularly favourite technique in the humorous ballads is innuendo. Several describe a dalliance between a woman and a worker of some form, and portray their encounter in a veiled but suggestive way, using terms drawn from the man's profession.²⁴

Alongside these romantic and narrative lyrics the volume also contains about thirty political songs.

Eleven of these deal with the conflict between Emperor Charles V and the Duke of Gelderland in the 1520s, while others recount battles, sieges and coronations from a similar period.²⁵ Often these pieces veer towards propaganda, as an extremely partisan position is frequently apparent. It is known that the Habsburgs, the house to which Charles belonged, were keen sponsors of poets and chroniclers, often using such agencies to legitimise their projects.²⁶ Some of the songs are surprisingly and vividly detailed in their accounts of battles, to an extent that suggests first-hand experience of the events they recount. It may therefore be possible that the songs addressing the emperor were written by a member of Charles' entourage, specifically employed to compose such pieces.²⁷

Notes on the translation

We offer below four pieces from the *Songbook*, in a fresh English translation. The translation of these four songs – to our knowledge, this is their first version in English – is based on the critical edition *Het Antwerps Liedboek*, ed. by Dieuwke van der Poel, Dirk Geirnaert, Hermine Joldersma, Johan Oosterman, and Louis Peter Grijp, 2 vols. (Tiel, 2004). The diplomatic edition of the critical edition is also available online at www.dbnl.org. The original Dutch text has been reproduced by kind permission of the editors. In rendering these compositions into English, we have followed Peter Dale's advice on translating late-medieval poetry: 'To translate a formal poet into free verse is as odd as to attempt to translate *The Cantos* into heroic couplets. Traffic in either direction is illogical'.²⁸ Accordingly, while remaining faithful to the sense of each lyric, we have also tried to recreate their forms and structures as fully as possible. We felt

that too much would be lost by rendering these highly formal compositions into prose or free verse, especially since complex rhyme-schemes are one of their most important features. Our choice of texts has also tried to reflect the thematic range of the lyrics. Our selection contains a specimen of each category found in the collection, comprising of a romantic lyric, a *fabliauesque* 'amorous' song, a political song, and a lover's complaint. We have also selected these particular songs because each has been reconstructed and recorded by a modern vocal group. All are freely available on the Globe CD-set *The Antwerp Songbook 1544* (Camerata Trajectina, Egidius Kwartet, Louis Peter Grijp, 2005. B0007CIH0G).

27 Een nyeu liedeken (A new song)

In this song, which takes a traditional May-time setting, the narrator is a youth who calls on other youths to help him celebrate the Spring. The song concludes with an address to the narrator's beloved, who is offered a May-branch as a token of devotion. Rather like Herrick's 'Corinna's Going a-Maying' (c.1648), the song is written as a summons, designed to stir its addressee from her sleep.²⁹ This song is one of the most enduringly popular in the songbook. Versions of it appear up to the seventeenth century, in both monophonic and polyphonic arrangements: the most famous of these is that of Jacob Clemens no Papa (c.1510-65). At the time that the *Songbook* was compiled, the song was evidently a fairly recent composition.³⁰

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1
 Den lustelijcken Mey is nu inden tijt
 Met sinen groenen bladen
 Int lieuelijc aenscouwen ghi die venus dienaers
 zijt

Men mach v niet versaden
 Want bi des meys virtuyt
 So menich cleyn voghelken ruyt
 Sijnen sanck is soet om hooren
 Dies willen wi vruecht orbooren

2
 Bedrijft solaes genoeghe ende vruecht
 Die blomkens staen ontploken
 Coemt met v lieueken buiten in des veldekens
 iuecht

Die cruyden staen seer soet van roken
 Si staen net ende reyn
 In dat soete lustelijcke pleyn
 Daer siet mense iuechdelijck bloeyen
 Door des soeten meyschen daus bepoeyen.

3
 Die nachtegael singhet nacht ende dach
 Met menich dierken cleyne
 Want ghi die Venus doet gewach.
 Wendt v ten veldekens reyne
 ende wilt ons comen bi
 V weerste lieueken ic ende ghi
 en acht gheen nijders bespringhen
 ende helpt ons den mey in bringhen

4
 O Venus had ich mijn lieueken alleyn
 Het soude mijnder herten lusten
 ende wi tsamen laghen op een beddeken cleyn
 Daer ick bi haer mocht rusten

ende wi daer speelden moedernaect
 Alsomen die beruoetekinderkens maect
 So soude ic mijn lieueken ghebruycken
 Ende in mijn armkens luycken

5
 Amoreuse lieuekens zijn hier vergadert
 This elcken een melodie
 Als deen gesichte dander verclaert.
 Scout alle melancolie
 Haer caecxken zijn van coluere root
 Ende hoe menich versuchten groot
 geeft elc zijn liefken int wesen
 Een soeken van v schoon lief salt genesen

6
 Oorlof princelijc lief seer amereus
 Nu bidde ic v om een bede
 Neemt desen mey in dancke seer coragieus.
 Ende bewaert hem na reynder sede
 Thoont ons v ghetrouwige ioncste fier.
 Al onder desen soeten eglentier
 Wilt wt den slape ontspringen.
 Ende helpt ons vrolijc singhen

27 A new song

1
 Lusty May is the current time of year
 With all its leaves of green.
 Its lovely show, if Venus you revere,
 Cannot too often be seen.
 All this comes from May's virtue,
 So many graceful songbirds coo
 The song of each is sweet to hear
 And so we wish to relish cheer.

2
 Take comfort, gladness and glee –
 The flowers are in bloom.
 Go with your darling to the fresh lea
 Where the plants have sweet perfume,
 All there are pure and white
 At that sweet and lusty site
 There you'll see the joyful blossom
 May's sweet dew has now begotten.

3
 The nightingale sings night and day
 With many other birds tiny.
 Of Venus you have much to say:
 Make your way then to this lea
 And come to us by and by.
 My darling love, you and I,
 Of the jealous we fear nothing
 As into town May we bring.

4
 O Venus, if my true love had I
 Then my heart would give way to lust
 And we two on a bunk would lie
 Where with her I might rest
 And naked games would be played
 The way barefoot children are made:
 I'd enjoy my love in this manner,
 In my arms I mean to have her.

5
 Amorous ones gather in this place,
 For everyone is this melody.
 Each sets light to another's face
 Shaking off all melancholy.
 The colour red is in each cheek
 Heavy sighs are all they speak

Each makes the rest sigh all the more.
 A kiss from you, sweet love, is my cure.

6
 Greetings, princess love, so amorous,
 I make to you now this suit:
 Accept this May-bough so gracious,
 Keep it with you for good repute.
 Proof of your kind faith we desire
 Here under this fair sweet-briar.
 From your sleep you must spring
 And help us now to frolic and sing.

193 Een amoreus liedeken.

This song is fairly typical of the humorous songs found in *Songbook*. Its subject is a young woman who asks that a doctor 'probe her deep wound' – sadly, he is unable to use his instrument to her satisfaction. The usual ingredients of a comedic ballad are present: impotence is matched with sexual voracity, innuendos are developed around the tools of a craftsman's trade. But for all this the poem is far from unremarkable. At the end of the piece the prince-stanza is used in a highly singular way. 'Prince' here becomes an exclamation or interjection, rather than the addressee of the stanza. The copy of the text in the *Songbook* is unique, although several later songs use it as a model: one notable example is 'Schoon liefken jent, seer excellent', from the *Aemstelredams amoreus lietboeck*, printed by Harmen Jansz in 1589.³¹ Such later references have allowed the melody of item 193 to be reconstructed in full.³²

1
 HET was een aerdt een aerdich medecijn.
 Op eenen morgen stonde.

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En daer vant hi \ vant hi een vrouwen fijn.
 Sy had een so diepen wonde.
 Sy vraegden dat meesterken op dat pas.
 Oft hi een meester vander wonden was.
 Sy hadts van done.
 Do neemt v tent en tentelt my.
 Van goeder herten bly
 Pijnt v te spoene

2

Hy nam dat vrou \ dat vrouwen bider hant
 als meester gepresen
 Hi leydese daer \ aldaer aen eenen cant
 Om haer te genesen
 Sijn bus metter saluen die was daer bereet
 En daer me dat hi tegent goelijc vrouwen street
 dat vrouwen riep
 salft mi salft mi noch eens
 noch eens al binnens beens
 Oft ick ontsinne.

3

Dat Meesterken gaf en gaf dat vrouwen soet
 Al vanden beste
 hy soudese noch eens tenten tenten metter spoet
 maer zijn tente en woude niet vesten
 Sijn tente die faute gelic een riet
 Van schaemte dat hi dat vrouwen liet
 Als die veruaerde
 dat vrouwen riep hoort mijn | hoort mijn beueel
 Maer tentelt my noch wel
 Met lacker aerde

4

Prince dat meysken moeste daer vlien
 met also groote onteeren
 Die busse metter saluen was qualijcken versien

Voor sulcke oude seeren
 Dat vrouwen riep luy ende daer toe fel
 Armen duuel leert irst v ambacht wel
 Leert eerst cureren
 Ghi mocht veel beter eerst gaen lappen v schoen
 Arm allendighe loen
 dan vroukens tempteeren

193 An amorous song

1

There was a learn- a learned surgeon
 At work one morning
 And there he met a fine woman
 With a wound deep and yawning.
 To this master she made her plea:
 If a master of wounds he might be
 Of help she was in need.
 'Take your probe, examine me
 With a heart good and free.
 Please act with speed!'

2

He took that wom- that woman by the hand
 Of his skill he was sure.
 Lie down by the road, was his command
 As he administered his cure.
 A jar filled with ointment he took
 And with that cream the woman he struck.
 She screamed and whined:
 'Salve me, salve me - more you must apply,
 Especially inside each thigh,
 Or I'll go out my mind.'

3

That master gave and gave that woman sweet
 The best that he could give.
 He wished her quickly to treat, to treat

But his probe was no longer stiff.
 Like a straw it bowed and bent:
 Ashamed, he got up and went.
 The woman was enraged.
 She shouted: 'Hear my, hear my decree!
 Get back here! Examine me!
 My desire is engaged!'

4
 Prince, the girl was forced to go
 Being treated shamefully.
 The level of salve in the jar was low,
 Too low to help that injury.
 The woman screeched loud and shrill:
 'Damnable devil, learn your skill
 Better cures to summon!
 You are better suited to making a shoe –
 You poor miserable dolt you –
 Than to treating a woman!'

107 Vanden Keyser

Item 107 is a political song dealing, like many others in the *Songbook*, with Charles V of Spain (1500-58). When Charles was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1530 by Pope Leo X, the event was the occasion of much jubilation in Flanders. Since Charles had been born in Ghent, he was seen by the Flemings as one of their own countrymen. The song reflects this fact in its emphasis on Charles' link to Mary of Burgundy, the legitimate countess of Flanders. It also alludes to the fact that Charles is heir to the Valois family of Burgundy, calling him *princelic graen* ('princely grain' or 'princely seed') in its prince-stanza. The song also mentions a popular prophecy, produced by Alonse Fresant in 1528, which held that Charles would bring peace both to Flanders and to Europe. He

would supposedly bring an end to Flemish wars with France, and vanquish the Turkish Empire, conquering as far east as 'the dry tree' – the former site of Eden. Fresant goes on to claim that the dry tree would begin to blossom and bear fruit after the Pope had recited mass at its base.³³ Again, the *Songbook* text of this lyric is unique. However, similarities between this piece and a ballad by De Castelein, taken from the posthumous collection *Diversche liedekens* (1574), allow its melody to be reconstructed with reasonable accuracy.³⁴

1
 LOf toeueraet \ maria sonder sneuen
 Dies mogen wi wel louen sonder respijt
 Den keyserliken hoet die is ons coninc bleuen
 Dies moghen wi wel maken groot iolijt
 In desen tijt. Ende al met hem verblijden
 Ende laten trueren lijden
 Van graue Ian \ den vierden man
 So is hi dan \ segt so wie can
 Aloncius prophecie.

2
 Den Arent coen quam eerst wt Oostenrijck
 Met een leewinne was hi eerst ghepaert
 Een stout baroen \ men vant niet zijns gelijc
 der leeuwen dieren heeft hi wel bewaert
 Sijn vol geschaert \ stelde hi in ordinancien
 met wapenen ende lancien
 Hi en vant noeyt lien \ die werc bien
 Si en mosten vlien Voor het wijse engien
 Ghemoet waren alle zijn cansen

3
 Den Arent snel heeft ons geweest ontsprongen
 Mer den heyiligen geest heeft ons so wel versien

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Ende niemant el \ met een van sinen ionghen
 Groote victorie sal hem geschien
 Somen mach sien In boecken diet wel weten
 Gheschreuen van propheten |
 Int aertsche dal \ heeft hi gheual
 Ende tvocl int stal \ heere bouen al
 Mach hi hem wel vermeten

4

Der leeuwen stoc is nv seer hert om biten
 Want den edelen Arent is ons comen bi
 In zijn belock \ tot onser alder profijten
 Wi hopen vlaenderen wort van oorloghen vry
 Verstaet wel mi Mi heeft gedocht in droome
 Den edelen Keyser van roome
 Den grooten Kan des heydens soudaen
 Sal hi verslaen \ ende voortwaert gaen
 Al totten drooghen boome

5

O princelic graen \ ghi zijt souuent idone
 Want den oppersten coninc heeft v so wel versint
 ghi sult ontfaen \ die keiserlicke crone.
 En acht dese nijders tonghen niet en twint
 Ghi zijt gemint Wil v noch yemant deren
 Wi sullent helpen weren
 Met lijf ende ghelt \ als ghi op velt
 v tenten stelt Der leeuwen moet swelt
 met schilden ende met speren

On the Emperor

1

Praise Mary, our helper without rest,
 We must honour her without respite:
 With the empire was our king blessed,
 We must make for her sake great delight
 In this time. And all with him are pleased,

And our sorrows are decreased
 By courageous John. The fourth man
 He is, who is seen in the plan
 Of Aloncius' prophecy.

2

The brave eagle came forth from Austria,
 With a lioness he was paired,
 A bold knight, men shall not find his peer,
 For the lion's people he has cared.
 He set his troops in good ordinance
 With the weapon and the lance,
 Stubborn enemies could he never find,
 Foes were put to flight by his wise mind:
 His deeds were favoured by chance.

3

The swift eagle from us has been flung,
 But the Holy Spirit has served us well,
 Giving none other than the eagle's young:
 With great victories he shall excel.
 In books of truth it is discerned:
 From the prophets it may be learned.
 In the earthly vale he holds fate in thrall
 With a ready army. Master above all
 He may call himself, a name he has earned.

4

The lion's tree is not easy to cut through
 For the noble eagle has made it endure.
 To him we belong, profit to accrue,
 We hope Flanders will be free from war.
 Hear me well: in a dream I did see
 The Emperor of Rome in his majesty,
 The great Khan, that heathen sultan,
 He will defeat, and then press on
 Until he reaches the dry tree.

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5

O princely grain, sovereign of renown
 Since the Highest King holds you in favour
 You will receive the imperial crown.
 Don't let jealous tongues cause you to waver:
 You are loved. When threats you fear,
 We will help you to stand clear
 With life and wealth, as on the field
 You make camp. The lion's nerve is steeled
 With shield and with spear.

123 Van proper Ianneken.

Item 123 is a fairly typical *syntaktikon*, or poem narrated by a departing traveller: it thus fits neatly into a tradition that stretches back as far as Horace and Virgil.³⁵ In this example, the narrator bids farewell to his standoffish lover as he leaves for Rome. This song perhaps more than any other in the *Songbook* shows the influence of the *refereyn* on these texts. The poem is a sustained attempt to accommodate the conventions of the *refereyn* into the framework of a lyric. As well as concluding with a prince-stanza, it finishes every verse with a *stockregel*, the 'stock-line' or 'return-verse' which is a fundamental feature of the *refereyn*. In fact, the use of a couplet rather than a single line at the end of each stanza gives the *stockregel* an even greater role here than it serves in most *refereynen*. While this song has only been preserved in the Antwerp collection, other texts do refer to the piece, and even supply musical notation to accompany it. Johan Fruytiers' *Ecclesiasticus* (1565) is the earliest among these.³⁶

1

OM een die liefste die ic beminne
 Moet ic daechs voor haer duere staen

Si is so amoreus van sinne
 Het sal mi aen mijn leuen gaen.
 Si cost mijn herte so menigen traen
 Adieu schoon Ianneken tot op een wederkeeren
 Adieu ic vare na troomsche lant

2

Schoon soete lief waert v bequame
 Dat ghi mi geeft een troostelijke woort
 Ic en soude certeyn geen ander boelken kiezen
 Al sout mi oock aen mijn leven gaen
 Helpt mi maria minen druc verslaen
 Ick hebbe verloren mijn beste pant
 Adieu schoon Ianneken tot op een wederkeeren
 Adieu ic vare na troomsche lant

3

Dese nijders tongen gaen voor mijn ooghen
 Ende achter minnen rugghe stroyen si quaet
 Si doen mijn ionghe iuecht verdrooghen
 Dat sal ooc aen mijn leuen gaen
 Het cost mijn herteken so menighen traen.
 Hier ende elders aen elcken cant
 Adieu schoon Ianneken tot op een wederkeeren
 Adieu ic vare na troomsche lant

4

Princersselijc lief hoe moechdi mi vergheten
 Ende ic was altijt so ghereet
 Ende dat ghi mi dus wilt versteken
 Dat valt mijn herteken al te wreet
 Mijn lijf mijn goet was voor v bereet
 Want ic noeyt schoonder lief en vant
 Adieu schoon Ianneken tot op een wederkeeren.
 Adieu ick vare na troomsche lant

Four Lyrics from the *Antwerp Songbook* (1544)**On Fair Janneke**

1

That lovesome one, whom I adulate,
I must stand before her door each day.
She is so amorous in every trait
My own life I shall cast away,
So many tears from my heart do stray.
Farewell fair Janneke, until I return,
Farewell, I go to the Roman's land.

2

Fair sweet love, if it would please you
To bestow on me some faithful word,
Be certain no other will I pursue.
Although I may cast my life away
Help me, Mary, to quell my dismay,
My dearest treasure has left my hand.
Farewell fair Janneke, until I return,
Farewell, I go to the Roman's land.

3

Jealous tongues go before my eyes
And behind my back they abuse me,
My youth so fresh withers and dries:
That too will cast my life away.
From my heart it makes tears stray,
Here, there, wherever one might stand.
Farewell fair Janneke, until I return,
Farewell, I go to the Roman's land.

4

Princess love, how can you forget
That I was always at your beck and call?
And my service you now reject -
Such cruelty my heart does gall.
My life, my goods - you had my all,
For I never saw a girl so grand.
Farewell fair Janneke, until I return,
Farewell, I go to the Roman's land.

NOTES

¹ D.J. Harreld, *High Germans in the Low Countries: German merchants and commerce in Golden Age Antwerp* (Leiden, 2004), pp.1-2.

² W. Waterschoot, 'Antwerp: books, publishing and cultural production before 1585', in *Urban Achievement in Early Modern Europe: Golden Ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London*, ed. by P. O'Brien and others (Cambridge, 2001), pp.233-48.

³ A. Putter, 'Fier Margrietken: a medieval ballad and its history', in *The Singer and the Scribe: European ballad traditions and European ballad culture*, ed. by P.E. Bennet and R. Firth Green (Amsterdam, 2004), pp.73-6.

⁴ *Het Antwerps Liedboek*, Part 2, text edition by Dieuwke E. van der Poel, Dirk Geirnaert, Hermina Joldersma and Johan Oosterman, reconstruction of the melodies by Louis Peter Grijp (Tiel: Uitgeverij Lannoo, 2004), p.9. For discussion of this edition, cf. Hermina Joldersma, ed.: 'Het Antwerps Liedboek,' a critical edition (unpublished doctoral dissertation, 2 vols., Princeton Univ., 1983; some Dutch university libraries have this, e.g. Utrecht and Antwerp); and Dieuwke E. van der Poel, 'Het Antwerps Liedboek compleet', in *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 10(2), pp. 80-85.

⁵ On Duke August and his library see *A Treasure House of Books. The Library of Duke August of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel*, ed. by H. Schmidt-Glintzer (Wolfenbüttel, 1998); E. Jay, 'Queen Caroline's Library and its European Contexts', *Book History* 9 (2006), pp.31-55.

⁶ *The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse, 1509-1659*, ed. by H.R. Woudhuysen (Harmondsworth, 1994), pp.357, 437.

⁷ *Het Antwerps Liedboek*, Part 2, pp. 31-36.

Louis Peter Grijp, 'Nagedachten bij de muzikale reconstructie van het *Antwerps Liedboek*', in *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 10(2), pp. 86-97.

⁸ See R.P. Meijer, *Literature of the Low Countries* (The Hague, 1978), 52-3; also B. Jongenelen and B. Parsons, 'Ten Poems from the Gruuthuse Songbook', *Fifteenth-century Studies* 34 (2009).

⁹ B. Ramakers, 'Between Aea and Golgotha: the education and scholarship of Matthijs de Castelein', in *Education and Learning in the Netherlands, 1400-1600: essays in honour of Hilde de Ridder-Symoens*, ed. by K. Goudriaan and others (Leiden, 2004), pp.179-200.

¹⁰ For a comprehensive study of the chambers, see M.A. Schenkeveld, *Dutch Literature in the Age of Rembrandt: themes and ideas* (Amsterdam, 1991).

¹¹ A.-L. van Bruane, 'Sociabiliteit en competitie. De sociaal-institutionele ontwikkeling van de rederijderskamers in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1400-1650)', and A. van Dixhoorn, 'Burgers, braries en bollebozen. De sociaal-institutionele ontwikkeling van de rederijderskamers in de Noordelijke Nederlanden (1400-1650)', in *Conformisten en rebellen – Rederijderscultuur in de Nederlanden (1400-1650)*, ed. by B. Ramakers (Amsterdam, 2003), pp.45-64, 65-85; H. Pleij, *Nederlandse literatuur in de late Middeleeuwen* (Utrecht, 1990), pp.158-191. See also Gary K. Waite, *Reformers on stage – Popular drama and religious propaganda in the Low Countries of Charles V, 1515-1556* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2000), pp. 26-48.

¹² E.M. Kavalier, 'Renaissance Gothic in the Netherlands: The Uses of Ornament', *Art Bulletin* 82 (2000), p.11.

¹³ On the *Conste van rhetoriken*, see M. Spies, *Rhetoric, Rhetoricians and Poets* (Amsterdam,

1999), pp.40-6.

¹⁴ The refereyn is discussed in M. Spies, 'Developments in Sixteenth-Century Dutch Poetics: from "Rhetoric" to "Renaissance"', in *Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. by H.F. Plett (Berlin, 1993), pp.72-91.

¹⁵ P.J. Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian ceremony and civic life in late medieval Ghent* (Ithaca, 1996), p.177.

¹⁶ J.W. Bonda, 'Tandernaken, between Bruges and Ferrara', in *From Ciconia to Sweelinck: Donum natalicium Willem Elders*, ed. by A. Clemens and E. Jas (Amsterdam, 1994), pp.49-74; Putter, 'Fier Margrietken', pp.69-88.

¹⁷ See for instance W.J.A. Jonckbloet, *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche letterkunde*, 6 vols. (Groningen, 1888-92), II: *de Middeleeuwen* (2) (1889), pp.285-307.

¹⁸ K. Vellekoop, 'Hoe oud is "oudt" in het Antwerps liedboek?', in *Tussentijds. Bundel studies aangeboden aan W.P. Gerritsen ter gelegenheid van zijn vijftigste verjaardag*, ed. by A.M.J. van Buuren (Utrecht, 1985), pp.272-279.

¹⁹ K. ter Laan, *Letterkundig woordenboek voor Noord en Zuid*. (The Hague, 1952), p.626.

²⁰ *Het Antwerps Liedboek*, Part 2, pp. 13-14.

²¹ Hermina Joldersma, 'De fascinerende reikwijdte van liederen uit het Antwerps Liedboek: het 'Liedeken van Sint Jacob (AL 20)', in *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 10(2), pp. 106-115.

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²³ L. Forster, 'Dutch', in: *EOS. An Inquiry into the Theme of Lovers' Meetings and Partings at Dawn in Poetry*, ed. by A.T. Hatto (The Hague, 1965), pp.473-504.

²⁴ Comic songs of the period are discussed in W.S. Gibson, *Pieter Breugel and the Art of Laughter* (Berkeley, 2006), pp.23-4.

²⁵ See J.D. Tracey, *Charles V, Impresario of War: campaign strategy, international finance, and domestic politics* (Cambridge, 2002), pp.72-5.

²⁶ See for instance R.J. Evans, *The making of the Habsburg monarchy, 1550-1700: an interpretation* (Oxford, 1979), p.156-8.

²⁷ Johan Oosterman, 'O Fortuna – Tragiek, troost en vastberadenheid', in *Nederlandse Letterkunde*, 10(2), pp. 98-105.

²⁸ P. Dale, 'A Note On Translations', in *François Villon: Selected Poems*, trans. and ed. by P. Dale (Harmondsworth, 1978), p.7.

²⁹ Robert Herrick, *Selected Poems*, ed. by D. Brooks-Davies (London, 1996), pp.22-4.

³⁰ *Het Antwerps Liedboek*, Part 2, p.98; CD 1 track 6.

³¹ See D. van der Poel, 'Liefdesliedjes uit Amsterdam. *Het Aemstelredams Amoreus lietboeck* (1589)' in *De fiere nachtegaal*, ed. by L.P. Grijp and F. Willaert (Leuven, 2006), pp.167-89.

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³³ D. Bax, 'Aloncius prophecie', *Nieuwe Taalgids* 43 (1950), pp.116-7.

³⁴ *Het Antwerps Liedboek*, Part 2, pp.261-262; CD 2 track 5.

³⁵ On this form in the Renaissance, see S. Pugh, *Spenser And Ovid* (Aldershot, 2005), p.97.

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