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## RHYTHM AND RECEPTION IN THE AGE OF DANTE

### ABSTRACT

Quasi tutti i generi di musica polifonica del periodo compreso tra il 1150 e il 1250 ca. sono stati oggetto di una riscrittura notazionale intorno al 1300. Sebbene queste fonti siano lontane da fornire prove certe sulle strutture ritmiche e metriche originali, esse rivelano un interesse verso il recupero dell'*organum*, del *conductus* e di altri generi attraverso attente rielaborazioni. Alcune di queste si limitano ad aggiornare la scrittura senza intervenire sul profilo ritmico, altre invece hanno un effetto profondo sul profilo metrico delle opere stesse. Inoltre, il processo di adeguamento notazionale talvolta comprende anche vere e proprie riscritture: principalmente l'aggiunta di una terza voce all'*organum* a due voci. Ciò determina un superamento dei confini di genere: la forma 'mista' dell'*organum* e del *conductus* è ampiamente cancellata, mentre nuove opere vanno a coesistere con musica che era insieme patetica e innovativa verso il 1300.

PAROLE CHIAVE *Organum, conductus, chanson, refrain*, notazione

### SUMMARY

Almost every genre of polyphonic music from the period c1150 to c1250 was subject to renotation around 1300. Far from providing evidence of how the rhythm and metre of the originals were structured, these sources from c1300 reveal a culture of careful reworking that constitutes a site of reception for *organum*, *conductus* and other genres. While some renotations simply update without changing rhythmic profile, others have a profound effect on the metrical profile of the work. Furthermore, in some cases the process of renotating also involved recomposition: mostly the additional third voices to two-voice textures. Generic boundaries were consequently blurred, and the profile of *organum* and *conductus* as a mixed form was largely erased, as these updated works co-existed with music that was pathbreaking and innovative c1300.

KEYWORDS *Organum, conductus, chanson, refrain*, notation



DANTE Alighieri's *De vulgari eloquentia* used to be a key text in the analysis of vernacular song.<sup>1</sup> It served as a tantalising glimpse into the ways in which the languages of *oc*, *oïl* and *sì* – Provençal, *Francien* and Italian – could have been viewed around 1300, and one of the earliest sustained accounts of romance languages. It also is one of the earliest descriptions – and certainly the earliest from a practising poet – of the songs of the *trouvères* and *troubadours*, and remains a fundamental, but perhaps exasperating, text with which any account of the vernacular poetry and music of the middle ages must contend.<sup>2</sup>

Grappling with Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia* does however represent additional cultural work: the author's creative life spans the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, and the text itself, dealing as it does with poetry and music of the previous century and before, dates from the very beginning of the fourteenth century. And this helps subvert the critical legacy of dividing the history of medieval music between the thirteenth century – the later history of *organum* and *conductus* and the motet – and the fourteenth – polyphonic song, the music in the *Roman de Fauvel* and what used to be called the isorhythmic motet.<sup>3</sup> Such constructs are in urgent need of subversion: to take just the history of the motet, the music in the *Roman de Fauvel*,<sup>4</sup> for example, overlaps chronologically with the collection of motets in Turin, Biblioteca Reale vari 42, perhaps copied even after Dante's death. Furthermore, the emergence of polyphonic song – with its ultimate form in the works of Machaut – was a process that similarly spanned the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century. Such observations, coupled with the origins of Parisian *organum* and the earliest *conductus* in the second half of the twelfth century leads directly to the idea of a 'long' thirteenth century, one that begins with the earliest *organa* and datable *conducti* in the 1160s and extending up until the 1320s.

If the period around 1300 prefigures other seismic changes in music history – the *nuove musiche* c1600 and the *Neue Musik* c 1900, it also witnessed a more subtle change in the history of western music. At the end of nearly half a century of intense theoretical debate about the nature of rhythm, metre and notation, and about the generic applicability of various approaches to rhythm and notation, musicians around 1300 started to revisit repertoires from the previous 150 years, and began to attempt reworkings of their rhythm in the light of changes in thought and progressions in notational so-

1. Modern editions of *De vulgari eloquentia* are in Marigo, cur., *De vulgari eloquentia*, and DANTE ALIGHIERI, *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. Mengaldo. There are facing-page translations (Latin-Italian) in DANTE ALIGHIERI, *Opere minori* 2, ed. Mengaldo, and (Latin-English) in DANTE, *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. and trans. Botterill.
2. *De vulgari eloquentia* served as a key text in entirely innovative ways in STEVENS, *Words and Music*.
3. Such divisions are entrenched in the literature from REESE, *Music in the Middle Ages*, and there is even a residue in EVERIST – KELLY, eds., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Music*.
4. The notated version of the *Roman de Fauvel* is Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter *F-Pn*), fonds français 146.

phistication. No genre seems to have been immune from this process: two-voice *organum*, three-voice *organum* – each with very different approaches to rhythm and metre – the *conductus* – both *cum* and *sine littera* – and all forms of vernacular monody, especially the songs of the *trouvères* and *troubadours* for whom Dante is such a telling witness.

For most of the twentieth century, the appearance of these genres in various forms of metrical rhythm was proof positive that the original forms of *organum*, *conductus* and secular song were metrically organised.<sup>5</sup> More careful readings of theory in the quarter-century either side of the millennium called such assumptions into question, but so too did a recognition of the aesthetics of reception that acknowledged that processes changed over time, and that later years took older music and recast it in its own form. As long ago as 1985, Ernest Sanders could critique the view that the original forms of *organum*, *conductus* and secular song were subject to metrical principles by analogy to Czerny's 1837 edition of J.S. Bach's *Das wohltemperirte Clavier, oder Praeludia, und Fugen durch alle Tone und Semitonia*:

Moreover, the versions of Notre Dame conducti in... mensural sources... must be viewed with at least the same degree of caution regarding their reliability as, for instance, Czerny's version of The Well-Tempered Clavier. In fact, no mensurally notated source of a Notre Dame conductus can be automatically regarded as dependable evidence for its original rhythms...<sup>6</sup>

Sanders points out, furthermore the similarity in time lag between the composition of Schubert's Symphony 7 and Maher's arrangement of the work and in temporal distance between the original versions of *organum* and *conductus* and their metrical versions c1300;<sup>7</sup> such examples could easily be multiplied: Schoenberg arranging Brahms is just another example.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, once the chronology of sources, theory and what is known about dates of composition were clarified, it became evident that *all* the sources that cast *organum duplum*, *conductus* and monophonic song in

5. These assumptions resulted in complete editions of the repertory that imposed modal rhythm onto repertories or parts of repertories that were never designed to accept it: for *organum*, WAITE, *The Rhythm of Twelfth-Century Polyphony*, and TISCHLER, ed., *The Parisian Two-Part Organa*; for the *conductus*, ANDERSON, ed., *Notre-Dame and Related Conductus* (all but vol. 7 and 11 have appeared) and TISCHLER, ed., *The Earliest Polyphonic Art Music*; for *trouvère* song, TISCHLER, ed., *Trouvère Lyrics with Melodies* (1997). The two latter editions are complemented by TISCHLER, ed., *Trouvère Lyrics with Melodies* (2006). For *organum*, there is a critical edition which takes a more circumspect view of the rhythm of sustained-tone *organum* in ROESNER *et al.*, éd., *Le Magnus liber organi de Notre Dame de Paris*, and for *trouvère* song, VAN DER WERF, Hrsg., *Trouvères-Melodien*. The *conductus* still awaits a modern critical edition.
6. SANDERS, *Conductus and Modal Rhythm*, p. 454.
7. ANDRASCHKE, *Die Retuschen Gustav Mahlers an der 7. Symphonie von Franz Schubert*, cited in *ibid.*, p. 454, note 79.
8. Arnold Schoenberg arranged Brahms' g minor piano quartet op. 25 for orchestra between May and September 1937; Brahms' original was composed in 1861.

metrical rhythm dated from the very end of the long thirteenth century – almost exactly from Dante’s lifetime. In other words, the sources that older scholars used were evidence not of the original form of these works but of their reception in an age where the mensurally-conceived, and by 1270 mensurally-notated, motet was gaining most attention in terms of composition, cultivation and theory; such metrical practices in the motet bled over into late copies of *organum* and *conductus*. Each of the relatively small number of sources constitutes a site of reception for the genre it preserves, and provides evidence – as do all such sites – of the ways in which older repertoires interact with newer practices and cultures.<sup>9</sup>

With the ground cleared of anachronistic attempts to force rhythmic and metrical practices from c1300 onto repertoires from the late twelfth century, one remarkable principle emerges: that of the ‘mixed form’: a genre whose most general features include the mixing of rhythmically, texturally and poetic discourses that mimics the poetic mixed forms that bring prose and poetry into alignment. In their admixture of sustained-tone *organum* with *discantus* and *musica cum littera* with *musica sine littera*, *organum* and *conductus* were no less mixed forms than Boethius’ *De consolazione philosophiae*. While the implications of reading the mixed form in the *conductus* have been explored, its allusions in *organum* await investigation. With this in mind, the field is clear to ask exactly what cultural work these sites of reception in fact undertake. When it is recognised that musicians revised, revisited or updated the music of the past, their practices and the aesthetic results of their endeavours may then become themselves the object of inquiry. In examining this phenomenon, five precepts emerge:

1. The renotation of *organum duplum* and *conductus* between 1270 and 1320 reveals nothing about the rhythmic structure of that music when it was originally composed a century or more earlier, but it does uncover a great deal about the ways in which that music was received around 1300 in a context where the theoretical discussions of mensural notation had been developing for at least twenty-five years.
2. The renotation of non-mensural shapes with mensural ones could have one of two effects:
  - 2.1. Either it simply clarified the notation of already fully-metrical music, as in the case of *clausula* and motet, the upper voices of three- and four-part *organa*, and the *sine littera* sections of the *conductus*
  - 2.2. or it could radically change the rhythmic profile of previously non-metrical rhythms as found in the upper voices of *organa dupla*, the *cum littera* sections of *conductus* and most forms of monophonic song.
9. For a broad account of the ‘site of reception’ and the theoretical framework in which the current observations are placed, see EVERIST, *Reception Theories, Canonised Discourses and Musical*. For a direct use of the concept in the context of the medieval *conductus*, see ID., *Reception and Recomposition*.

3. Changes in notation and rhythm also entailed the addition of voices in certain genres – *conductus* and even the *refrain* – where voice addition had never formed part of the musical culture.
4. The consequences of these notational and rhythmic shifts resulted in changes to two key genres: *organum duplum* and the *conductus cum caudis*.
  - 4.1. In both cases the clearly-defined mixed form of the original is smoothed over. The alternation of unmeasured *organum purum* and the fully-measured *clausula* had characterised the genre for nearly a century, and the same was true of the unmeasured *musica cum littera* of the *conductus* and its fully measured *musica sine littera*. These rhythmic distinctions were effaced.
  - 4.2. Generic boundaries, especially between motet and *conductus* were blurred.
  - 4.3. The mixed form was accordingly more or less erased from music history.
5. Despite these radical changes, genres using unmeasured notation and unmeasured, or non-metrical, rhythm continued to be cultivated alongside these newer types of measured and metrical notations.

### Notational Re-encoding

Unmeasured or partially-measured notation that encoded mensural practice was updated c1300 to fully-measured notation, but rhythmic and metrical profile remains unchanged. The best-known example of this procedure is surely the motet. Here, works clearly designed to be performed mensurally – since they often share and frequently are based on modally-notated *clausulae* – were notated in Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana (hereafter *I-Fl*), Plut. 29.1, Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek (hereafter *D-W*) 1099 and related manuscripts in a partially- or completely-unmeasured notation. These same works were then copied and recopied in various forms of pre-Franconian notation, thorough-going Franconian notation and then associated with even later notational types, with little or no change to their rhythmic profile. The same motet could be transmitted as a Latin motet in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1, a French contrafactum in *D-W* 1099, and then in a kaleidoscope of different sources and slightly different notational dialects – those of Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek (hereafter *D-BAs*) Lit. 115, the *corpus ancien* of Montpellier, Bibliothèque interuniversitaire (*F-MOf*) H 196 and London, British Library Additional 30091 and *F-Pn* fonds latin 11266. But the motet is perhaps not the most interesting element in the story. The tale of the addition and subtraction of voices and texts, together with the role of *contrafactum* has been



Figure 1a. Three-voice *organum Virgo flagellatur. ¶ Sponsus amat*, opening of responsory; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Plut. 29.1, fol. 39v



Figure 1b. Three-voice *organum Virgo flagellatur. ¶ Sponsus amat*, opening of responsory; Montpellier, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire, H 196, fol. 5v

endlessly reviewed in the last half century and longer, and is perhaps of less significance as a series of sites of reception than others to be discussed.<sup>10</sup>

Alongside the motet, however, three-voice *organa* represent a less-familiar instance of unmeasured or partially-measured original notation that encoded mensural practice in the period 1160-1220, which was updated c1300 using largely unambiguous mensural notation. Figures 1a and 1b give two versions of an extract from a three-voice responsory, *Virgo flagellatur* with the verse *Sponsus amat*.

10. The networks of reworking, addition and subtraction of voices and *contrafactum* were first adumbrated in LUDWIG, *Repertorium organorum recentioris et motetorum vetustissimi stili*; This was supplemented in GENNRICH, *Bibliographie der ältesten französischen und lateinischen Motetten*, and again in VAN DER WERF, *Integrated Directory of Organa, Clausulae and Motets*.

Figure 1a gives the beginning of the piece copied in Paris in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 between 1245 and 1255 and composed perhaps between 1190 and 1220; it is notated in a classic and largely unambiguous modal rhythm in the upper voices with a sustained tenor beneath them. Figure 1b is the beginning of the same piece copied – also probably in Paris in the 1280s or 1290s – in the first fascicle of *F-MOf* H 196; this was, together with the seventh fascicle, the first supplement to be made to the original core of the manuscript – the so-called corpus ancien – that comprised the second to sixth fascicles of the manuscript.<sup>11</sup> The two versions encode the same rhythms; the difference is that the scribe of the version in *F-MOf* H 196 seeks to clarify the values of ligatures by using the techniques available to him from theory stretching back to Johannes de Garlandia, through Lambertus, the St Emmeram Anonymous and Anonymous IV right through to the author of *Ars cantus mensurabilis*.<sup>12</sup> Careful additions of downward tractus and the equally careful attention to questions of *proprietas* and *perfectio* render the implicit mode-III structure of the original *explicit* via the use of mensural ligatures. The Montpellier scribe goes even further and seeks to differentiate shorter values using ligatures *cum opposita proprietate* and to distinguish between *breves* and pairs of *semibreves* in accordance with mensural theory from the last quarter of the thirteenth century.

What the example from *Virgo flagellatur* reveals is the ability of musicians and scribes from the end of the thirteenth century to understand the modal notation of the end of the twelfth, and to recognise how this could be re-encoded and clarified by the use of mensural ligatures that had been developed during their lifetime. There was here, however, no attempt to change the rhythmic profile of the original through the use of a more modern notation.

## Metrical Re-encoding

Unmeasured or partially-measured notation which encoded non-mensural practice resulted in notational changes around 1300 that imparted a new mensural and metrical rhythm that was not there before. There are four

11. This is broadly speaking the analysis of the manuscript offered nearly a century ago in ROKSETH, éd., *Polyphonies du treizième siècle*, vol. 4, p. 30, despite failed attempts to challenge it in WOLINSKI, *The Montpellier Codex*, and EAD., *The Compilation of the Montpellier Codex*, as well as in DILLON, *The Sense of Sound*. For a reading of Rokseth's account of the manuscript, its structure and its significance for several genres of polyphonic music in the second half of the thirteenth century, see EVERIST, *Polyphonic Music in Thirteenth-Century France* (1985), published under the same title in 1989, vol. 1, pp. 110-133.
12. See for Garlandia, JOHANNES DE GARLANDIA, *De mensurabili musica*, Ed. Reimer; for Lambertus, MEYER, ed., and DESMOND – HAGG-HUGLO trans., *The 'Ars musica' Attributed to Magister Lambertus/Aristoteles*; for the St Emmeram Anonymous, YUDKIN, ed., *De Musica mensurata*; for Anonymous IV, RECKOW, ed., *Der Musiktraktat des Anonymus 4*; for *Ars cantus mensurabilis*, FRANCONIS DE COLONIA, *Ars cantus mensurabilis*, eds. Reaney – Gilles.



Figure 2a. Two-voice *organum Christus resurgens*.  $\Psi$  *Dicant nunc iudei*, opening of verse; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Plut. 29.1, fol. 70r



Figure 2b. Two-voice *organum Christus resurgens*.  $\Psi$  *Dicant nunc iudei* opening of verse; Copenhagen, Det kongelige Bibliotek, 1810 40, fol. 6v

genres in which this change in rhythmic profile was witnessed: the *conductus*, *trouvère* song, the *refrain* and two-voice *organa*. Discussion of the *conductus* may be postponed until the next section, but it is enough to say here that the unmeasured sections of *conducti cum caudis* (those characterised by *musica cum littera*) and the entire work in the *conductus sine caudis* were reworked so that their originally non-metrical rhythm is recast in a metrical form. This was not a trivial undertaking for the musicians who undertook the work at the end of the century, but neither is it one that posed significant problems: largely syllabic music with low levels of ornamentation was relatively easy to adapt to the metrical strictures of mensural notation.

Two-voice *organum* is different; here, the highly florid nature of the original makes imposing a rhythmic profile a near-insurmountable challenge. The principal witness is a set of fragments discovered in the late 1980s in Copenhagen, Det kongelige Bibliotek (hereafter *DK-Ku*) 1810 4<sup>o</sup>.<sup>13</sup> One of the best-preserved fragments contains part of the processional responsory *Christus resurgens*, and

13. There is a brief report on the Copenhagen fragments in BERGSAGEL, *The Transmission of Notre-Dame Organa*. Although «a full study by the present author with facsimiles and transcriptions is forthcoming» (*ibid.*, p. 636, note 3), no such publication has appeared.



its verse *Dicant nunc iudei*. Figures 2a and 2b give the original unmeasured version from *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 and *DK-Ku* 1810 4° (Figures 2a and 2b). Not only does *DK-Ku* 1810 4° attempt to update the notation of the verse *Dicant nunc iudei* using mensural ligatures which unambiguously identify *longae* and *breves*, but it also possibly indulges in innovative compositional acts.

As in the case of the version of *Virgo flagellatur*, the three-voice *organum* from *F-MOf* H 196, the scribe of *DK-Ku* 1810 4° tries to distinguish between *longa* and *brevis* using descending strokes in ligatures to distinguish *proprietas* and *perfectio*. Like the scribe of *F-MOf* H 196, he also uses ligatures *cum opposita proprietate*. It seems to go quite well at the beginning, as he attempts to encode the notes all as *breves* except at cadences where he assigns *longae*. But the virtuosic, quasi-improvised display that characterises this music defeats him quickly as soon as he reaches the *currentes* in the original for which, despite his modernist enthusiasms, he can do nothing but simply reproduce the original shapes in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1. He gamely changes the last note of the first *currentes* to a *longa*, but for the second one he does not even try. In short, this musical project was designed to update the rhythm of a completely unmeasured original which is carried out as well as it could have been, given the disparity between notation and musical style in the source material and the ambitions of the editor. A musical project from around 1300, then, attempts to update music over a hundred years old with – at best – questionable results.

It might be thought that the Copenhagen musician was simply not up to the task of updating the original material, but there are two reasons to give the individual more credit: the first is that the task of updating with fully-mensural ligatures melodic lines that include *currentes* of the sort found here is in fact impossible; the second is that the musician might also in fact have composed a new work. In *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 there is no setting of the responsory, *Christus resurgens*, just its verse *Dicant nunc iudei*; the verse is preceded by the end of a totally different piece: the responsory *Et valde* with a verse *Et respicientes*, and it has always been assumed that the responsory was simply sung in plainsong. However, *DK-Ku* 1810 4° preserves part of the responsory (Figure 3), and it seems reasonable to assume that before fragmentation the manuscript would have included the responsory missing in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1.

This could equally well be a copy c 1300 of a much older version of the piece that was simply not copied in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 or any other of the cognate sources from mid-century, but it is not impossible that the *DK-Ku* 1810 4° version was composed for a liturgical environment that allowed or required the performance of the of the processional responsory in polyphony which was supplied in the manuscript. In any case, the responsory, as Figure 3 shows was either updated or composed using the same mensural ligatures as found elsewhere in the fragment.

Given the amount of heat generated by the subject, it might have been thought that the fate of *trouvère* song would have been central to the rhythmic rework-



Figure 3. Two-voice *organum Christus resurgens. V̇ Dicant nunc iudei*, extract from responsory; Copenhagen, Det kongelige Bibliotek, 1810 40, fol. 6v

ing of music around 1300.<sup>14</sup> But despite duel, death and disgrace,<sup>15</sup> scholars in the early twentieth century could find almost no sources from around 1300 that encoded the genre in mensural notation, and a single manuscript – the so-called *Chansonnier Cangé*, *F-Pn fonds français 846* – must undertake a lot of cultural work in this regard.<sup>16</sup> Although convincingly dated by Alison Stones and Kathleen Ruffo c1300, the manuscript is poorly placed to do it.<sup>17</sup> Figures 4a and 4b give two of the three surviving sources for the anonymous song *Apris ai qu'en chantant* (RS 2010): *F-Pn fonds français 847* – one of the so-called KNPX group of *chansonniers*<sup>18</sup> – and *F-Pn fonds français 846*.<sup>19</sup>

The notation of *F-Pn fonds français 847* is typical of almost all *trouvère chansonniers* in that it records pitch with no attempt to impose any sort of metrical rhythm, and most modern scholars take the view that the free declamatory rhythm of the music is largely determined by the internal logic of the poetry.<sup>20</sup> Not so the version in *F-Pn fonds français 846*, where it looks very much like the scribe – here clearly as much a musician as an editor – is trying to impose a mode-two profile. He starts with a neat alternation of *brevis* and *longa*, reading

14. The only exception seems to be the three French songs appended to the manuscript *F-Pn fonds français 844* which may well date from much later than the '*trouvère*' tradition to which they are attributed. See KARP, *Three Trouvère Chansons in Mensural Notation*.

15. HAINES, *The 'Modal Theory'*.

16. BECK, éd., *Reproduction phototypique du chansonnier Cangé*.

17. Two attempts at dating the manuscript (which place it just either side of 1300 and therefore much later than most of the *chansonniers* that transmit the *grand chant*) are STONES, *The Illustrated Chrétien Manuscripts and their Artistic Context*, and RUFFO, *The Illustration of Noted Compendia of Courtly Poetry*, pp. 61-64 and 125-182.

18. For the KNPX group of *chansonniers* and their text-critical significance, see SPANKE, Hrsg., *Eine altfranzösische Liedersammlung*.

19. The third source, which adds nothing to the current discussion, is *F-Pn nouvelles acquisitions françaises 1050*, fol. 210v.

20. Although it took several decades for his understanding of the rhythm of *trouvère* song to become accepted, van der Werf's publications from the 1960s and 1970s are fundamental and remain without serious contradiction: WERF, *The Trouvère Chansons as Creations of a Notationless Musical Culture*; ID., *Concerning the Measurability of Medieval Music*, ID., *The Chansons of the Troubadours and Trouvères*

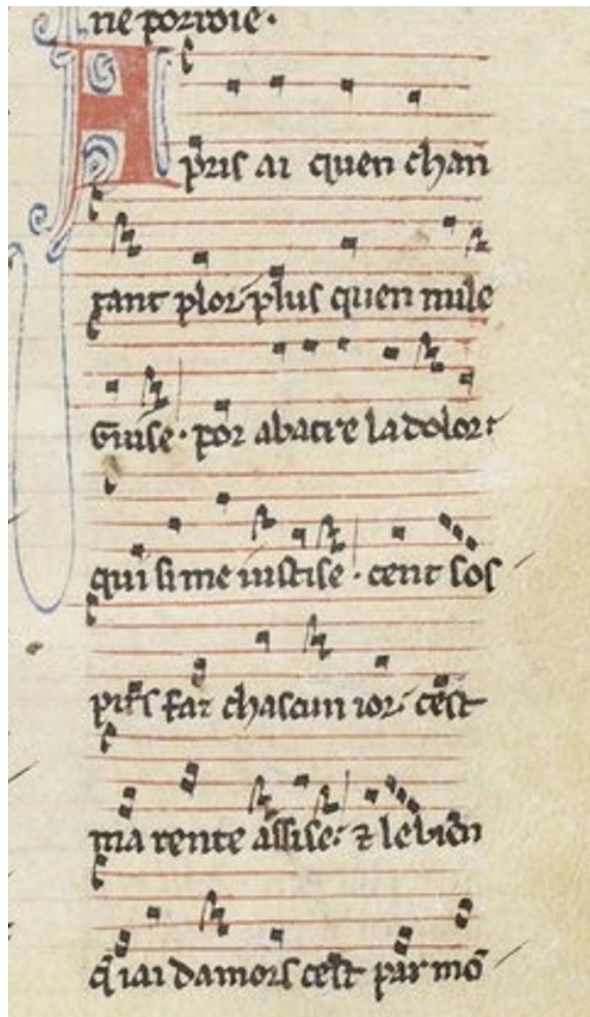


Figure 4a. Anonymous *trouvère* song *Apris ai qu'en chantant* (RS 2010), opening; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 847, fol. 140r



Figure 4b. Anonymous *trouvère* song *Apris ai qu'en chantant* (RS 2010), opening; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 846, fol. 10v

the original three-note ligatures as *fractio modi*. He gets some of the cadences right – ending with a *brevis*, for example, at «chascun ior» on the fifth stave in both cases (the cadence is melodically simplified in *F-Pn fonds Français* 846); but he also often struggles to make the original notation fit his plan, especially at cadence points. The effort is intriguing, and there are other things about *F-Pn fonds français* 846 that align it with books of mensurally-notated music – motets in particular: the much smaller format of the volume (the resolution of the images mask this difference) and especially ignoring the conventional *ordinatio* of the *trouvère* songbook where the contents are organised initially by author and replacing it with a simple alphabetic order familiar from such motet books as *D-BAs* Lit. 115 or the motet fascicles of *D-W* 1099.<sup>21</sup>

## Notational Shifts and the Compositional Impulse

When composers from around 1300 updated the rhythmic profile of music up to a hundred years old, they did not do so in a vacuum. Their work was accompanied by two further musical impulses: the addition of voices and the composition of new works. Motets are at the forefront of the network of borrowing, composition, reworking and renotation, and are characterised by a set of incremental shifts over the long thirteenth century and into the fourteenth, in which notation and rhythm play perhaps a lesser part than the endless reference to the genre in the theoretical literature suggests.

Within the domain of the *conductus*, though, there are several sources from around 1300 that not only reinterpret unmeasured music *cum littera*, but also – and this is almost completely unknown in the *conductus* repertory between 1160 and 1240 – add voices. The *conductus Ave tuos benedic* is copied in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 as a two-voice *conductus*, and probably stems from an early layer of composition, and almost certainly before 1200. A much later copy – English, and probably from around 1300 – not only updates the notation of the *musica cum littera* from undifferentiated to mensural shapes but also adds a third voice throughout the work. This is from a small collection of *conducti* in a manuscript from Oxford, Worcester College (hereafter *GB-Owc*) 3.16 (A)\* (Figures 5a and 5b).<sup>22</sup>

The completely unmeasured notation in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 contrasts with the careful reworking of the same pitches in English mensural notation (*breves* are always given as lozenges) as well as with the addition of a third voice. Both versions begin with a fully-measured *cauda* which, in the original two voices, and exhibit hardly any textual variance since the pitches of the two lowest voices are the same in both sources. The opening two-voice *cauda* in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 also accumulates a third voice in *GB-Owc* 3.16 (A)\*, and this practice aligns very closely to some of the additive techniques at work in the motet. Other sources

21. For the detail, see EVERIST, *Polyphonic Music in Thirteenth-Century France*, pp. 200–203.

22. Both versions are edited in SANDERS, ed., *English Music of the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries*; the edition of the version in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 is less successful than the one in *GB-Owc* 3.16 (A)\*.

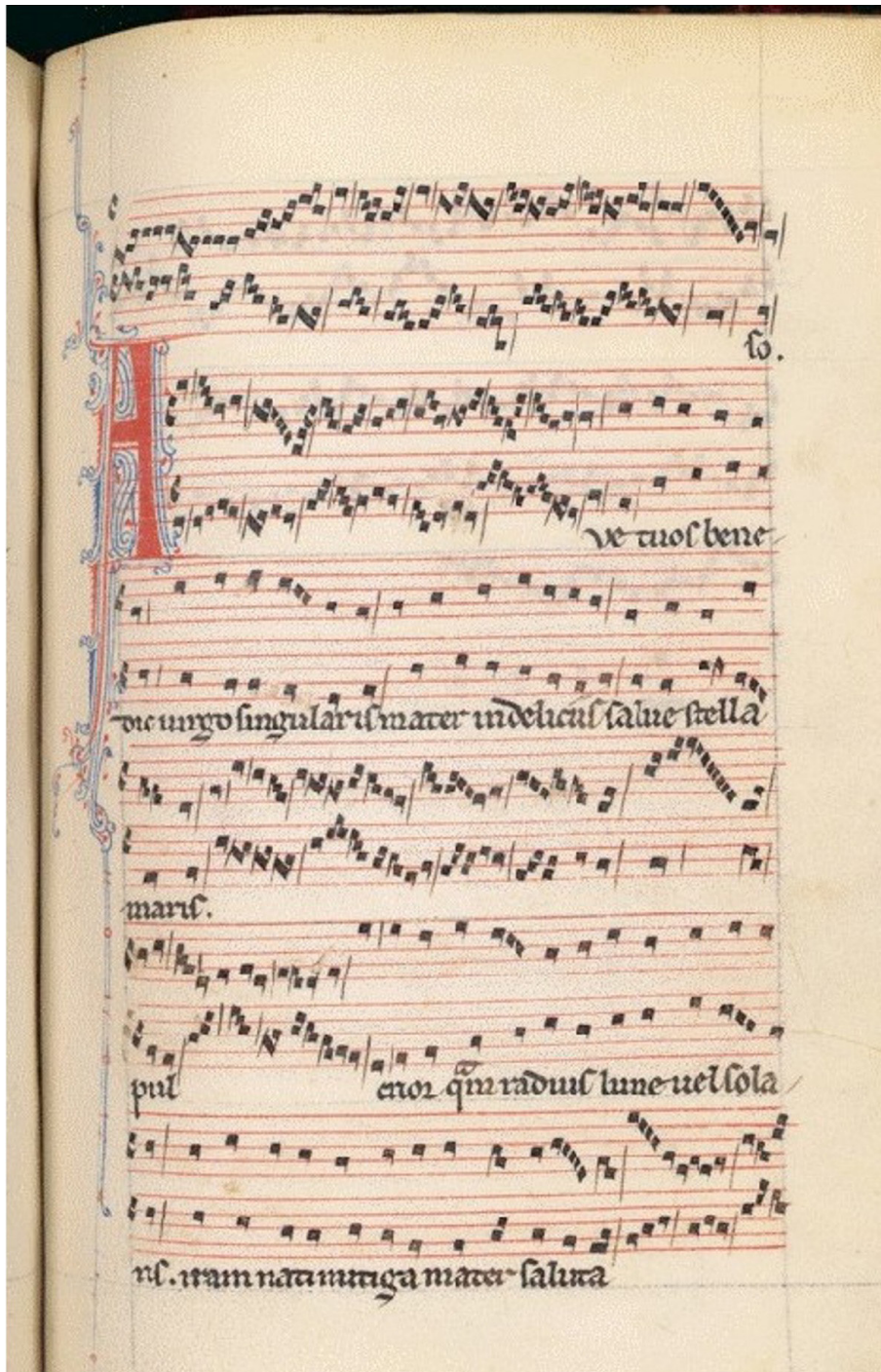


Figure 5a. Two-voice *conductus* *Ave tuos benedic*, opening; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Plut. 29.1, fol. 366r

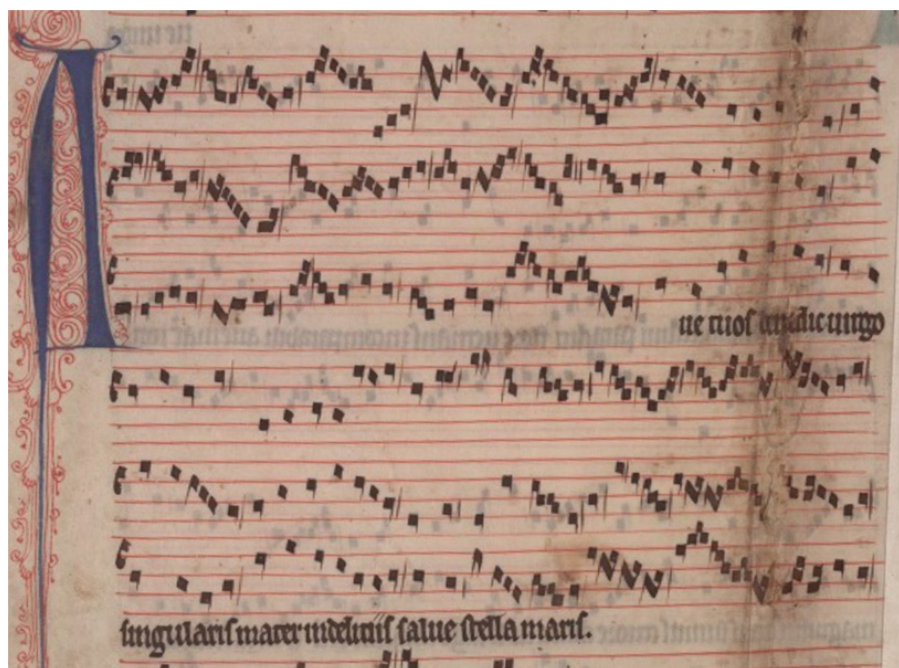


Figure 5b. Three-voice *conductus Ave tuos benedic*, opening; Oxford, Worcester College, 3.16 (A)\*, fol. 1v

now in Heidelberg and Metz behave very much the same way as they both update notation and rhythm *cum littera* to mensural norms and also add *tripla* to two-voice originals.<sup>23</sup>

There is a single instance of the addition of voices c1300 in a genre where one would least expect it. The repertory of nearly 2000 *refrains* survives in sources both with music and without, but when it is preserved with notation, it is exclusively monophonic even when its destination might be the polyphonic motet. In addition to the motet, it defines the genres of *chanson à refrain*, *chanson avec des refrains* and *rondeau*, and is found extensively in the repertory of *romance*. *Refrain* vdB 936 *J'ai joie ramenee chi* is found in all four manuscript transmissions of Jaquemart Gielee's romance *Renart le nouvel*, in the three transmissions of the anonymous *Court de Paradis*, in the unique source for Jacques Bretel's *Le tournoi de Chauvency* and in the single manuscript of Mathieu le Poirier's *La court d'amours*.<sup>24</sup> The sources that survive with music are indicated below in bold:

Anonymous, *La court de paradis*  
*F-Pn* fonds français 837, fol. 60r  
***F-Pn* fonds français 25532, fol. 335r**  
*F-Pn* fonds français 1802, fol. 106r  
 Jacques Bretel, *Le tournoi de Chauvency*

23. These are discussed in EVERIST, *Discovering Medieval Song*, pp. 294-301.

24. All the material is catalogued and edited in IBOS-AUGÉ – EVERIST, *REFRAIN: Music, Poetry Citation*.

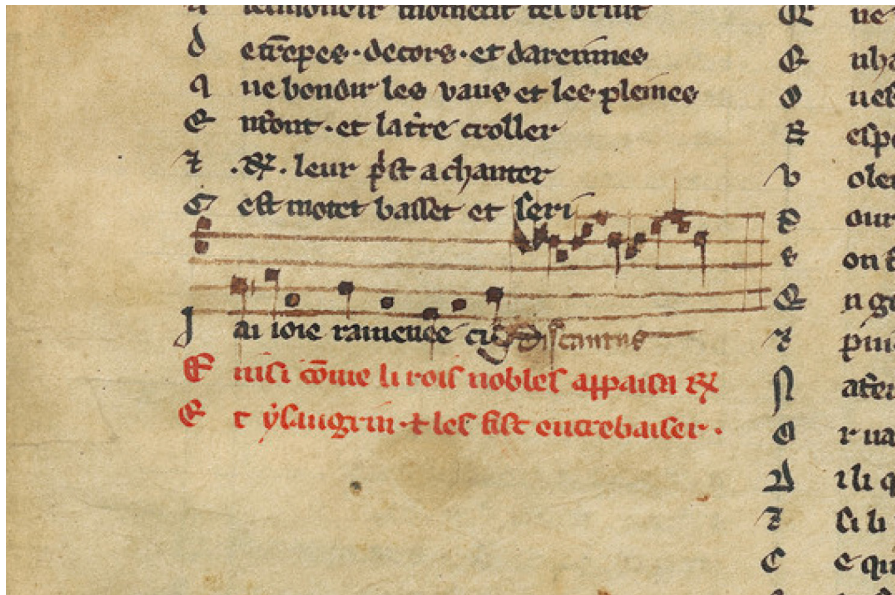


Figure 6. Refrain *J'ai joie ramenee chi* (vdB 936); Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 1593, fol. 18r

- Mons, Bibliothèque de l'Université 330-215, fol. 90r  
 Jaquemart Gielee, *Renart le nouvel*  
 F-Pn fonds français 1581, fol. 18r  
 F-Pn fonds français 2566, fol. 127v  
 F-Pn fonds français 1593, fol. 18r  
 F-Pn fonds français 372, fol. 17v  
 Mathieu le Poirier, *La court d'amours*  
 F-Pn nouvelles acquisitions françaises 1731, fol. 61r

and comprise one of the sources for *La court de paradis* and three of the four sources for *Renart le nouvel*. The notation is unmeasured in the former but measured in the sources for *Renart le nouvel*, and it seems likely that the version in F-Pn fonds français 25532 is the oldest and the original. Not only do the versions in the three sources for *Renart le nouvel* present the refrain in mensural notation but the one in F-Pn fonds français 1593 includes a second voice in counterpoint marked «Discantus» (Figure 6).<sup>25</sup>

The mensural notation of the original is clear as is that of the *discantus*. The colour of the ink suggests a later addition, but the nature of the notation suggests that it took place not significantly later. The broader notational context of the manuscript is complex; although the original scribe allowed space for the notation of the refrains, they mostly appear to be copied in a later hand, at a later time, and use a range of notational types ranging from the unmeasured, through the mensural notation of (vdB 936) *J'ai joie ramenee chi* to mensural notation with *minimae*.

The counterpoint of *J'ai joie ramenee chi* is unique in the repertory of

25. See HAINES, *Satire in the Songs of Renart Le Nouvel*.

the *refrain*, but given the polyphonic destinations of so many perhaps not quite as implausible as it might seem ((vdB 936) *J'ai joie ramenee chi* is not involved in any polyphonic context, however). However contingent the polyphonic *refrain* is on its codicological context, it nevertheless is a further witness to the practice of polyphonic addition around 1300 seen in other genres.

### *Organa tripla*

Updating unmeasured notation and declamatory rhythm to mensural practice aligned with the composition of new music is the context for the remarkable resurgence in the cultivation and composition of *organum triplum* around 1300. Three-voice *organa* are transmitted in the first fascicle of *F-MOf* H 196, in Basel, Universitätsbibliothek (hereafter *CH-Bu*) F. X 37,<sup>26</sup> and in Stockholm, Riksarkivet (hereafter *S-Sr*) Fr 535 (Table 1).<sup>27</sup>

Table 1. *Three-voice organa c1300*

CH-Bu F. X 37
[Alleluia. $\checkmark$ Christus resurgens ex mortuis, iam non moritur: mors] il[li] ultra [non dominabitur]. (M 18)
[Dum] compler[en]tur [Re]pleti sunt omnes [s]p[iritu] sancto et ceperunt loqui Gloria patri et filio et sp[iritu] sancto (O 11)
[Alle]luya. [ $\checkmark$ ] Vox sancti bartholomei quasi tuba [vehemens] es[t?] ambulanscum [e]o (U.I.)
[So]lem [iustitie. $\checkmark$ Cernere divinum lumen] (O 19)
F-MOf H 196
Benedicamus domino (BD VII)
Portare [?Sustinere] (?M 22)
Virgo. $\checkmark$ Sponsus amat. Gloria (O 40)
Alleluya. $\checkmark$ Nativitas (M 38)
Sancte Germane. $\checkmark$ O sancte Germane. Gloria (O 27)
Alleluya. $\checkmark$ Posui adjutorium (M 51)
Abjecto. $\checkmark$ Rigat (O 41)
S-Sr Fr 535
[Alleluia. $\checkmark$ ] Tumba sancti Nicolai sa[crum] resu[dat] oleum quod egros sanat ]
[Terribilis est locus iste. $\checkmark$ Cumque evigilasset Ja]cob [qua]si de gravi somp[no ait. Gloria] (O 31)

26. ARLT – HAAS, *Pariser modale Mehrstimmigkeit*.

27. BJÖRKVALL *et al.*, *Flerstämmig musik från medeltiden*; WOŁODARSKI, *Gdy pozostały tylko fragmenty...*



All use mensural notation for the upper voices, distinguishing between *longae* and *breves*, making use of ligatures with *perfectio* and *proprietas*, and even going as far as using ligatures *cum opposita proprietate* to regulate the use of smaller values. In this regard, they are all akin to the transmissions of *Virgo flagellatur*.  $\bar{V}$  *Sponsus amat* in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1 and *F-MOfH* 196 discussed earlier. But nearly all the pieces are either entirely new or new settings of chants provided only with two-voice polyphony in sources from the first half of the thirteenth century. The entirely new pieces are in red in Table 1. In each of the three surviving sources, there is a completely new composition based on a chant unknown in the core Notre-Dame repertory. But the significance of new composition becomes even more striking if new compositions based on known chants are identified (in blue in Table 1).

If every source has a brand new piece, most of the rest of the compositions in *CH-Bu* F. X 37 and *S-Sr* Fr 535 are new settings of chants that pre-exist with different two-voice polyphonic settings. All the upper-voice pitches are new, with no melodic overlap between these new three-voice works and earlier two-voice settings. The version of *Dum complerentur* in *CH-Bu* F. X 37 shows how different it is from the two-voice setting in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1. Its verse *Repleti sunt omnes* is given in Figures 7a and 7b from the two sources.

The two *clausulae* on the words «et ceperunt» are entirely different, and *CH-Bu* F. X 37 has a completely new *Gloria*. It is possible that the preceding melisma in the *CH-Bu* F. X 37 *duplum* had something in common with the one in *I-Fl* Plut. 29.1, but the state of the fragment means that it must be treated as a completely new setting of a known chant in Table 1. And returning to the three-voice *organa* in the first fascicle of *F-MOfH* 196, of the seven pieces only three are simple notational updates of the originals as in the case of *Virgo*.  $\bar{V}$  *Sponsus amat*. Of those three, two are attributed to Perotinus, and may represent some sort of homage.<sup>28</sup> Although the responsory *Sancte Germane* falls into the same category, almost all the verse is newly composed in *F-MOfH* 196 fascicle 1. So of the thirteen *organa tripla* copied in sources in the twenty-five years either side of 1300, nine and a half represent brand-new composition.

*Organa tripla* therefore stand apart from the ways in which other genres are handled in the history of music c1300. True, *conductus*, *chanson* and even two-voice *organum* leave a trace of new composition in the process of rhythmic reworking around 1300, but in the case of *organum triplum*, as Table 1 eloquently bears witness, new composition in a style a hundred years old, but using the most up-to-date notational precepts – is the musical aesthetic of preference.

## Conclusion

All genres that deployed unmeasured notation and free declamatory rhythms up to around 1250 were subject to reworking in the twenty years

28. LUDWIG, *Repertorium*, Bd. 1, Abt. 1, p. 354.

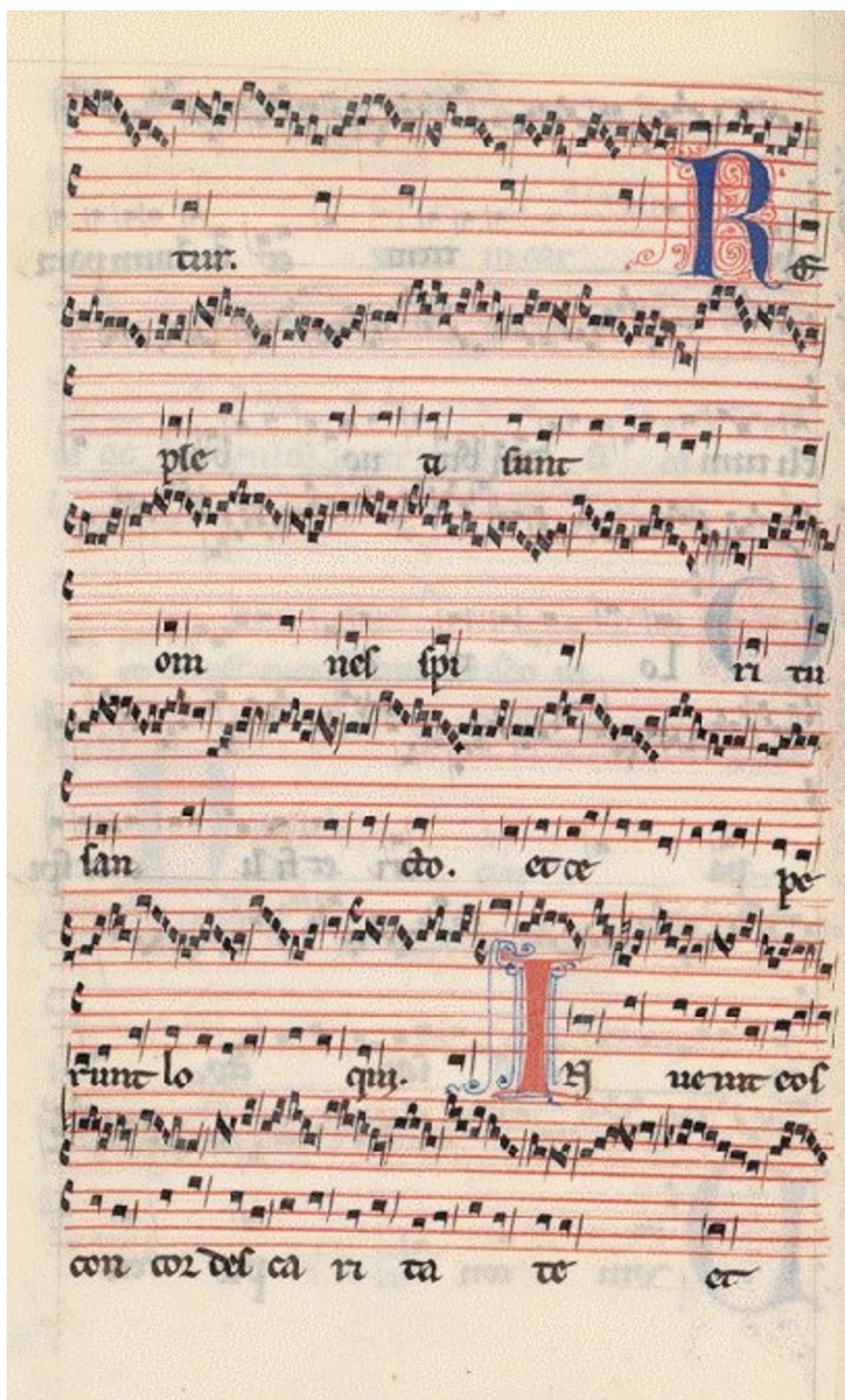


Figure 7a. Two-voice organum *Dum completerentur*. ♯ *Repleti sunt omnes*, verse; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Plut. 29.1, fol. 72v

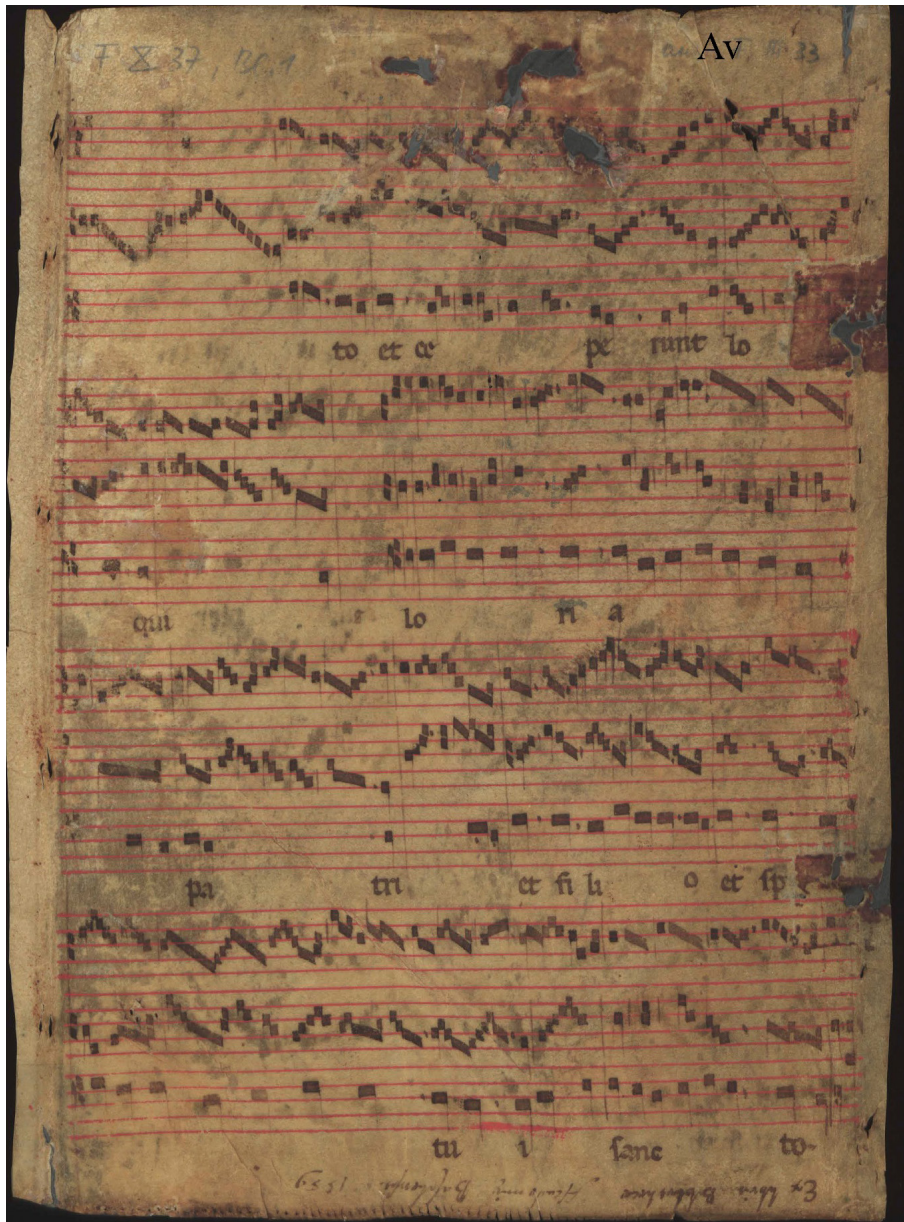


Figure 7b. Three-voice *organum Dum completerentur. ¶ Repleti sunt omnes*, verse; Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F. X 37, fol. Av

either side of 1300. The consequences of this, perhaps inevitable, practice was a process of generic blurring, especially between *conductus* and motet, and critically the end – or at the very least the weakening – of the mixed form that had characterised *organum* and *conductus* since its inception in the last third of the twelfth century. Many of these changes – and the motet is an exception – seem to have taken place suddenly, with little incremental change, as the vogue for mensural notation and the resulting rhythms over-

took Parisian music like a tsunami around 1270. But what is also clear is that alongside this massive and sudden change, the original types of *organa* and *conductus* – with their declamatory rhythms which allowed the preservation of the mixed form – continued to be copied, transmitted and in some cases composed all over Europe in the fourteenth century.

As a series of sites of reception, the music considered in this article shows first how works of all types and dating from as early as the late twelfth century could be assimilated into a completely different aesthetic in the decades around 1300. Second, this music is a salutary reminder that the old arts – in some cases some *very* old arts – coexist in a complex continuity with new arts of all sorts. And third, these practices are inextricably linked to the process of new composition. Recognising the interrelationships between these elements is essential to understanding the complexity of music during Dante's lifetime.

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