

The song and the page: experiments with form and layout in manuscripts of medieval Latin song

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ABSTRACT. *The non-liturgical songs of twelfth- and thirteenth-century England were recorded, for the most part, not in dedicated song books, but on occasional pages in manuscript miscellanies. Away from the context of fully musical books, there were no fixed procedures for the layout of music, and scribes devised new approaches to layout as they worked. This article considers three Latin songs from such sources and explores the evidence for experimentation, both in scribal technique and in musical procedures, that may have contributed to their specific manuscript presentations.*

Among the ecclesiastical institutions of twelfth- and thirteenth-century France, a number of repertoires of a new kind of Latin song were emerging. Musical settings of Latin lyrics, embodying the formal and technical characteristics of a trend referred to as 'nova cantica',¹ survive in manuscripts from Paris, Aquitaine and Beauvais, among others.² Their poets were concerned mainly with religious themes, and a few songs found a place within local festal liturgies, but many others were transmitted simply as collections of song, without any indications of their possible function, ritual or otherwise. Another such repertoire survives from England, although its songs are not preserved in self-conscious 'collections', but scattered individually among largely non-musical manuscripts.³ These 'miscellanies' collectively preserve a hundred or so

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¹ For an outline description, see Frederic Raby, *A History of Christian Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1953), 288–96. See also Wulf Arlt, 'Sequenze and "Neues Lied"', in *La Sequenza Medievale*, ed. Agostino Ziino (Lucca, 1992), 3–18; *idem*, CD Booklet Notes to *Nova Cantica: Latin Songs of the High Middle Ages*, Dominique Vellard and Emmanuel Bonnardot, 1990, CD 77196-2-RC; Wolfram von den Steinen, 'Das neue Lied', in his *Der Kosmos des Mittelalters: von Karl dem Grossen zu Bernhard von Clairvaux* (Bern, 1959), 231–52.

² See Ruth Steiner, 'Some Monophonic Latin Songs Composed around 1200', *Musical Quarterly*, 52 (1966), 56–70; Susan Rankin, 'Some Medieval Songs', *Early Music*, 31 (2003), 327–44; Leo Treitler, 'The Aquitanian Repertoires of Sacred Monody in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', Ph.D. diss., Princeton University (1967); *idem*, 'Medieval Lyric', in *Music before 1600*, ed. Mark Everist, *Models of Musical Analysis* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1992), 1–19; Wulf Arlt, *Ein Festoffizium des Mittelalters aus Beauvais in seiner liturgischen und musikalischen Bedeutung* (Cologne, 1970); *idem*, 'Das eine Lied und die vielen Lieder: Zur historischen Stellung der neuen Liedkunst des frühen 12. Jahrhunderts', in *Festschrift Rudolf Bockholdt zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Norbert Dubowy and Sören Meyer-Eller (Pfaffenhofen, 1990), 113–27.

³ For the interpretation of these sources and the musical and textual patterns among them, see Helen Deeming, 'Music in English Miscellanies of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge (2005).

musical pieces of this kind, largely monophonic, of which only a handful have attracted scholarly attention.⁴ Several songs of this English repertory, perhaps on account of their unconventional manuscript preservation, bear witness to processes of scribal and musical experimentation; the songs to be discussed in this article thus allow us some insight into the working processes of those who made these songs and those who wrote them down.

For some reason, it seems that an environment was never created in England in which such Latin songs were routinely gathered together and systematically recorded in dedicated 'song books', as they were elsewhere. This certainly has interesting implications concerning the scribal culture in the milieu in which the songs were cultivated. More importantly for the present purpose, however, the recording of the songs individually and (apparently) haphazardly meant that no norms were established for their written presentation. Indeed, no aspect of the written presentation of music outside liturgical books was fixed in twelfth- and thirteenth-century England.⁵ The ruling of the stave-lines, the design of the page to accommodate music, and the alignment of text with notes were all issues to be confronted anew by each scribe who copied a song into a miscellany.⁶ Because of these challenges, it is sometimes possible to discern, even at this chronological distance, something of how the scribe understood the piece he was writing down, and how he went about trying to present it. These questions are at their most apparent when some unusual or complex feature of a song's form forced the scribe to engage actively with its layout, as is the case with the three (otherwise unrelated) songs to be discussed here. In the creation of *Salve mater salvatoris*, sequence procedure and polyphonic texture have been manipulated to create a unique voice-exchange structure, for which the scribe had to generate an appropriate layout. The monophonic song *Gaude gloriosa morborum medela* exists in two versions in a single source, one apparently a reworking of the other, produced by a musician-scribe wishing to exploit the musical-formal possibilities of its unusual verse-structure. Lastly, the three-part *Ave gloriosa mater* with its French contrafact *Duce creature* has been copied in a hybrid of score- and part-format, perhaps owing to its particular structure that combines elements of conductus and motet. In each case, the scribe's presentation was inspired partly by layout norms within certain generic categories (sequence, conductus and motet), but also by musical particularities of the song that elicited layout responses of his own invention.

⁴ Studies of individual songs from the English miscellanies include John Stevens, 'Angelus ad virginem: The History of a Medieval Song', in *Medieval Studies for J. A. W. Bennett*, ed. Peter Heyworth (Oxford, 1981), 297–328; Christopher Page, 'Angelus ad Virginem: A New Work by Philip the Chancellor?', *Early Music*, 11 (1983), 68–70; John Stevens, 'Samson dux fortissime: An International Latin Song', *Plainsong and Medieval Music*, 1 (1992), 1–40. The Latin, French and English songs found in GB-Lbl Harley 978 were also discussed by John Stevens in 'Sumer is icumen in: A Neglected Context', in *Expedition nach der Wahrheit: Poems, Essays and Papers in Honour of Theo Stemmler*, ed. Stefan Horlacher and Marion Islinger (Heidelberg, 1996), 307–47.

⁵ Diane Droste has shown the operation of certain systematic principles for the presentation of written music among liturgical manuscripts of the period; see 'The Musical Notation and Transmission of the Music of the Sarum Use, 1225–1500', Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto (1983).

⁶ The codicology of 'musical miscellanies' is given fuller treatment in Helen Deeming, 'Observations on the Habits of Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Music Scribes', *Scriptorium* (forthcoming, 2006).

Before turning to the detailed discussion of layout and form in these three songs, their context – the poetic and musical techniques exhibited by this English song repertory – must be established.⁷ Almost all the song-texts are characterized by a regular pattern of syllable count, accent and rhyme, often using one of a few common patterns of syllable count, such as 8/8/7 or 8/8/8/7 with trochaic rhythm. The strength of these regular stress-patterns so permeated the style that examples can be found of poets misaccenting words in order to make them fit the pattern.⁸ In music, this regular rhythm of accent and rhyme is matched by an almost entirely syllabic setting, which follows the text both in surface detail and in overall structure. These largely syllabic textures and regular text structures allowed scribes to present the songs in non-rhythmic notation without jeopardizing the utility of their copies. The performers could decide whether to follow a trochaic rhythm as implied by the accentual patterns of most of the texts, or to sing each syllable with the same duration, subdividing as necessary for the two- or three-note melismas that occasionally occur.

Strophic structures in the poetry are almost always matched by strophic settings in the music, and poetic rhyme can often be matched by musical rhyme. The most common way of organizing the overall form of the songs is the sequence procedure, in which (in its simplest form) each unit is repeated before moving on to the next one. In this way, the procedure generates songs that are neither truly strophic nor truly through-composed. The use of melodic repetition in the sequence procedure has some of the effect of a strophic piece, in rendering the music more familiar: as Richard Crocker puts it, 'we know a sequence better than a gradual because listening to it once we have heard most of it twice'.⁹ Its variety is generated not just through the continuity in the text (as in a strophic piece), but also through a changing series of melodic units in the typical pattern aabbcdd and so on.¹⁰ From the twelfth century, a trend emerged for so-called 'regular' sequences, which retain the same line-length for all the versicles, following the poetry of Adam of St Victor and his contemporaries.¹¹ The sequence procedure in such songs is articulated solely through their musical settings, since their use of a single text structure would theoretically have allowed them to be set to a single repeated musical strophe.

Much of the poetic material of the songs is made up of conventional turns of phrase and even direct citation from well-known liturgical texts; thus the individual pieces

⁷ The following summary is necessarily very brief; for a fuller discussion of the nature of these songs, see Deeming, 'Music in English Miscellanies', chapter 3.

⁸ Henry M. Bannister and Clemens Blume, *Liturgische Prosen des Übergangsstiles und der zweiten Epoche: insbesondere die dem von Adam von Sanct Victor zugeschriebenen*, *Analecta Hymnica medii aevi* 54 (Leipzig, 1915), vii. See also Hans Spanke, 'Sequenz und Lai', *Studi Medievali*, 11 (1938), 12–68 reprinted in his *Studien zu Sequenz, Lai und Leich* (Darmstadt, 1977), 146–202, esp. 177.

⁹ Richard Crocker, *The Early Medieval Sequence* (Berkeley, 1977), 375.

¹⁰ For a recent bibliography of studies concerning the sequence procedure, see Lori Kruckenberg, 'Sequenz' in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Sachteil 8*, ed. Ludwig Finscher, 2nd edn (Kassel, 1998), 1254–86.

¹¹ See Margot Fassler, 'Who Was Adam of St Victor? The Evidence of the Sequence Manuscripts', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 37 (1984), 233–69; *eadem*, *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, 1993).

are imbued with an impression of familiarity. Mary is by far the most common theme among the texts, and numerous traditional descriptions of the Virgin are repeatedly reused. Also prevalent is the practice of *contrafactum*: around a third of the melodies in English miscellanies survive with more than one text. Both features point to a musical and poetic language in which recollection and renewal are crucial factors. There is a sense in which these songs may be regarded as many different reworkings of material from a common musical and poetic fund. Like the medieval approach to religious learning, new material is generated through the meditative contemplation of familiar texts, their quotation, and their interpretation through the accumulation of glosses.¹²

Both poetry and music use patterns of small units: repeated words, syllables or consonants form a verbal ostinato in the texts to which the musicians often responded with recurring melodic units.¹³ The texts are deeply imbued with devices such as anaphora, alliteration and *annominatio*, which create patterns of repeated words, letters and sounds. Reading such verses, it is difficult to disagree with Leo Treitler's assessment that the phonic aspects of language were of particular importance to medieval Latin poets.¹⁴ Patterning like this is a form of sonic revelry, like 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper'; it is far removed from the subtle verse of classical and scholastic poets.¹⁵ But the conspicuous nature of these poetic devices and the occasionally vapid predictability of rhythm make it a poetry uncommonly well suited to musical setting. Those responsible for making the music created melodies richly permeated with motivic patterning in response to texts that were themselves imbued with their own music of verbal sound-play. Small wonder that such a prevalent and extensive song-culture grew up around new poetry of this kind in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe.

Salve mater salvatoris

Salve mater salvatoris, a two-part piece using the sequence procedure, is preserved in the manuscript *GB-Ob* Bodley 343.¹⁶ This source is a twelfth-century collection of sermons in Anglo-Saxon and Latin, in four roughly contemporary sections copied by different scribes but linked together by a common decoration scheme of red and green

¹² For a brief description of biblical scholarship in the period, see Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075–1225*, The New Oxford History of England (Oxford, 2000), 518–20.

¹³ This phrase is adapted from Leo Treitler who refers to the recurrence of the same word spaced consistently across a single song as 'a slow ostinato in the sound of the language'; 'The Marriage of Poetry and Music in Medieval Song' in his *With Voice and Pen: Coming to Know Medieval Song and How it was Made* (Oxford, 2003), 477.

¹⁴ Treitler, 'The Marriage of Poetry and Music', 460.

¹⁵ If compared, for example, with the poetry of Peter of Blois, the verbal and poetic devices seem often crude and insubstantial; see Peter Dronke, 'Peter of Blois and Poetry at the Court of Henry II', *Medieval Studies*, 38 (1976), 185–235.

¹⁶ *Salve mater salvatoris* was edited in Ernest Sanders, *English Music of the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries*, Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century 14 (Monaco, 1979), 10. See also the transcription in Example 1, which proposes a number of different readings.

plain initials.¹⁷ Three musical pieces have been inserted at different locations within the book; the polyphonic *Salve mater salvatoris* was copied by one of the scribes responsible for the Latin sermons, whereas the two monophonic pieces *Specialis graciosissima* and *Salve sanctorum sanctissima* were added in later, more informal hands.¹⁸

Figure 1 shows the layout of *Salve mater salvatoris* in the manuscript. Reading down each column, the entire text and music for the sequence is presented in each, but with each versicle-pair reversed in the right-hand column:

1a 1b
 1b 1a
 2a 2b
 2b 2a
 3a 3b
 3b 3a
 etc.

Each column corresponds to a voice-part, and the polyphony is generated through voice-exchange: as the first voice sings the **a** versicle, the second voice sings the **b** versicle and vice versa. Within each voice, the music for the **a** and **b** versicles is therefore different, but when the voices are heard together the overall effect is of repeated music, just as one would expect in a sequence form (see Ex. 1).

Salve mater salvatoris is a unique surviving example of a voice-exchange sequence, whose creator(s) and scribe were apparently experimenting with something new. The poet and composer (perhaps the same person) generated a verbal and musical construction that permitted polyphonic treatment in this way, and the scribe of Bodley 343 (perhaps also the same person) formulated an approach to the written presentation of such an unparalleled composition.

In a piece whose versicles are sung in reversed order by one of the voices, the poetic structure would ideally require each pair of versicles to be syntactically interchangeable if the poem is to make sense to the singer. Such a construction is a challenge to a poet, since grammatical constructions must usually last no longer than a single versicle (fifteen syllables in this case), and there may be only limited development of ideas across the whole song.¹⁹ Versicles need to be constructed in such a way that the

¹⁷ A discussion of the manuscript is found in Neil Ker, *Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957, reissued with supplement, 1990), 368–75; some of its texts are edited in *Twelfth-Century Homilies in MS Bodley 343*, ed. Algernon Belfour, Early English Text Society (London, 1909); one sermon is discussed by Bartlett, *Norman and Angevin Kings*, 453–4.

¹⁸ The texts of *Salve sanctorum sanctissima* and *Specialis graciosissima* were edited in *Sequentiae ineditae: Liturgische Prosen des Mittelalters aus Handschriften und Frühdrucken*, Analecta Hymnica medii aevi 9, ed. Guido Dreves (Leipzig, 1890), 69 and 40, ed. Henry M. Bannister (Leipzig, 1902), 103. Their music is transcribed in Deeming, 'Music in English Miscellanies', 2:82 and 2:89.

¹⁹ Nancy van Deusen describes this 'interchangeability of conceptual modules, in which pairs of lines may be placed in any order without doing violence to a logical construction' as a feature held in common between sequences and psalms; 'Sequence Repertories: A Reappraisal', *Musica Disciplina*, 48 (1994), 104–5. *Salve mater salvatoris* is, to my knowledge, the only sequence to exploit the polyphonic possibilities of this construction; see Bryan Gillingham, *Medieval Polyphonic Sequences: An Anthology* (Ottawa, 1985), no. 14.

1a. Sal - ve ma - ter sal - va - to - ris ma - ter sa - lu - ti - fe - ra

1b. Spes Ma - ri - a pec - ca - to - ris vir - go et pu - er - pe - ra

1b. Spes Ma - ri - a pec - ca - to - ris vir - go et pu - er - pe - ra

1a. Sal - ve ma - ter sal - va - to - ris ma - ter sa - lu - ti - fe - ra

2a. Sal - ve vir - go spe - ci - a - lis spe - ci - a - lis me - ri - ti

2b. Ge - ni - trix et tem - po - ra - lis an - te tem - pus ge - ni - ti

2b. Ge - ni - trix et tem - po - ra - lis an - te tem - pus ge - ni - ti

2a. Sal - ve vir - go spe - ci - a - lis spe - ci - a - lis me - ri - ti

3a. Hanc in val - lem des - cen - su - ra di - vi - na sub - li - mi - tas

3b. Sca - lam si - bi de te pu - ra fe - cit O vir - gi - ni - tas

Ex. 1 *Salve mater salvatoris* (GB-Ob Bodley 343, fol. x verso)

3b. Sca- lam__ si - bi de te__ pu - ra fe - cit O vir - gi - ni - tas

3a. Hanc in val - lem des - cen - su - ra di - vi - na sub - li - mi - tas

4a. In scrip - tu - ris quan - tum flo - res an - ge - lo - rum do - mi - na

4b. Te dis - tinc - ti vel - ud__ flo - res dig - na__ pin - gunt no - mi - na

4b. Te dis - tinc - ti vel - ud__ flo - res dig - na__ pin - gunt no - mi - na

4a. In scrip - tu - ris quan - tum flo - res an - ge - lo - rum do - mi - na

5a. Por - tam__ ce - li__ te vo - ca - re di - di - cit re - li - gi - o

5b. Et cas - tel - lum quod in - tra - re__ pla - cet__ De - i fi - li - o

5b. Et cas - tel - lum quod in - tra - re__ pla - cet__ De - i fi - li - o

5a. Por - tam__ ce - li__ te vo - ca - re di - di - cit re - li - gi - o

Ex. 1 *continued*

6a. Ven-ter tu - us O pu - el - la tha - la - mus pa - la - ci - um

6b. Au - la do - mus tem - plum cel - la ci - vi - tas sa - cra - ri - um

6b. Au - la do - mus tem - plum cel - la ci - vi - tas sa - cra - ri - um

6a. Ven-ter tu - us O pu - el - la ta - la - mus pa - la - ci - um

7a. Vir - ga ru - bus ap - pel - la - ris flos fe - nes - tra ia - nu - a

7b. Ma - ter De - i lux so - la - ris Ies - se stirps in - ge - nu - a

7b. Ma - ter De - i lux so - la - ris Ies - se stirps in - ge - nu - a

7a. Vir - ga ru - bus ap - pel - la - ris flos fe - nes - tra ia - nu - a

8a. Vi - tis u - va ro - sa stel - la mar - ga - ri - ta li - li - um

8b. Dig - na dig - num in - ter - pel - la pro in - dig - nis fi - li - um

Ex. 1 *continued*

8b. Dig-na dig - num in - ter - pel - la___ pro in - dig - nis___ fi - li - um.

8a. Vi - tis u - va ro - sa stel - la___ mar - ga - ri - ta___ li - li - um.

Translation: Hail mother of the Saviour, mother bringing salvation, / Mary, hope of the sinner, both virgin and giving birth. / Hail matchless virgin of matchless merit / And temporal mother of the Son born before time. / The divine loftiness, being about to descend into this valley, / made for itself a ladder out of you, O pure virginity. / How you bloom in writings, O lady of the angels. / Worthy names adorn you like beautiful flowers. / Religion has learnt to call you the gate of heaven / And the citadel which it pleased the Son of God to enter. / Your womb, O maiden, is bedroom, palace, / Hall, home, temple, chamber, city and sanctuary. / You are called stem, bush, flower, window, door, / Mother of God, light of the sun, noble root of Jesse. / Vine, grape, rose, star, pearl, lily, / O worthy one, intercede for the unworthy with your worthy Son.

Ex. 1 *continued*

sense does not lead on directly from one to the next, something that was achieved in several versicles of *Salve mater salvatoris* by the use of unordered lists of allegorical descriptions of Mary:²⁰

- [6a] Venter tuus, o puella, thalamus, palacium
- [6b] Aula, domus, templum, cella, civitas, sacrarium
- [7a] Virga, rubus appellaris, flos, fenestra, ianua
- ...
- [8a] Vitis, uva, rosa, stella, margarita, lilium

In addition to this device, most couplets are formed of two self-contained grammatical units that are syntactically unrelated to their pairs (such as stanzas 1, 6, 7 and 8), or else of connected clauses that may be placed in either order owing to the flexibility of Latin word-order (stanzas 2, 3, 4). This necessary subdivision of the song into such short sense-units allows for no single strand of progressive sense across the whole poem, but rather a profusion of varied descriptions of the Virgin. In this respect, the poem is not unusual for its type: many Marian texts of this song repertory consist of little more than the traditional qualities of the Virgin worded in conventional patterns.²¹

In only two of the eight strophes is the poet unsuccessful in his attempt to make the versicles 'reversible'. Strophe 5, when sung in the reverse order ('[5b] Et castellum quod intrare placet Dei filio [5a] Portam celi te vocare didicit religio'), places the 'et' linking 'portam celi' and 'castellum' unsatisfactorily at the start of the sentence.

²⁰ I have added commas to this example to highlight the list structure.

²¹ 'Most medieval "Marian" versifiers are content to pile up paradoxes and mysteries'; Stevens, 'Sumer is icumen in', 320.

Ex. 2 *Salve mater salvatoris*, first stanza

Strophe 8, when sung in the reverse order ('[8b] Digna dignum interpella pro indignis filium [8a] Vitis uva rosa stella margarita lilium'), contravenes the convention in Marian poetry of ending the poem with a request for intercession.

Yet these are minor discrepancies in a largely very successful attempt to construct interchangeable versicles in *Salve mater salvatoris*. Moreover, in some cases, there appears to have been deliberate manipulation of the poetic possibilities of polyphonic performance. At times, the poet seems to be generating a 'polyphony of texts'²² in which the simultaneous sounding of different syllables is not random but itself forms an artistic pattern. Most aurally apparent is the difference between rhyme-words and non-rhymes: words that in a monophonic performance would link the versicles successively sound concurrently in the polyphonic version, producing a constant progression in each half-verse from non-rhyming to rhyming words which highlights the regular textual subdivisions. As the voices approach cadences and caesuras, the textual polyphony proceeds from 'dissonant' syllables to 'consonant' ones, via 'semi-consonant' syllables with just the vowel in common (Ex. 2).²³ Every strophe contains at least two 'semi-consonant' syllables in addition to its rhymes, which contribute to the aural appreciation of the polyphony of texts. Such possibilities are in some ways quintessentially suited to poetry of this kind, whose poets revelled in any opportunities to play with the sounds of words as well as their sense. It is inevitable that something of the sense of the texts will be lost to the listener in a performance of simultaneous texts, but the audible sense of the words in several kinds of late twelfth-century song appears to be an expendable quality. The contemporary motet also puts forward different texts simultaneously, and examples of organum space the syllables of the text so widely that the sense can scarcely be determined through

²² This phrase derives from Margaret Bent, 'Polyphony of Texts and Music in the Fourteenth-Century Motet: *Tribum que non abhorruit/Quoniam secta latronum/Merito hec patimur* and its "Quotations"' in *Hearing the Motet: Essays on the Motet of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Dolores Pesce (New York and Oxford, 1996), 82–103.

²³ See also the motet discussed by Christopher Page, 'Around the Performance of a 13th-Century Motet', *Early Music*, 28 (2000), 343–56: 'Because the vowels are identical the harmonics reinforce one another and the effect is to give a special brilliance to the dissonances of the bar' (356).

2a. Sal - ve vir - go spe - ci - a - lis spe - ci - a - lis me - ri - ti

2b. Ge - ni - trix et tem - po - ra - lis an - te tem - pus ge - ni - ti

Ex. 3 *Salve mater salvatoris*, second stanza

listening alone. Far from being a poem that has been roughly forced into the constraints imposed by its musical performance, *Salve mater salvatoris* is very much a poetic experiment in itself.

If reversibility of phrases presented the principal poetic challenge, it was their simultaneity that proved the most difficult musical task. If two phrases are to make even basic musical sense when combined in two parts, they must be carefully controlled in terms of consonance, tessitura and direction of melodic movement. In *Salve mater salvatoris*, the melodies of versicle-pairs often employ contrary motion, and set short melismas in one part against single notes in the other. The versicles alternate their approaches to the final note by step from above and below, so that the polyphonic effect is always of the two parts converging towards the final unison. The two parts are co-ordinated in terms of the large-scale control of *ambitus*, by which new melodic high points are introduced successively throughout the piece (*c*, *d* and *e* occur in the first three strophes respectively, but *f* and *g* are reserved for the final two strophes). Whilst each versicle cadences on unison G, the initial sonorities demonstrate a kind of progression from the predominant unisons of the first few strophes (G/G in strophes 1 and 4, *a/a* in strophe 3), through the dissonant G/*a* of strophe 5, to the open fifths F/*c* of strophe 6 and G/*d* of the final two strophes. Certain strophes show evidence of the deliberate use of the polyphonic medium to generate musical patterning: in strophe 2, a three-note melodic figure (and its variants) appears five times in all, but is spread between the two parts, so that its full effect only becomes apparent in polyphonic performance (Ex. 3). Thus features of both text and music seem consciously designed to make a virtue of the polyphonic performance: it is clear that *Salve mater salvatoris* was fashioned from the outset as a voice-exchange piece. Moreover, the close interdependence of its musical and textual structures is persuasive evidence for the work of a single mind in its composition.

Polyphonic music in medieval manuscripts may be laid out either in score format or in separate parts. The former theoretically permits the vertical alignment of two or more parts with each other and the text, and consequently could indicate how the parts were to fit together even where the notation transmitted no intrinsic rhythmic information. The latter, on the other hand, presents the voices separately so that each may be read easily without any possibility of interference with the others. *Salve mater salvatoris* is essentially laid out in part format, its two columns being reminiscent of the

presentation of motets in thirteenth-century French manuscripts.²⁴ Yet unlike motet layouts, the two columns here are not entirely independent of one another. The scribe's placement of each versicle on a new line in both columns means that the line-breaks occur at the same time in both voices. Such a layout was only possible because the line-lengths remain the same throughout the piece, and thus was a presentational feature intimately connected to the trend for so-called 'regular' sequence poems at this time. The scribe who copied *Magdalene laudes plene* on fol. 153v of *GB-Lbl* Arundel 248, for example, evidently intended to begin each poetic line at the left-hand edge of the column, but was forced to abandon his attempt when the versicles became too long. Having begun with sixteen syllables in each versicle, the second strophe increases to twenty, causing the scribe to spill the text into the central inter-columnar space, and by the fifth strophe, the increase to twenty-five syllables became impossible to fit on a single line (see Fig. 2).

Since each column represents the entire music needed for polyphonic performance of the song, it could have been presented as a single column, provided the singers knew how to realize the polyphony in performance. Such types of presentation, in which the polyphony is 'hidden', are indeed found in some of the Machaut manuscripts and in the Aquitanian source *F-Pn* lat. 1139.²⁵ If *Salve mater salvatoris* were presented in this way, a clue to the hidden presence of polyphony would be found in the strange disjunction of poetic and musical structure: a poem apparently constructed in couplets would appear to be musically through-composed.²⁶

The layout devised for *Salve mater salvatoris* has been informed not only by considerations applying to polyphony, but also by traditions in the presentation of sequence-songs. Theoretically, the nature of the musical repetitions in the sequence procedure allowed scribes the opportunity to economize on space by copying the music for each strophe only once (either with both versicles underlaid, or with one underlaid and the second written as prose at the end). Very few scribes took up this opportunity, however, although their use of alignment and *litterae notabiliores* often shows that they had a clear understanding of the double-versicle form they were copying.²⁷ Scribes often made efforts to begin each full strophe on a new line, thus

²⁴ Such as Montpellier, Bibliothèque Inter-Universitaire, Section Médecine, H196, and Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Ed.IV 6, both illustrated in Carl Parrish, *The Notation of Medieval Music*, 2nd edn (New York, 1959, repr. 1978), plates 35 and 38–41.

²⁵ For the Machaut sources, see Margaret Hasselman and Thomas Walker, 'More Hidden Polyphony in a Machaut Manuscript', *Musica Disciplina*, 24 (1970), 7–16; for the Aquitanian source, see Sarah Fuller, 'Hidden Polyphony: A Reappraisal', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 24 (1971), 169–92. Fuller notes that only certain types of textual and musical structures are appropriate for this kind of presentation; hence that the notation is a response to a particular kind of song-making, just as the non-rhythmic notation in use among these songs can be easily fitted to the texts because of their regular structures and syllabic settings.

²⁶ Fuller, 'Hidden Polyphony', 176.

²⁷ Another 'unofficial' song book of the late twelfth century, Cambridge, University Library, Ff.1.17(1), makes use of both these more economical layouts for sequence-forms, but this manuscript is the exception among sources preserving sequences from this time. See *Olim sudor Herculis* on fol. 7r, and *Ad honorem salvatoris* on fol. 8v; reproduced in facsimile in *The Later Cambridge Songs*, ed. John Stevens (Oxford, 2005).



Fig. 2 Magdalene laudes plene in GB-Lbl Arundel 248, fol. 153v. By permission of the British Library.

aligning all the a versicles at the left margin and all the b versicles around the centre of the page. *Risum fecit Sare* (GB-Lbl Arundel 248, fol. 201v), shown in Figure 3, for example, is laid out with each versicle-pair occupying a single full line, with a

pronounced initial letter half-way across signalling the start of the **b** versicle. The visual effect, emphasized here by the elongated initials functioning as stave braces, is of a two-column format: **a** versicles on the left and **b** versicles on the right. In this sense, the layout in ruled columns of *Salve mater salvatoris* is merely a tidier version of a way of presenting sequences that was already in use among music-scribes.

Several processes of experimentation in the layout and polyphonic possibilities of the sequence procedure have come together in the creation of *Salve mater salvatoris*. Since it never became common in sequences to copy the melody only once for each couplet, scribes began to show a preference for a layout which aligned the **a** versicles on the left side of the page and the **b** versicles on the right side giving the impression of two columns. This too was only feasible in 'regular' sequence forms in which the line length remained the same throughout the piece. Furthermore, since the two-column format was almost invariably used for motets at this time, it may have seemed (to some scribes) the obvious layout for a polyphonic piece. From the musical perspective, the voice-exchange potential of any sequence-song in two parts must have been apparent. Since the sequence form demands the two-fold repetition of each section of musical material, it seems likely that the idea of creating some variety by exchanging the voices half-way through that repetition would have occurred to singers and composers. For such a piece to be genuinely successful, though, its text must also have been constructed so that the versicles might be reversed; the severe constraints on the poet of this construction may account for the paucity of surviving examples of this kind of musical experiment.

Gaude gloriosa morborum medela

Gaude gloriosa morborum medela is a monophonic song, two different versions of which are preserved in the manuscript Evreux, Bibliothèque Municipale, 17 (*F-EV* 17). The Evreux manuscript is one of the hundred or so to survive from the Norman abbey of Lyre, and consists of one main book, dating from c. 1173, which has been bound with three independent thirteenth-century gatherings, each containing music.²⁸ The main portion of the manuscript, containing a martyrology of Usuard and the Rule of St Benedict, was made for or at Wareham Priory, one of Lyre's four dependent cells in the British Isles.²⁹ Although the origins of the added gatherings cannot be so securely

²⁸ Charles Samaran and Robert Marichal, *Catalogue des manuscrits en écriture latine portant des indications de date, de lieu, ou de copiste* (Paris, 1984), 7:145, state that Thomas Becket (canonized 1173) has been added to the calendar and martyrology after the first phase of copying, but in contemporary hands. See also Albert Derolez, *The Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books* (Cambridge, 2003), plate 9.

²⁹ Samaran and Marichal (*Catalogue*, 145) label the Calendar '*ad usum monasterii Waremensis*' whereas Jean-Loup Lemaître, *Répertoire des documents nécrologiques français* (Paris, 1980), 1:297–8, calls it '*Calendrier du diocèse d'Evreux*'. Since it contains both English and Norman saints, I would suggest that it is indeed a Wareham calendar, and the monks of Wareham venerated the saints local to their mother-house as well as their own. Samaran and Marichal (145) state that '*Le calendrier est à l'usage du prieuré de Saint-Ethelwold de Wareham (Angleterre) dépendant de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame de Lyre et le martyrologe a été adapté dès l'origine pour ce centre*' (The calendar is of the use of the priory of St Ethelwold in Wareham (England), a dependant of the abbey of Our Lady at Lyre, and the martyrology has been adapted from its original for this centre).

identified, several pieces of evidence suggest that they too originated in England. The second of these gatherings contains both a necrology of Wareham priory, datable to after 1225,³⁰ and a copy of an agreement between the prior and monks of Wareham and Philip de Melkesham, monk of nearby Abbotsbury, dated 10 July 1262 (fol. 12r). The third musical gathering contains (among other pen-trials) two jotted English names: ‘Simon Cempton’ and ‘Wymundus Wynton’.³¹ These gatherings may have come to Lyre via Wareham, whether before or after binding with the main book, as part of the normal traffic of monks and of books between major abbeys and their dependent priories.³²

In the first and third musical gatherings of Evreux 17 are found two versions of *Gaude gloriosa morborum medela*, a poem in *versus retrogradi*.³³ Both versions preserve broadly the same text and music, but with the sections arranged in a different order:³⁴

fol. 4v	music		fol. 158v	music	
Gaude gloriosa morborum medela laude copiosa iustorum tutela	A	}	Gaude gloriosa morborum medela laude copio/sa iustorum tutela	A	
In Via inviando [sic] [viant]es procura curia curando deviantes cura	B		X	Tutela iustorum copiosa laude medela morborum gloriosa gaude	A
Prece preciosa precantes intende Nece tenebrosa cantantes defende	C			via inviando viantes procura curia curando deviantes cura	B

³⁰ Lemaitre, *Documents nécrologiques*, 297.

³¹ It seems unlikely (although tempting) that this ‘Wymundus Wynton’ could be the same as the ‘W. de Winton’ named in a list of polyphonic compositions in *GB-Lbl Harley 978*, although a possible connection between the two manuscripts was first suggested by Christopher Hohler, ‘Reflections on Some Manuscripts Containing Thirteenth-Century Polyphony’, *Journal of the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society* 1 (1978), 11, and is explored further in Deeming, ‘Music in English Miscellanies’, 1:62–80.

³² Martin Heale, ‘Books and Learning in the Dependent Priors of the Monasteries of Medieval England’, in *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R. B. Dobson*, ed. Caroline Barron and Jenny Stratford (Donington, 2002), 65–79.

³³ *Versus retrogradi*, which read the same backwards as forwards, were occasionally used by scholastic poets, such as Johannes de Garlandia in his *De Triumphis Ecclesie Libri Octo*, ed. Thomas Wright (London, 1856), 41, lines 15–18. Garlandia, however, merely introduces these few lines in retrograde in the middle of a long poem, and does not make the procedure the creative principle behind a whole poem as here.

³⁴ On reworkings, see also Stevens, ‘Angelus ad virginem’, 315.

Tutela iustorum copiosa laude medela morborum gloriosa gaude	A	}	Cura deviantes curando curia procura viantes inviando via	B	
Cura deviantes curando curia/ procura/viantes inviando via	B		X	Prece preciosa precantes intende nece tenebrosa peccantes deffende [<i>sic</i>]	C
Cantantes deffende [<i>sic</i>] tenebrosa [<i>nece</i>] intende precantes/ preciosa prece/	C			Peccantes deffende [<i>sic</i>] tenebrosa nece intende precantes preciosa prece	C
amen					

Translation: [A] Rejoice, glorious cure of diseases, praise, eloquent defence of the righteous. [B] O road for travelling on, look after those who travel; O court for governing, take care of those who stray. [C] Defend the sinners [*version 1*: singers], from gloomy death, hear the praying, pray, O precious one.³⁵

The first version thus forms a musical structure of two long strophes, whereas the second version follows the sequence procedure of progressive repetition. Yet in both versions, the distribution of enlarged initials (shown as capitals in the transcription above) is not wholly concordant with their actual structures, suggesting that neither version's scribe was entirely at ease with the structure of the piece he was copying. Both are written continuously, without line-breaks at the end of poetic phrases, and in both versions all the repeated material is copied out in full. This layout is typical of pieces using the sequence procedure, but is unusual in strophic pieces, where it would be more common to copy the music only once, and add the residual text without notation below.

The two versions' use of the principle of text reversal is mirrored by their musical arrangements: in the first version the stanzas follow the pattern 1 2 3 / 1 (reversed) 2 (reversed) 3 (reversed), whereas in the second version the structure is 1 1 (reversed) / 2 2 (reversed) / 3 3 (reversed), as shown in the transcriptions given in Examples 4 and 5. Thus in both versions the musical unit A is always associated with the strophe beginning 'Gaude gloriosa' or its reverse, unit B with 'Via inviando' or its reverse, and unit C with 'Prece preciosa' or its reverse. Although the ordering of the units is different, therefore, the musical-textual substance is essentially the same in both versions.

The poem's patterning by the retrograde principle relies, like *Salve mater salvatoris*, on the flexibility of Latin word-order. Each line consists of two words, in a recurring pattern of syllables, so that when the line appears in retrograde, the two words are

³⁵ I am grateful to Matthew Nicholls for thoughts on the translation of section B.

Notes: the line-breaks at the end of poetic lines are editorial; in the source, the music is written continuously. Capital letters are shown where large initials appear in the source. The final four words of the text are written without a staff in the bottom margin of the page.

E b A Gau-de_ glo - ri - o - sa__ mor-bo-rum me - de - la
8 lau - de__ co - pi - o - sa ius - to - rum tu - te - la
B 8 In_____ Vi - a in - vi - an - do [vi - an - t]es pro - cu - ra
8 cu - ri - a cu - ran - do de - vi - an - tes__ cu - ra
C 8 Pre - ce pre - ci - o - sa pre - can - tes in - ten - de
8 Ne - ce te - ne - bro - sa can - tan - tes__ de - fen - de
A 8 Tu - te - la ius - to - rum__ co - pi - o - sa lau - de
8 me - de - la mor - bo - rum glo - ri - o - sa__ gau - de
B 8 Cu - - ra de - vi - an - tes \cu - ran - do/ \cu - ri - a/
8 \pro - cu - ra/ vi - an - tes in vi - an - do__ vi - a
C 8 Can - tan - tes def - fen - de te - ne - bro - sa [illegible]

\intende precantes preciosa prece/

Ex. 4 *Gaude gloriosa morborum medela*, version 1 (F-EV 17, fol. 4v)

Notes: the line-breaks at the end of poetic lines are editorial; in the source, the music is written continuously. Capital letters are shown where large initials appear in the source.

E \flat

A Gau-de_ glo-ri - o - sa__ mor-bo-rum me-de - la

lau - de_ co - pi - o - sa ius - to - rum tu - te - la

A Tu - te - la ius - to - rum__ co - pi - o - sa lau - de

me - de - la mor - bo - rum glo - ri - o - sa__ gau - de

B vi - a in - vi - an - do vi - an - tes pro - cu - ra

cu - ri - a cu - ran - do de - vi - an - tes_ cu - ra

B Cu - ra de - vi - an - tes cu - ran - do cu - ri - a

pro - cu - ra vi - an - tes in vi - an - do__ vi - a

C Pre - ce pre - ci - o - sa pre - can - tes in - ten - de

ne - ce te - ne - bro - sa pec - can - tes__ def - fen - de

C Pec - can - tes def - fen - de te - ne - bro - sa ne - ce

in - ten - de pre - can - tes pre - ci - o - sa__ pre - ce.

a - men.

Ex. 5 *Gaude gloriosa morborum medela*, version 2 (F-EV 17, fol. 158v)

switched. But the poet has ensured not only that the lines will make sense when reversed, but also that they will continue to rhyme. Since there are only two words in each line, this has meant treating every word in the poem as a rhyme-word. The technique is unusual and poetically challenging, but it is merely an extension of the kinds of word-patterning common in this repertory. Over and above the retrograde structure, the poem is full of the play on verbal sounds beloved of these poets. Many of the two-word lines employ alliteration: 'Gaude gloriosa', 'morborum medela', 'curia curando', 'prece preciosa'. *Annominatio* is particularly dense in the stanza beginning 'Prece preciosa', the syllables 'en' or 'an' being heard in five different words, and the words 'prece', 'preciosa', 'precantes' and 'nece' all contributing to a repeated pattern of the 'ec' syllable. This patterning of repeated 'ec' syllables provides strong support for version 2's reading 'peccantes' over version 1's 'cantantes' in this stanza, although either word is arguably possible.

This is not the only place at which the two versions preserve different readings, and indeed the text of version 1 is often difficult to read in the source, with words cancelled and insertions made. In some cases, such as the line 'In Via inviando', the text that is preserved does not fit with the otherwise regular syllable-count of the poem. Perhaps the enlarged initial letter of 'Via' is an indication that the scribe recognized this problem, but no attempt has been made to erase the 'In'. Towards the end of the piece, the scribe has run out of space on the stave and has consequently written the last four words without notation in the lower margin. The music for these words can easily be reconstructed from the first strophe, although they also coincide with one of the most significant musical differences between the two versions, so it would have been helpful to have had confirmation of version 1's reading at this point. At the phrase beginning 'nece' in the first strophe, the first seven notes are written a third higher in version 1 than at the equivalent place in version 2. Such differences often result from misplacing the notes on the wrong stave-line, and version 1's descending fourth *a-E* is modally less convincing than version 2's *F-C*. The other significant musical difference is the opening gesture of musical unit C, which in version 1 is a descending triad *c-a-F*, whereas version 2 has the longest melisma of the song, circling round the final *F*, with *G-a-bb-a-G-E*. In this case, both readings are equally plausible.

The opening line of the poem sets up the expectation of a regular trochaic pattern of accent, in common with many songs of this repertory. The lines consisting of a pair of three-syllable words, however, do not fit into this pattern. If a trochaic metre is applied to those lines, one of the two words must be misaccented, and, when they are subjected to retrograde treatment, the accentuation of the two words also switches. Here is clear evidence that ordinary word-stress could be subjugated to poetic patterns in such poetry: the construction of the verse has been predicated principally on the verbal game over and above any consideration of accentuation. Intriguingly, the line 'Cantantes defende' (version 1) / 'Peccantes defende' (version 2), is not reversed in either version, even though this disrupts the rhyme-scheme as well as the prevailing pattern of reversal. In version 2, however, the two words have been marked with double diagonal lines above the first letter, perhaps being an instruction to switch them in performance.

Since the two versions of *Gaude gloriosa morborum medela* in Evreux 17 appear in different hands and in separate sections of the book that may originally have been independent, they could have been copied in isolation from one another. But such a coincidence seems too great, especially when we take into account the numerous textual (and perhaps musical) corruptions in version 1 which seem to have been 'corrected' in version 2. Version 2 supplies all the words that are damaged or missing in version 1, and provides the more plausible of the two readings of the music for the second half of unit C. Perhaps the most convincing evidence that the scribe of version 2 may have been copying from version 1 (or that they shared an exemplar) is the failure to reverse the words of 'Cantantes / Peccantes defende' on their second appearance; assuming this is a mistake (and there is no other obvious explanation for why this line should break the pattern), it is hard to believe that two independent scribes of the piece would accidentally have made the same mistake at the same point. Moreover, the fact that both versions use the variant spelling 'deffende' at this point (although version 1 used 'defende' earlier in the song) argues for a direct connection between the two versions. But the structural differences between the two versions cannot be described as 'correction'. Both constructions make equal musical and textual sense and their differences are too great and too internally consistent to have been the result of miscopying at any point during the song's transmission. I would argue instead that version 2 represents a deliberate reworking of version 1, by a musician who saw the structural potential for the piece to be treated as a sequence, and to make more apparent the game of word-reversal. As it stands in version 1, both the musical and textual constructions are somewhat hidden: neither the listener nor the reader glancing casually at the page would necessarily spot the retrograde pattern or the musical repetition immediately. The visual aspect of this is largely to do with the layout: had it been presented in the usual format of strophic songs, both aspects would have been more easily identifiable. The layout in itself may have suggested the sequence procedure to the person responsible for version 2, and tempted him to look more closely at the song. Identifying the musical and textual construction, he realized not only that the units could be reordered to create a sequence form, but also that in doing so, the last word of each unit would be repeated immediately as the first word of the next. The retrograde pattern could thus be made more obvious in performance, as the proximity of the reversed words would make them more aurally apparent. In visual terms, too, the pattern could be made to stand out on the page. These possibilities, coupled with the opportunity to correct some of the defects of version 1, perhaps proved irresistible for the scribe of version 2. If this is so, we have opened a window on the workings of a thirteenth-century musician, and seen at close quarters the operation of musical innovation in a directly written context.

Ave gloriosa mater / Duce creature

The importance of presentation in understanding and articulating musical form is also apparent in *Ave gloriosa mater*, found with its French contrafact *Duce creature* in

the Reading miscellany, *GB-Lbl Harley 978*.³⁶ This collection of French and Latin poetry and historical texts opens with a gathering of music, including nine monophonic Latin songs and three polyphonic *estampies* as well as the six-part rota *Sumer is icumen in*.³⁷ Some editors have interpreted *Ave gloriosa mater / Duce creature* as a single macaronic poem, although *Duce creature* is now more often regarded as a separate text to be sung to the same music; one of a significant number of vernacular contrafacta to Latin religious texts to be found amongst the songs of this repertory.³⁸ Both texts consist of thirty-two lines, the first sixteen having six syllables each and the rest having five syllables. This change of syllable-count alongside the change of rhyme-pattern from abababab to aaabcccb led Stevens to describe them as ‘very short regular sequences’.³⁹ The musical setting, however, is through-composed, with no elements of either the sequence procedure or strophic form.

Ave gloriosa	Duce creature
mater salvatoris	virgine Marie
ave speciosa	chaste nette <i>et pure</i>
virgo flos pudoris	et saunz vilenie
ave lux iocosa	<i>par vus</i> est la dure
thalamus splendoris	mort a ceus finie
ave preciosa	ki humeine figure
salus peccatoris	ont la dreite vie
ave vitis via	<i>vus</i> estes la rose
casta munda pura	d’espine nurie
dulcis mitis pia	par ki est desclose
felix creatura	la porte de vie
parens modo miro	k’a trestuz grant pose
nova paritura	fu <i>par</i> la folie
virum sine viro	Eve e Adam close
contra legis iura	ke plein furent d’envie
virgo virginum	porte de salu
expers criminum	<i>vus</i> estes rescu ⁴⁰
decus luminum	garaunt e escu
celi domina	cuntre l’enemi
salus gencium	<i>vus</i> estes le port

³⁶ An edition of *Ave gloriosa mater / Duce creature* may be found in Sanders, *English Music*, 223; an illustration of its presentation in *Harley 978* is in Parrish, *Notation of Medieval Music*, plates 32–3 and in the *Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music*: (www.diamm.ac.uk).

³⁷ A summary of the bibliography relating to *Harley 978* may be found in Andrew Taylor, *Textual Situations: Three Medieval Manuscripts and Their Readers* (Philadelphia, 2002), 235–6.

³⁸ Some well-known examples are *Gabriel fram evene king*, a contrafact of *Angelus ad virginem*, *Stond wel moder (Stabat iuxta Christi crucem)*, and *Sumer is icumen in (Perspice christicola)*; see Deeming, ‘Music in English Miscellanies’, 1: 227–54.

³⁹ ‘*Sumer is icumen in*’, 328.

⁴⁰ MS: ?*rescitu*.

spes fidelium	solaz <i>et</i> confort
lumen cordium	a ceus ki la mort
nos illumina	urent deservi
nosque filio	par ceo en chantant
tuo tam pio	e tut en plurant
tam propicio	mere al rei pusant
reconcilia	de <i>quer</i> fin <i>vus</i> pri
et ad gaudia	k'envers <i>vostre</i> enfant
nos <i>per</i> hennia	me seez aidant
duc prece pia	k'il me seit garant
virgo Maria	e eit de moi merci

Translations:

[LATIN] Hail, glorious mother of the Saviour; Hail, beautiful virgin, flower of modesty. Hail, joyful light, bedchamber of splendour, Hail precious salvation of the sinner. Hail, vine,⁴¹ chaste, clean, pure way; sweet, mild, dutiful, happy creature, mother in a miraculous way, newly about to give birth to a man without a man, against the rules of law. Virgin of virgins, lacking wickedness, ornament of lights, mistress of heaven, salvation of the people, hope of the faithful, light of hearts, illuminate us. And reconcile us to your Son, so dutiful and so gracious, and lead us to eternal joys by your devout prayer, O Virgin Mary.

[FRENCH] Sweet creature, Virgin Mary, chaste, clean, pure and bearing no shame, through you harsh death has ended for those mortals who live a holy life. You are the rose sprung from the thorn, through whom the door of life is opened, which was closed to everyone for a long time by the sin of Eve and Adam who were full of greed. O gateway of salvation, you are help, safety and shield against the enemy. You are the haven, solace and comfort of those who have deserved death. Therefore, through this song and through tears, mother of the omnipotent king, I pray to you from my heart that you will help me towards your Son; may he protect me and have mercy on me.⁴²

The rather confusing modern designation of the piece, 'conductus-motet', derives in large part from its unique layout.⁴³ The tenor has been copied twice: firstly in score format below the two upper voices, and secondly in a separate block at the end of the piece, on the bottom right-hand corner of the opening. This latter layout is strongly reminiscent of the presentation of motets, whose tenors (having few if any words) can occupy a much smaller space than the fully texted upper parts. The score layout, on the other hand, is more akin to the usual presentation of polyphonic conductus, in which all the voice-parts are sung to a single text, usually copied below the lowest

⁴¹ Sanders assumes the MS reading 'vitis' should read 'vite', and thus translates the line 'Hail, chaste, clean, pure way of life'; in *English Music of the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (n. 16 above); this reading and translations of the other texts from this volume were reprinted in *Motets of English Provenance, Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century* 15, ed. Frank Ll. Harrison (Monaco, 1980), 247. Since 'vine' is also used as an allegorical description of Mary (see *Salve mater salvatoris* above), I have retained 'vitis'.

⁴² Translation by Mark Everist from *Five Anglo-Norman Motets* (Newton Abbot, 1986), 12.

⁴³ Stevens, 'Sumer is icumen in', 326-7; Parrish, *Notation of Medieval Music*, 99-104.

part. The formal conundrum of this piece is not simply one of layout however: the rhythmic implications of the two versions of the tenor are also different. The part-notated tenor is written largely in ligatures, suggesting a pattern of undifferentiated longs and long rests typical of tenors sung to a single word or syllable throughout. Although no text is given for this part in Harley 978, the melody is identifiable from other sources as 'Domino'.⁴⁴ In the score version, however, there is a change in tenor rhythm from simple longs for the first two phrases, to a trochaic alternation of longs and breves matching the syllabic declamation of the French and Latin texts (shown at point X in Example 6).

The change of rhythm, amounting to a recomposition of the tenor, must have come about as a response to the *Ave gloriosa / Duce creature* texts. The scribe was probably copying the score-notated tenor from an exemplar with the tenor in simple longs, like the part-notated tenor here, but using single notes rather than ligatures so as to align the tenor with the upper parts. Only as he was copying the score notation above the texts (almost certainly copied first) did he realize that his tenor as it stood could not possibly be sung to those texts. Thus the scribe began to adapt the tenor during the third phrase, repeating notes as necessary to achieve a rhythm matching the syllabic declamation of the upper voices. Whatever source he was copying from surely had the piece as a motet, perhaps with the tenor sung to its original 'Domino' text. The Harley scribe may have begun to copy the motet in score format merely through habit, without originally intending any change to its performance. It was only once copying had begun that his choice of layout implied to him a change of performance, to a conductus style whose tenor would sing the same text as the upper voices.

The additional copying of the tenor in a block at the end of the piece is a further puzzle. It could be suggested that the Harley scribe was aiming towards a motet layout, but misunderstood its execution and copied the tenor twice by mistake. But since we have evidence that the scribe was intervening in the musical fabric whilst copying the score-notated tenor, it is possible that he was deliberately constructing a layout that left the form of the piece 'open' to be determined in different ways by its performers. With some adaptation to the first two phrases of the score-notated tenor, the piece can be performed as a conductus, with all three parts singing either the Latin or the French text, or as a motet, with triplum 'Ave gloriosa mater', duplum 'Duce creature' and tenor 'Domino'.⁴⁵ In this way, the Harley scribe was engaged in a two-way dialogue with his layout: on the one hand devising an appropriate way to write down an unusual kind of piece, and on the other, adapting that piece, in response to layout conventions, to open up further potential readings of it. The confusion over its genre is largely a modern one; there seems no reason to doubt that this scribe was entirely comfortable for his written copy to represent the song in an unfixated state.

⁴⁴ Heinrich Bessler and Peter Gülke, *Schriftbild der Mehrstimmigen Musik*, Musikgeschichte in Bildern 3.5 (Leipzig, 1973), 48.

⁴⁵ Parrish, *Notation of Medieval Music*, 100.

Score-notated tenor

Part-notated tenor

Ave gloriosa mater salvatoris ave speciosa
Duce creature virgine Marie chaste nette et pure

virgo flos pudoris ave lux io-co-sa tha-la-mus splen-do-ris
et saunz vilenie parvus est la du-re mort a ceus fi-ni-e

a-ve pre-ci-o-sa sa-lus pec-ca-to-ris
ki hu-meine fi-gu-re ont la drei-te vi-e

etc.

Ex. 6 *Ave gloriosa mater / Duce creature*, opening (GB-Lbl Harley 978, fols. 9v-10r)

Conclusion: The written presentation of song

Copying a musical piece, especially in a primarily non-musical manuscript, requires the scribe to make decisions about its structure that will inform his approach to its written presentation. By reordering the musical units on the written page in *Gaude gloriosa morborum medela*, the scribe of the second version in Evreux 17 effectively

transformed the song from one structure to another. Both in his layout and in his musical adaptations the Harley scribe made simultaneous reference to the conventions of both motets and polyphonic conductus within the course of *Ave gloriosa mater / Duce creature*. The Bodley scribe, too, may have been nodding towards conventions of motet-layout with his use of two columns for the voices of *Salve mater salvatoris*. In all three cases, the scribes' involvement with layout went beyond practical considerations of space, and allowed them to represent, directly or implicitly, their own interpretations of the pieces they copied. The act of music-writing is not simply one of presenting musical content, after all, but of creating a visual impression on the page that may speak to a reader long before the details of the writing are processed, saying 'I am music' or 'I am a motet'. Scribes are themselves readers: they are aware of the initial assumptions that a reader makes when approaching the written page, and they may play with these assumptions by accident or by design. Written presentation alone is not responsible for all structural complexity and ambiguity in music of this kind, but it plays a significant part. Both the making of these songs and their copying into these musically informal written contexts were undertaken within a prevailing culture of experimentation and revision.

It seems likely that the kind of experimentation with layout and form attested to by these Latin songs operated within a written rather than primarily oral culture. This written context need not imply a 'stable' transmission, however: as Leo Treitler suggests, 'writing fixes one text, the one that is written; it does not fix the song'.⁴⁶ Whether a musical reworking, a textual contrafact with an uncertain form or a venture into the possibilities of polyphony and the sequence, the three songs were regarded by their scribes neither as cast-iron members of particular generic categories, nor as fixed entities in themselves. Those responsible for their creation played with poetic and musical conventions to generate the new; those who wrote them down seem to have treated their copies as individual realizations of an unfixed musical substance.⁴⁷ In finding space for their songs on isolated pages of miscellaneous manuscripts, these English scribes exhibited an enthusiasm for the creative potential of the writing process itself. Given their own intervention in the material they copied, it seems improbable that they would have regarded their texts as set down for posterity. Rather, interpreting these written pieces as frozen instances in the constantly shifting story of a song's transmission seems truer to their scribes' intentions, and to the song culture in which they operated. In this sense, neither the songs nor the miscellanies that preserve them represent the last word in the history of their texts.

⁴⁶ Leo Treitler, 'Oral, Written and Literate Process in the Transmission of Medieval Music', in his *With Voice and Pen*, 234.

⁴⁷ Edward Roesner, 'Who "Made" the Magnus Liber?', *Early Music History*, 20 (2001), 264; Treitler, 'Oral, Written and Literate Process', 234, 246; Susan Rankin, 'Taking the Rough with the Smooth: Melodic Versions and Manuscript Status', in *The Divine Office in the Middle Ages: Methodology and Source Studies, Regional Developments, Hagiography: written in Honor of Professor Ruth Steiner*, ed. Margot Fassler and Rebecca Baltzer (Oxford, 2000), 213–33.