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"Portare" or "Sustinere"?
A verb, a tenor and its cross

A family history

The tenor *Portare* forms the basis of a variegated family of seventeen motets preserved in major collections and various other manuscripts compiled in the half-century between the 1260's and the 1310's. The origin of this melody goes back to the monophonic setting of the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* verse, employed in the Masses for the feasts of the Cross (*De Sancta Cruce*, Good Friday; *Inventio Crucis*, 3 May; *Exaltatio Crucis*, 14 May), and attested in the manuscript tradition since the 10th century. The interesting observation is that the melody that later provided the tenors of the 13th-century motets corresponds, in the monophonic sources, to the melismatic setting of an imperfect synonym of 'portare', namely, 'sustinere': the latter verb is still found, albeit in a limited number of cases, in the labels of the tenors of three of the seventeen motets of the family.[1]

This study aims to shed light on the cultural history of this melody, starting from the verbal text – stemming from the late-6th-century hymn *Pange,*

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[1] The notions of family and progeny are widespread in the scholarly literature on the motet, and sometimes appear in titles. See Friedrich Ludwig, *Repertorium organorum recentioris et motetorum vetustissimi stili*, edited by Luther A. Dittmer, New York-Hildesheim, Institute Mediaeval Music, Olms, 1964[2], II, p. xxiii; *Polyphonies du 13. siècle: le manuscrit H 196 de la faculté de Médecine de Montpellier*, edited by Yvonne Rokseth, 4 vols., Monaco, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1936-39, IV, pp. 141-198; Rebecca A. Baltzer, *The Polyphonic Progeny of an "Et gaudebit": Assessing Family Relations in Thirteenth-Century Motet*, in *Hearing the Motet. Essays on the Motet in the Middle Ages and Renaissance,* edited by Dolores Pesce, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 28-51, reprinted in *Ars Antiqua: Organum, Conductus, Motet,* edited by Edward Roesner, London-New York, Routledge, 2016[2], pp. 17-27; Catherine A. Bradley, *Re-workings and Chronological Dynamics in a Thirteenth-Century Latin Motet Family*, «The Journal of Musicology», XXXII, 2, 2015, pp. 153-197; Dolores Pesce, *Thirteenth-Century Motet Functions: Views Through the Lens of the "Portare" Motet Family*, in *A Critical Companion to Medieval Motets*, edited by Jared C. Hartt, London, Boydell, 2018, pp. 131-154.

lingua, gloriosi proelium by the then Bishop of Poitiers Venantius Fortunatus – and tracing its development in the repertoire of songs for the Mass and the Office, respectively in the verse *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* and in the antiphon *Dulce lignum*.[2] The survey shows that the gradual substitution of «sustinere» with «portare» was not accompanied by substantial changes in the melody, which, apart from a few negligible variants, retained in the polyphonic repertoire the same contour of the original melismatic setting. Six of the eight occurrences of «Sustinere» in the polyphonic repertoire are found in sources consisting of no more than three motets, all handed down in the *corpus antiquum* (i.e., before the 1270s) of F-MO, H 196 (= *Mo*), the largest surviving collection of pieces in this genre. The remaining two are found respectively in a *clausula* contained in one source – I-Fl, Plut. 29.1. (= *F*) – datable to the mid-13th century on the ground of its notation, and in a *hoquetus* from F-Pn, lat. 11411 (= *EF*), a fragment of probable English origin compiled around 1300, but containing music from several decades earlier. The fact that a second *hoquetus* and fourteen of the seventeen motets built on this melody are found in sources that never apply the label «Sustinere» to their respective tenors is a compelling reason to name *Portare* the family to which they belong. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that *Sustinere* frequently appears in the early stages of the history of this great family; largely unexplored, this early period constitutes the main subject of our investigation.

The verbal text of the *"Alleluia. Dulce lignum"*

The liturgy of Holy Week was celebrated in a particularly sumptuous manner in Carolingian religious culture. While in Rome it was officiated only with an antiphon and a psalm, in Gaul the rite of the Adoration of the Cross on Good Friday was enhanced by the singing of the great *improperia* imported from Byzantium, and of the ten stanzas of Venantius Fortunatus' hymn *Pange, lingua*.[3] The first half of the hymn summarises the life of Christ, while the second offers a detailed account of the events of his last day: the

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[2]   On the relationship between the verse and the antiphon see Dolores Pesce, *Beyond Glossing: the Old Made New in "Mout me fu grief / Robin m'aime / Portare"*, in *Hearing the Motet* cit., pp. 38-42, repr. in *Ars Antiqua* cit., pp. 495-499. See also Sylvia Huot, *Allegorical Play in the Old French Motet. The Sacred and the Profane in Thirteenth-Century Polyphony*, Stanford (CA), Stanford University Press, 1997, pp. 133-137; Emma Dillon, *The Sense of Sound: Musical Meaning in France 1260-1330*, Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 320, 326; Pesce, *Thirteenth-Century Motet Functions* cit., *passim*.

[3]   Michel Huglo, *Les versus de Venance Fortunat pour la procession du Samedi-saint à Notre-Dame de Paris*, «Revue de musicologie», LXXXVI, 1, 2000, pp. 119-126. In the Carolingian context, strophic hymns with *refrains* were called *versus*.

sixth and seventh stanzas describe the flagellation and the crucifixion, while the eighth, ninth and tenth stanzas, reproduced below, wax lyrical in an extended praise of the Cross:

> Crux fidelis, inter omnes arbor una nobilis,
> nulla talem silva profert flore, fronde, germine,
> dulce lignum, dulce clavo dulce pondus sustinens!
>
> Flecte ramos, arbor alta, tensa laxa viscera,
> et rigor lentescat ille quem dedit nativitas,
> ut superni membra regis mite tendas stipite.
>
> Sola digna tu fuisti ferre pretium saeculi
> atque portum praeparare nauta mundo naufrago
> quem sacer cruor perunxit fusus agni corpore.[4]

When used in the rites of the Office, the hymn was divided into its two halves and performed with a *Gloria* inserted between the fifth and the sixth stanza. When it was included in the *proprium* of the Mass, its eighth stanza («Crux fidelis [...]») acquired the function of a *refrain* and was sung in alternation with the others.[5] Thus, when, after its last occurrence, the final verse of the stanza-refrain is followed by the opening verse of the final stanza, the resulting distich closely anticipates the verbal text of the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*:

HYMN	VERSE
[...] dulce lignum, dulce clavo pondus sustinens!	Alleluia. Dulce lignum dulces clavos dulcia ferens pondera
Sola digna tu fuisti ferre pretium saeculi [...]	quae sola fuisti digna sustinere regem caelorum et Dominum.

The reworking of the text resulting from the juxtaposition of the third verse of the stanza-refrain with the first verse of the last stanza of *Pange, lingua* raises a grammatical problem, namely, an incongruity between the

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[4] *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi,* edited by Guido M. Dreves and Clemens Blume, voll. 55, Frankfurt am Main, Minerva, 1961², L, p. 71.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 73. Still practiced in the Parisian cathedral of Notre Dame in the 1220s (cf. F-Pn, lat. 1112, f. 95*v*, ancient foliation: LXXXVII*v*), the calculated use of the stanza-refrain is recorded in a gradual from St. Gallen from the mid-11th century (cf. CH-SGs, Cod. Sang. 374, p. 97): after its full statement at the beginning, only the first two verses are repeated after each odd-numbered stanza («Crux [...] germine»), while only the third verse («dulce [...] sustinens!») is repeated after each even-numbered stanza.

feminine adjectives «Sola digna», originally referred to the feminine nouns «crux» (in the *refrain*) or «arbor» (in the previous stanza), and the neuter noun «lignum» to which the two adjectives refer in the verse. One way to make up for this inconsistency, though not an ideal one, is to insert the relative pronoun «quae» before «sola», and to apply a number of additional changes: 1) replace «sustinens» with «ferens»; 2) place «ferens» between «dulcia» and «pondera», forming a syntagm that pluralizes the original «dulce pondus»; 3) transform the present participle «sustinens» into the infinitive «sustinere» and place it in the second verse instead of «ferre»; 4) replace «pretium saeculi», a somewhat cryptic reference to Christ, with the more explicit expression «regem caelorum et Dominum», also found in other verses where «sustinere» is often replaced with «portare».[6]

Another possible emendation of this passage is less obvious, but far more important. In the hymn by Venantius Fortunatus, «sustinens» appears at the end of a verbal sequence formed by the nominative «dulce lignum», the ablative «dulce clavo» and the accusative «dulce pondus» – three syntagms praising the Cross as «sweet wood supporting sweet weight with sweet nail».[7] Both in the antiphon (*Dulce lignum*) and in the verse (*Alleluia. Dulce lignum*) this verbal sequence shows an apparently negligible variant, the addition of an «-s» at the end of «dulce» and at the end of «clavo». However, the end result – the transformation of the ablative singular «dulce clavo» into the accusative plural «dulces clavos» – reveals that this variant is actually far from negligible: an indispensable tool – a nail enabling the Cross to bear the sweet weight of the King of Heaven – unexpectedly becomes an additional burden made up of a set of nails.

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[6] Accompanied by the demonstrative adjective «huius», the syntagma «pretium saeculi» is also found in the antiphon *Dulce lignum*, a chant included in a large number of sources whose verbal text bears many similarities to that of the *Alleluia* verse *Dulce lignum*, but whose melody is completely different from the one that generated the tenor *Sustinere/Portare*. The syntagma «regem caelorum et Dominum» appears in the *Alleluia verse. O crux veneranda* for the Mass on the Feast of the Cross (14 September), only handed down in an Albigensian gradual from the mid-11th century (F-Pn, lat. 776, f. 114*v*), as well as in other verses attested more widely in the manuscript tradition.

[7] The triple occurrence of the adjective «dulce» results from the use, in the second of the three cases, of an alternative ending of the masculine singular ablative of adjectives of the second class, «dulce» instead of «dulci». Although this choice may be due to Fortunatus' striving for phonic uniformity, it is worth noting that this alternative ending can boast some occurrences also in classical authors such as Horace: see *Sat*., 2.2.122 («et nux ornabat mensas cum duplice ficu») and *Carm*., 3.14.7-8 («et soror clari ducis et decorae / supplice vitta»).

The insertion of punctuation, a notoriously delicate process in the standardisation of classical and medieval texts, becomes a most thorny problem in the case of texts set to music. In the antiphon, the sweet wood of the Cross «dulces clavos dulce pondus sustinuit», while in the verse the Cross is «dulces clavos dulcia ferens pondera». While in the second case a comma can be easily inferred, what is more difficult to postulate is the insertion of a conjunction – the element that would have made the syntax correct: «dulces clavos *atque* dulcia ferens pondera». The fading of 'sustinere' has its roots in this small incongruity, which can be variously attributed to a superficial knowledge of Latin, an approximate adaptation of the words to the needs of the chant, a lack of space on the page, a lack of accuracy on the part of the compiler, or a fatal combination of all these and possibly other factors.

The music of "Alleluia. Dulce lignum"

A study of settings of alleluia verses from the early centuries of the Christian era to the end of the 11th century published more than half a century ago identified the manuscript I-MOd O.I.7 (= *Mod*) as the primary source of the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*.[8]
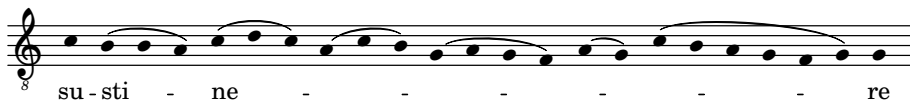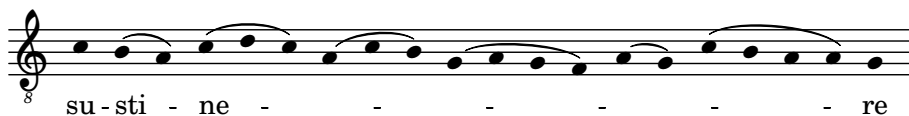

su - sti - ne - - - - - - re

Ex. 1 – *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*. Setting of the verb «sustinere» (*Mod*, f. 128*v*)

The manuscript comes from Forlimpopoli, a small town about 120 km south-east of Modena, where it is kept today in the local capitular library. However, for a study such as this one, which aims at investigating the his-tory of the melisma on «sustinere» within *organa*, *clausulae*, *hoqueti* and motets, it is more useful to carry out a survey of the *cantus planus* sources compiled in Paris and the neighbouring areas in the first two thirds of the 13th century. Limiting our investigation to the portion of the melody corresponding to the setting of the verb «sustinere», in these sources we find a clear prevalence of the reading shown in Ex. 2, characterised, with respect to the one handed down in *Mod*, by the setting of the syllable «su-» on c and

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8 *Mod*, f. 128*v*. Cf. *Monumenta Monodica Medii Ævi,* edited by Andreas Haug, David Hiley, Karlheinz Schlager, 19 vols. and 7 supplements planned, Kassel, Bärenreiter, 1956-, VII, pp. 140 f. and 631 f.

by the absence of the detour through the *subfinalis* F in the passage leading to G, which carries the syllable «-re».

Ex. 2 – *Alleluia. Dulce lignum.* Transcription of the setting of «sustinere» prevalent in the Parisian area in the 13th century

This reading is found in the following manuscripts:[9]

F-Pn, lat. 1112	Paris, Notre-Dame	missal	ca. 1225	f. 169*vb*
F-Pn, lat. 14452	Paris, St-Victor	gradual	*ante* 1239	f. 94*r* f.
F-Pn, lat. 1107	Paris, St-Denis	missal	*post* 1254	f. 237*r*
F-Pn, lat. 904	Rouen, Notre Dame	gradual	13th cent.	f. 203*v*
F-Pn, lat. 13255	Paris, St-Maur-des-Fossés	gradual	13th cent.	f. 76*v* f.

A literal concordance with the reading that prevailed in Paris and the neighbouring areas is found on f. 86*v* f. of CH-ROM, Ms. liturg. FiD 5, a gradual compiled between 1246 and 1255 probably for the Cistercian abbey of Haut-Crêt (Vaud, Switzerland). Apart from the negligible splitting of the last neume of the melisma on «-ne-», an identical reading is found on f. 112*v* of D-HEu, Cod. Sal. X, 007, a gradual compiled for Salem, another Cistercian abbey near Lake Constance. Finally, a very slight modification, caused by a *plica* at the end of the melisma, is found on f. 199*v* f. of a combined missal and gradual for the church of Senlis (F-Psg, Ms. 99).

An interesting exception is F-RS, Ms. 264, a gradual compiled in the 13th century for the church of St-Thierry in Reims. On f. 47*v*, this manuscript features a musical setting of the verse that is closely related to the one prevailing in the Parisian area, except for a critically important verbal variant: the substitution of «sustinere» with «portare». This substitution also corresponds to the most conspicuous musical variant, which involves

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[9] Photographic reproductions of the manuscripts listed above are all available online. Regretfully, the reproductions of two sources that may have been of interest to this research, i.e., the missal GB-Lbl, Add. 38723 (Paris, 13th cent.) and the gradual I-Rc, Ms. 1695 (Paris, St-Germain-des-Près, 13th cent., possibly pre-1227) are not available.

the previous adjective «digna», whose melodic contour – otherwise rather subtly articulated – flattens out, settling on a series of c's:

Ex. 3 – *Alleluia. Dulce lignum.* Transcription of the setting of «portare» (F-RS, Ms. 264, f. 47*v*)

This is in all likelihood a contracted version of the vocalisation on «sustinere», conveniently adapted to a verb with a more generic meaning, and set to a much less distinct musical profile. Composed of 'sub' and 'tenere', the verb 'sustinere' in the hymn adequately expresses the function of a nail that 'holds' the body of Christ hanging from the 'sweet wood'. 'Portare' works better semantically, albeit in a context in which, partly due to the rough adaptations involved in transforming two verses of *Pange, lingua* into the prose text of the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*, the Cross takes upon itself the 'sweet weights' of the nails and other objects (presumably the robe and the crown of thorns) in addition to that of the body of Christ. The Reims gradual is not an isolated case, since monophonic settings of the verse, including this variant, are attested as early as the 10th century, mostly in Longobard Italy (Benevento, Monza).[10] However, in most cases where this substitution takes place, the trisyllable 'portare' appears to be associated to a melody that was designed for the outline of 'sustinere', a four-syllable verb whose accent falls on the third and not on the second syllable. The Reims gradual, on the other hand, contains a less elaborate setting, much more appropriate to the morphological aspect and semantic connotation of the verb 'portare'.

Going further back in time, we encounter the exceptional case of a missal compiled in the 10th century for the Abbey of St-Pierre (later St-Aubin) in Angers; on the left margin of f. 184*v*, this source provides a setting of «sustinere» conceived as alternative to that of «portare» in the main text. In this case too, however, the setting of «portare» is only a slightly modified version of that of «sustinere», in which the two notes preceding the melisma on the syllable «-ta-» have

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[10] I-BV, Ms. 33 (missal, 10th-early 11th cent.), f. 93*vb*; I-BV, Ms. 40 (gradual, 11th cent.), f. 53*v*; I-MZ, Ms. C-13/76 (gradual, 11th cent.). f. 112*v*; I-BV, Ms. 34 (gradual, 11th-12th cent.), f. 165*v*; F-CA, Ms. 60 (61) (gradual, early 12th cent.), f. 83*v*; F-Pn, lat. 12053 (missal, Paris, St-Maur-des-Fossés, second quarter of the 12th cent.), f. 5*r*. Unless otherwise stated, as in the last reference, the place of origin of the manuscript coincides with its current location.

been grouped into a single neume, a solution similar to that adopted on the tonic syllable of «sustinere».[11]

From mono- to polyphony: "Sustinere" as a tenor for organa, clausulae, hoqueti

Given the substantial homogeneity of the plainchant sources compiled in and around Paris in the first two thirds of the 13th century, it is not surprising to find the same reading in the oldest source of Notre Dame polyphony: D-W, Cod. Guelf. 628 Helmst. (= *W1*), the manuscript dating from the 1230s that Ludwig used as his main reference for cataloguing the earliest polyphonic reworkings of melodies for the Mass and the Office.[12]

Ex. 4 – Two-voice *organum* on *Alleluia. Dulce lignum.* Transcription of the portion of *vox principalis* corresponding to the setting of «sustinere» (*W1*, ff. 29*v*-30*v*)

Altering the original neumatic groupings of the melisma, the separation through dashes of the twenty notes corresponding to the setting of «sustinere» in the *vox principalis* depends on the outline of the *vox organalis*, notably characterized by a succession of three spectacular *conjuncturae* preceding the conclusion on the syllable «-re». A somewhat similar reading is found in a fragmentary source of the *Magnus liber organi*, E-Sl, Frag. 27 (= *Sl*), a manuscript compiled in the 1250s in the monastery of San Salvador del Moral in Cordovilla la Real (Palencia, Spain) and currently held at the nearby Benedictine abbey of Santo Domingo de Silos (Burgos). Although mutilated, the manuscript retains the final portion of the *organum* on *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* starting from the melisma on «digna», therefore including the full setting of the verb «sustinere».[13]

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[11] F-AN, Ms. 91, f. 184*v*. The grouping into a single neume of the notes intended for the setting of the syllable «por-» provides a solution to the problem of starting the melisma on the syllable «-ta-».

[12] Placed in *W1* at the base of a two-voice *organum* (ff. 29*v*-30*v*; ancient foliation 33*v*-34*v*), the melody of *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* is catalogued by Ludwig as M22.

[13] Discovered only in the early 1980s, *Sl* could not be included among the sources surveyed in *The Parisian Two-Part Organa. The Complete Comparative Edition,* edited by Hans Tischler, 2 vols., Stuyvesant, NJ, 1988, II, pp. 1001-1015. The surviving fragments are part

The organum is also found in the two other main sources of the Magnus liber organi, the already mentioned manuscript F and the later D-W, Cod. Guelf. 1099 Helmst. (= W2), datable to the 1250s.[14] In both cases the vox principalis shows a double enunciation of the melisma on «sustinere».
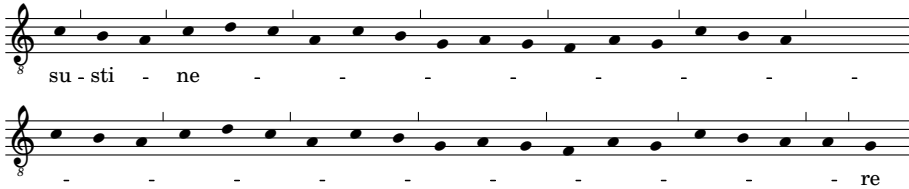
Ex. 5 – Two-voice *organum* on *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*. Transcription of the portion of *vox principalis* corresponding to the double *cursus* of the setting of «sustinere» (*F*, f. 114*v* f.)

A notable aspect of the *vox principalis*, most likely resulting from the double *cursus* of the setting of «sustinere», is the regular division of its notes into groups of three. The only difference between *W2* and *F* is the presence of a G before the conclusion on the syllable «-re», perhaps a remnant of the *plica* recorded in some of the monophonic sources mentioned in the previous paragraph, such as the Senlis missal and gradual. As for the *vox organalis*, this is less florid than in the versions of *W1* and *Sl*, which culminated with the three overflowing *conjuncturae* at the end; furthermore, *F* in particular tends to adhere to the first rhythmic mode. To summarise, the Notre Dame manuscripts contain the *organum* in two variants, either with a simple (*W1*, *Sl*) or with a double (*F*, *W2*) *cursus* in the *vox principalis*, with the superimposition of a more or less ornate segment of *vox organalis*.

In the end, the two versions of the *organum* contained in the four sources of Notre Dame yield two different *clausulae* on «sustinere»; in addition, another independent *clausula* is found in *F*.[15] The fact that the latter includes

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of a quaternion from a manuscript originally containing a collection of *organa* for the whole liturgical year. The contributions that reported this finding, and made the manuscript known, are Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta, *Fragmento polifónico del 'Ars antiqua' en Castilla*, «Revista de musicología», VII, 2, 1984, pp. 453-466 and Jesús Martín Galán, *Un fragmento polifónico de Ars antiqua en Castilla: Transcripción y fuentes paralelas*, «Revista de musicología», XIII, 2, 1990, pp. 579-614. More recently, *Sl* has been reproduced and transcribed in full in Nuria Torres Lobo, *El repertorio musical del ars antiqua en el Reino de Castilla,* Ph.D. diss., Madrid-Universidad Complutense, 2018.

[14] *F*, f. 114*v* f.; *W2*, ff. 72*v*-73*v*.

[15] *F*, f. 160*v*.

a single enunciation of the melisma on «-ne-» shows its affinity with the version of the *organum* handed down in *W1* and *Sl*; as for the *vox principalis*, its first twelve notes are identical and grouped in exactly the same way.
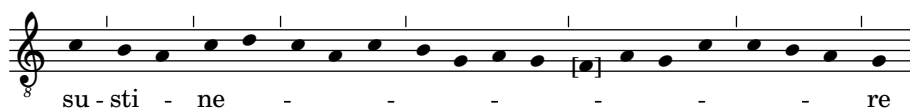

Ex. 6 – Two-voice *clausula* on «Sustinere». Transcription of the *vox principalis* (*F*, f. 160*v*)

In its second half, the melody stands out for the missing F, due to a mere oversight by the copyist.[16] This omission is counterbalanced by the inclusion of a c at the end of the next *ligatura*. The third distinctive feature of this melody is the exclusion of the second a before the final G.[17]

With regard to the *vox organalis*, its affinity with that of the *organum* version in *W1* and *Sl* is beyond doubt, leaving aside the three final *conjuncturae*; nevertheless, the *clausula* seems to be primarily an alternative to that attested in the *organum* version in *F* and *W2*, with the double *cursus* of the melisma on «-ne-».

A melismatic setting of «sustinere» similar to that encountered in the two versions of the *organum* and the *clausula* from the main sources of Notre Dame polyphony also forms the basis of two pieces belonging to another polyphonic genre, the *hoquetus*. The first is found in the opening fascicle of the *corpus antiquum* of *Mo*, the largest collection of motets of the 13th century.[18]
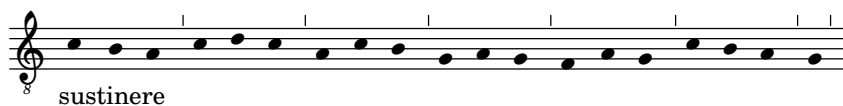
Ex. 7 – Three-voice *hoquetus* on «Sustinere». Transcription of the tenor part (*Mo*, f. 5*v*)

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[16]   The missing note is supplied by the editors in *Le magnus liber organi de Notre Dame de Paris,* edited by Edward H. Roesner et al., 7 vols., Monaco, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1966-2009: V, p. 96, no. 119.

[17]   The *clausula* appearing in *F* has a problem due to an unreported shift of the key of C from the fourth to the third line. A mirror image of this problem is found in the *organum* on *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* in the same source, *F*. In the last line of f. 115*r* the setting of the word «regem» must begin with a D, which is correctly indicated only if the note is preceded by a C-clef placed on the fourth, instead of the third line.

[18]   *Mo*, f. 5*v*. Transcription in *The Montpellier Codex*, edited by Hans Tischler, 4 vols., Madison, A-R Editions, 1978, Part I, p. 7. Compiled around 1270, the *corpus antiquum* of *Mo* – in this case the first of its six fascicles – hands down pieces that were probably composed in the early years of the century.

In this case the tenor has a total of 19 notes, divided into six groups of three plus the final G. Compared to the version prevailing in the contemporary Parisian *cantus planus* sources, the repetition of the a before the last note is missing, as in the separate *clausula* of *F*.

The systematic grouping into discrete three-note units is clearly indicative of the increasing separation of the melisma from the word it originated from. A further sign of this process is the iteration of the melody so articulated. If, on the one hand, a complete intonation of the *organum* version of *F* and *W2* results in only one statement of the melisma on «-ne-», on the other hand the *hoquetus* in *EF*, bypassing that intonation altogether, leads to no fewer than four consecutive statements of the melisma, by now treated, evidently, as an exclusively musical object.[19]

Ex. 8 – Three-voice *hoquetus* on «Sustinere». Tenor transcription (*EF*, f. 45*r*)

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[19]   *EF*, f. 45*r*. At the end of the first statement, the manuscript places the c-b-a group a third lower than it should be; the oversight is corrected editorially in Luther A. Dittmer, *Paris 13521 & 11411: facsimile, introduction, index and transcriptions from the manuscripts Paris Bibl. Nat. Nouv. Acq. Fr. 13521 (La Clayette) and Lat.* 11411, New York, Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1959, pp. 70-73.

The absence in the manuscript of the final syllable «-re» is due to a negligible oversight, since the presence of a *longa*, sealing the fourth consecutive statement of the final GaG unit, is an unmistakable signal of the imminent conclusion of the piece.

Summing up this investigation of polyphonic compositions based on the «sustinere» melisma, what can be observed, alongside a progressive decontextualization of the verb from the text of the verse, is an increasing standardisation of its melodic contour. Subdivided into units of three notes and often iterated, the melisma becomes a musical object, but also – because of its brevity and regularity – an ideal candidate for the role of tenor in a large family of motets. Within this family, it will gradually shed the memory of its origin in the hymn *Pange, lingua* and in the verse *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*, increasingly taking on, instead, the label «portare», a very rough synonym of the ancient 'sustinere'.

The resistible rise of "Portare"

Table 1 lists the seventeen motets based on the tenor *Sustinere/Portare* in the order in which they appear in *Mo*, the source that contains all of them except for the last one, attested only in F-Pn, n.a.l. 13521 'La Clayette' (= *Cl*). What stands out, even at first glance, is that only in three cases are the motets recorded in at least one source where the tenor is labelled «Sustinere». The fact that these works belong to the *corpus antiquum* of *Mo* suggests that they all date from before 1270.[20] Furthermore, their presence in *W2* allows us to backdate the copying of one of them – and more importantly, its composition – by a couple of decades.[21] Thus, the process leading to the permanent adoption of the *Portare* label, widely prevalent within the family, was relatively swift. «Portare» made its debut almost simultaneously in F-Pn, fr. 12615 ('Chansonnier de Noailles' = *N*) and in F-Pn, fr. 844 ('Chansonnier du roi' = *R*), two manuscripts whose virtually identical motet section was

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[20] *Mo*, ff. 74*v*-76*r* (T = «Sustinere»), ff. 129*v*-131*r* (T = «Portare») and f. 236*v* f. (T = «Sustine[re]»): cf. *The Earliest Motets (to ca. 1270): A Complete Comparative Edition*, edited by Hans Tischler, 3 vols., New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 1982, III, nn. 171 (p. 153), 216 (p. 174) and 218 (p. 176).

[21] The other two are both found in *Cl*, a manuscript from the same period as the *corpus antiquum* of *Mo*, and in D-BAs, Lit. 115 (= *Ba*), a major collection of motets compiled in the last quarter of the 13th century, second only to *Mo* in size. In addition to *Mo*, *Ba* and *Cl*, one of the two motets is also found in GB-Lbl, Add. 30091 (= *LoC*, 1880s) and in D-Mbs, Clm. 16444 (= *MüB*, from the first decade of the 14th c.), in the latter case limited to the two upper parts due to the omission of the tenor part.

N.	SOURCES											
	F-MO, H 196 (= *Mo*)			D-BAs, Lit. 115 (= *Ba*)			F-Pn, n.a.l. 13521 (= *Cl*)			Other manuscripts		
	fasc. / n.	ff.	incipit	n.	ff.	incipit	n.	ff. / pp.	incipit	ms.	ff.	incipit
1.	III / 41	74v-76r	Au douz mois	19	11r	Cruci Domini	18	375r-375v / 741-[742]	Au douz mois	*MiB*	Vr-Vv	Arbor nobilis
			Crux, forma			Crux, forma			Crux, forma			Crux, forma
			SUSTINERE			PORTARE			SUSTINERE			[T assente]
										LoC	7r-7v	Cruci Domini
												SUSTINERE
										Bes	[xiii]	[incipit]
2.	V / 81	120v-122r	Ja pour mal	68	43v-44r	Pour celi que j'ains	53	390 r /771	Ja pour mal			
			Hé, desloiaus			Nicholaus igitur			Hé, desloiaus			
			PORTARE			PORTARE			PORTARE			
3.	V / 91	129v-131r	Ja de boine amors	51	31r	Ne sai tant Amors	16	374v/[740]	Ne sai tant Amors	*Bes*	[liv]	[incipit = Mo]
			Ne sai tant Amors			Ja de boine amors			Ja de boine amors			
			PORTARE			PORTARE			SUSTINERE			
4.	V / 96	136v-138r	Li maus amorous									
			Dieu! Porquai									
			PORTARE									
5.	V / 142	192v-194r	Nus ne set les biens									
			Ha, diex! Ne me									
			PORTARE									
6.	V / 148	199v-200r	Si come aloie jouer								*Bes*	[xxxix]	[incipit]
			Deduisant com fins									

Tab. 1 – The family of motets based on the tenor *Sustinere / Portare*

No.	Source	Folio	Voices / Tenor	No.	Folio	Voices / Tenor	Siglum	Folio	Voices / Tenor
7.	V / 159	210v-212r	PORTARE; Emi, Emi, Marotele; Emi, Emi, Marotele						
8.	VI / 188	236v-237r	Douce dame; SUSTINE[RE]				**W2**	228v-229r	Douce dame; SUSTINERE
							N	187r	Douce dame
							R	207va	Douce dame
							StV	292r	[Douce dame]
9.	VI / 233	260r	Hyer main; PORTARE				**N**	194v	Ier matin
10.	VII / 257	279r-280v	Plus joliement; Quant li dous tans; PORTARE				**Tu**	22r-23v	Plus joliement; Quant li dous
							MB	5v-6r	O crux admirabilis; Cruci truci; [tenor]
11.	VII / 259	282r-283v	Par un matinet	56	34v-35r	Par un matinet	**Bes**	[xlv]	Les un bosquet; PORTARE
12.	VII / 265	292v-293r	Mout me fu grief	81	52v	Mout me fu gries	**Bes**	[xliii]	[incipit]

Tab. 1 – The family of motets based on the tenor *Sustinere / Portare*

			Robin m'aime		Robins m'aimme			[incipit]
13.	VII / 296	339r-339v	PORTARE		PORTARE			
			Boine amours					
			Uns maus savereus					
14.	VIII / 305	351r-352r	PORTARE					
			Mout ai longuement					
			Li dous maus					
			PORTARE					
15.	VIII / 322	372v-373r	Marie assumptio					
			Huius chori					
			[tenor, parziale]					
16.	VIII / 335	386v-388r	Cis a petit de bien					
			Pluseur dient					
			PORTARE					
17.	41	386r-386v/ 763-[764]				Cil qui m'aime		
						Quant chantent		
						PORTARE		

Tab. 1 – The family of motets based on the tenor *Sustinere / Portare*

copied between the end of the 1260s and the end of the following decade, while «Sustinere» appears for the last time in *LoC*, a manuscript whose compilation can be dated to the 1280s. The change, therefore, took place in slightly less than two decades, and the fact that it was irreversible is proven by the absence of the label *Sustinere* in *Ba* – a collection from the last quarter of the century that includes five pieces belonging to the family – and in all subsequent manuscripts.

The impression is that, irrespective of the centuries-old history of its verbal text, the melody aroused the interest of motet composers on account of its purely musical features:
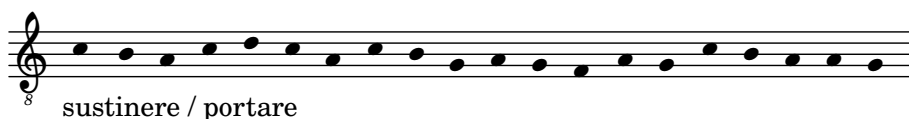
sustinere / portare

Ex. 9 – The standard outline of the tenor *Sustinere / Portare* in motet production

The relative brevity of the tenor (20 notes) favoured its repeated use with the aim of strengthening the structure of the polyphonic composition. Yet, stability is also an inherent quality of the melody, firmly anchored on the primary degrees of the eighth mode, as demonstrated by as many as four occurrences of the G *finalis* and five of the c *repercussio*. Out of a total of 20 notes, almost half (4+5 = 9) fall on those two strong degrees; the range is limited to the F-d sixth, with only one occurrence for each of the outer notes. Thus, in addition to its relative brevity, the melody is tightly contained within a restricted range, a valuable quality for a musical item slated to play the function of tenor, for which the verb 'portare' is undoubtedly better suited than the verb 'sustinere'. But other factors were also at play in the sudden, irreversible change between the two labels.

As we have seen, 'portare' could boast a more than respectable tradition within the texts for the liturgy celebrating the feasts of the Cross. During the Middle Ages such a tradition grew significantly, thanks to the prominent role played by the Marian cult. A case in point is the text of a verse used in the Mass for the Octave of the Assumption found in one of the plainchant sources examined above, the mid-13th-century gradual linked to Rouen Cathedral: «Alleluia. Dulcis virgo dulcis mater dulcia ferens pondera quae sola fuisti

digna portare regem caelorum et Dominum».[22] In this instance 'portare' is preferred to 'sustinere' because it better describes the material and spiritual burdens of Our Lady, who carried the King of Heaven in her womb for nine months, as well as her suffering at the foot of the Cross, which she endured in her heart until the end of her days. As one might reasonably expect in a *contrafactum*, the replacement of the verb was not matched by a parallel change in the melody, which remained similar to the one with the original melismatic setting of «sustinere».

Ex. 10a – The melisma on «portare» in the *contrafactum Dulcis virgo dulcis mater* (F-Pn, lat. 904, f. 291*v*)

Tellingly, however, there is an important change in another occurrence of the same *contrafactum*, in a coeval manuscript linked to the Paris and Reims liturgies containing nine Marian alleluias not related to specific feasts. In this case the syllable «por-» is correctly assigned a single neume, the c-b *plica*, after which the syllable «-ta-» is sung on an altered, slightly contracted version of the melisma on «-ne-».[23]

Ex. 10b – The melisma on «portare» in the *contrafactum Dulcis virgo dulcis mater* (I-Af, ms. 652, f. 54*v*)

Had it been used as the basis for a motet, this could have been a true *Portare* tenor, that is to say, a melody drawn from a melismatic setting of the verb which replaced 'sustinere'; yet, so far, the manuscript sources have not yielded any polyphonic pieces built on it.

In addition to the importance of the Marian cult, it is possible to pinpoint

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[22] F-Pn, lat. 904, f. 219*v*. The setting of the first syllable on b is a typical feature of the oldest settings of the verse, such as the one attested in *Mod* (see above Ex. 1).

[23] I-Af, ms. 695, f. 54*v*.

a second vehicle for the growing fortune of 'portare' in the texts for the Mass and the Office in the broadly distributed *Golden Legend* by Jacopo da Varagine, archbishop of Genoa and a great advocate of the Marian cult. Varagine wrote his collection of edifying stories, arranged according to the liturgical calendar, in the last third of the 13th century, and revised it several times. Although the final version was released only in 1298, the book was extraordinarily popular even in its early versions, which circulated widely in the last decades of the century in monasteries all over Europe.[24]

The *Golden Legend* has two chapters devoted to the feasts of the Cross. In the one dedicated to the Exaltation (14 September), Jacopo assigns the following eulogy to Heraclius I, the Byzantine emperor who redeemed the Cross from Persian captivity in 628:

> O crux splendidior cunctis astris mundi, celebris hominibus, multum amabilis, sanctior universis,que sola fuisti digna portare talentum mundi, dulce lignum, dulces clavos, dulcis mucro, dulcis hasta, dulcia ferens pondera, salva presentem catervam in tuis hodie laudibus congregatam, tuo vexillo signatam.[25]

This eulogy appears to be based on another antiphon for the feasts of the Cross, itself based on the hymn of Venantius Fortunatus, or texts derived from it:

> O crux splendidior cunctis astris mundi, mundo celebris, hominibus multum amabilis, sanctioruniversis, quae sola fuisti digna portare talentum mundi, dulce lignum, dulces clavos dulcia ferenspondera, salva presentem catervam in tuis hodie laudibus congregatam.[26]

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[24] The full title of the collection is *Legende sanctorum alias Lombardica hystoria*; see the critical edition in *Iacopo da Varazze. Legenda aurea,* edited by Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols., Florence, Sismel, 1998.

[25] *Ivi*, ch. CXXXI, p. 932 ff. («O Cross, most splendid than all the heavenly bodies, renowned throughout the world, deserving of all men's love, holier than all things else! O cross, you were worthy to carry the ransom of the world! O sweet wood, sweet nails, sweet sword, sweet lance, you were the bearer of sweet burdens! Save the host gathered today in praise of you and signed with your banner!», Iacopo da Varazze. *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan with an introduction by Emon Duffy, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2012, p. 556).

[26] («O Cross, most splendid than all the heavenly bodies, renowned throughout the world, deserving of all men's love, holier than all things else! O cross, you were worthy to carry the ransom of the world! O sweet wood, sweet nails, you were the bearer of sweet burdens! Save the host gathered today in praise of you».) In F-Pn, lat. 12044, an antiphonary compiled in the 12th century for the monastery of St-Maur-des-Fossés, the antiphon is prescribed,

The affinity between the words of the eulogy that Jacopo put in the mouth of Heraclius I and those of the antiphon suggests that the latter was well known to him. The text of the *Legend* introduces a number of changes, including a reference to the sword that pierced Christ's side («dulcis mucro») and the spear used to offer him the sponge soaked in vinegar («dulcis hasta»). However, both terms are problematic. Neither the sword, nor the spear can be counted among the sweet burdens that the Cross bears, so their mention is semantically implausible. Moreover, the nouns «mucro» and «hasta» are also syntactically inappropriate: as nominatives, they cannot be included among the objects that weigh down the load of the sweet wood. Heraclius I's fervent praise of the Cross seems to have forced Jacopo's hand a little. In any case, regardless of these considerations, the text of neither the eulogy, nor the antiphon shows any trace of the singular ablative «dulce clavo», which has been permanently replaced by the plural accusative «dulces clavos»; nor do we find the infinitive «sustinere», again permanently replaced by the infinitive «portare».

Therefore, the verse *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* seems to remain outside of Jacopo's field of reference; it is the antiphon, rather, that turns out to play an important role in it. In addition to including the verb «portare», the antiphon sets it without the slightest melismatic expansion, with a total of only three or at most four neumes assigned to it. In short, the *Golden Legend* reveals the disappearance of «sustinere» from the texts relating to the feasts of the Cross. Eventually promoted to be its replacement once and for all, 'portare' soon became established even outside of liturgical and devotional contexts, as demonstrated by the widely prevalent labelling of the tenors derived from an ancient melisma of the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* that became the basis of a late 13th-century motet family.

The residual persistence of 'sustinere': three motets

Nevertheless, the label *Sustinere* is still retained in some of the sources of three of the seventeen motets based on the tenor extracted from the melismatic setting of Fortunato's original verb. The survival of that verb in these limited cases is closely linked to the relationship of the tenores with their respective upper parts. The first motet whose tenor bears the label *Sustinere* in two of its five sources (*W2* and *Mo*) is a two-part composition whose duplum begins with the words «Douce dame sans pitié». Enunciated three

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with only minor changes, both for the feast of the Finding (*Inventio Crucis*, 3 May, f. 114v) and for the feast of the Exaltation (*Exaltatio Crucis*, 14 September, f. 186r).

times, in *W2* the tenor is transposed to the lower fifth, while in *Mo* it is given in the original version.[27] The triple statement is only found in one of the three sources in which the tenor is labelled *Portare*, namely, *StV*; in the other two (*N* and *R*) the statements are reduced to two, with an isolated variant in the opening of the first.[28] The replacement of *Sustinere* with *Portare* and the reduction in the number of statements from three to two occurred gradually, on account of the time of compilation of the manuscripts documenting this evolution. Although such a conclusion may seem to posit a linear process of development, it should be borne in mind that the time of compilation of a manuscript is merely a *non ultra quem* for the date of composition of the pieces contained in it.

The verbal text of the duplum is a bitter parody of a Marian prayer:[29]

Douce dame sans pitié
qui j'ai mon cuer otroié
ne l'avés pas desdeignie,
fors pour ce qu'il s'umilie
du tout a tua commant.
Autre don ne voz demant
por ce qui voz ai servie
de mon chant,
fors ke mes cuers ait congié
qu'il soit de vostra mesnie
car sans ce ne vivrai mie.
Douz cuers, alegiés mes maus,
qu'il ne m'ocient!

The lover who implores his sweet lady incapable of mercy is tormented by lovesickness. In order to describe the suffering experienced by this man in his sad days, the kinetic connotation of 'portare' is surely preferable to the static one of 'sustinere'. In this respect, the substitution of the tenor label in more recent sources seems entirely justified.

The second piece of the family, whose sources document the label *Sustinere* in at least one case, is a motet for three voices handed down in *Cl*, *Mo*

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[27]   *W2*, f. 228*v* f.; *Mo*, f. 236*v* f. In *Mo* the label is incomplete («Sustine»).

[28]   *StV*, f. 292*r*, *N*, f. 187*r*; *R*, f. 207*va*. In *N* the initial c is preceded by a lead-in gesture via the notes a-b, corresponding in the duplum to the beginning of the melody on the note a. In *R* the tenor is transposed to the lower fifth, as in *W2*.

[29]   In this and in the following cases the verbal text is transcribed following the reading of *The Montpellier Codex* cit., Part III, p. 10.

and *Ba*.[30] While the presence of «Portare» in *Ba,* compiled in the last quarter of the 13th century, is not surprising, that of «Sustinere» in *Cl* and of «Portare» in the sixth fascicle of the *corpus antiquum* of *Mo* are noteworthy, in that the substitution occurs in two manuscripts compiled within a few years of each other. Curiously, in each occurrence the motet exhibits a different notational layout, as in the two *Portare* sources the parts of duplum and triplum are reversed: *Ba* presents them in the order in which they appear in *Cl*, while *Mo* swaps them.[31]

Ne sai tant Amors servir
que me voelle gueredouner
ce qu'ai mis en bien amer.
Quant cele m'a en despit,
qui tant m'i fet la nuit sospirer,
si que quant je m'i doi reposer,
ne me sai de cele part torner,
que penser ne m'i face fremir,
Qu'eles me tienent en mon lit,
amors, quant je me doi dormir!

Ja de boine amor
mes cuers ne se departira
mes sans nul sejor
adès la servira,
tant qu'a me dame plera,
qui tant a de valour
dont ja a nul jor
mes cuers joie n'avra.
S'en sui en dolour
pour ce que ne la vi pieç' a;
s'en chanterai par douçor:
'Hé Dieus, la verrai je ja,
la bele qui mon cuer a?'

Again, the subject in the vernacular texts is the pain of love that the narrator-lover carries in his heart. The tenor has only one enunciation in *Cl*, where it is labelled *Sustinere*, and as many as four in *Mo* and *Ba* – the last one slightly abbreviated – named *Portare*. Despite its greater sophistication due to the presence of the triplum, which is of course absent in the two-voice motet examined above, the degree of harmonic consonance between the parts is higher, suggesting a later composition in line with the tendency towards a progressive standardisation of the melody.

The third motet is the only one whose sources for the most part give the tenor the label *Sustinere*, specifically *Mo*, *Cl* and *LoC*, whereas *Portare* appears only in *Ba*.[32] Perhaps it is no coincidence that, in this motet, the clear

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[30] *Cl*, f. 374*v*; *Mo*, ff. 129*v*-131*r*; *Ba*, f. 31*r*. The verbal incipit of the upper voices is mentioned in F-B, I 716 (= *Bes*), the index of a collection of motets – unfortunately lost – compiled around 1300.

[31] *Mo*'s anomaly may depend on the common subject matter between the two texts; indeed, in *The Montpellier Codex* cit. (Part II, p. 92 sg. they are presented in the order in which they appear in *Cl* and *Ba*.

[32] *Mo*, ff. 74*v*-76*r*; *Cl*, f. 375*r* f.; *LoC*, f. 7*r* f.; *Ba*, f. 11*r*. In MüB, f. V*r* f., the motet is

prevalence of *Sustinere* in the labelling of the tenor occurs with a duplum whose text – a unique case in the whole family – is a passionate praise of the Cross:

> Crux, forma penitencie, gracie
> clavis, clava peccati, venie
> vena, radix ligni iusticie,
> via vite, vexillum glorie,
> sponsi lectus in meridie,
> lux plenarie
> nubem luens tristicie
> serenum consciencie.
> Hanc homo portet,
> hac se confortet.
> Crucem oportet
> si vis lucis vere
> gaudia sustinere.[33]

The reader is irresistibly drawn to the word that seals the praise, which is identical to the one labelling the tenor in most sources. However, in this case, «sustinere» does not refer to the function of a nail driven into the wood, but to the need for the faithful to carry the Cross in order to attain the joy of the true light. In the two verses preceding the last three, the text urges the human race to take up the Cross and find comfort in it. There we find a form of the verb 'to bear': «portet», a subjunctive that rhymes with «confortet» and becomes an ingredient of the subsequent «oportet». A feminine accusative, the pronoun «hanc» refers to the Cross, the object praised in the first eight verses: these form a single sentence combining ten virtues in a tarsia of words that are deftly juxtaposed to enhance their musicality. While at first glance one might be tempted to read «clavis clava» as an echo of the «dulces clavos» praised in the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*, this impression is only correct as far as sound is concerned. In fact, not only do the two nouns, both feminine, mean something different from 'clavus' ('clavis' means key and 'clava' means club), but they also belong to two different attributes of the Cross, «gracie clavis» («key of grace») and «clava peccati» («club of sin»). Recast as part of a simple list, irrespective of the play of intersections and references ingeniously crafted by the author, the attributes produce an authentic 'exaltation' of the Cross:

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preserved only in its upper parts, whose incipits are also mentioned in *Bes*, [f. xiii].

[33] *The Montpellier Codex* cit., Part II, pp. 15-17.

forma pentencie
clavis gracie
clava peccati
vena venie
radix ligni iusticie
via vite
vexillum glorie
lectus sponsi in meridie
lux luens nubem plenarie tristicie
serenum consciencie.[34]

Writing a matching text worthy of accompanying such a composition was no easy task. The first solution, accepted by the two oldest sources (*Mo*, *Cl*), was a vernacular text that describes the pain of a shepherdess waiting for the return of her young man:

Au doz mos de mai
en un vergier flori m'en entrai,
trovei pastorele desoz un glai;
ses agneaus gardoit
et si se dementoit
si com je voz dirai:
'Robin, doz amis,
p*er*du voz ai;
a grant dolor de vos me dep*ar*tirai!'
Lés li m'assis,
si l'acolai;
esbahie la trovai
pour l'amour Robin,
qui de li s'est partis:
s'en estoit en grant esmai.

The triplum resonates with the praise of the Cross offered by the duplum by virtue of the idea of suffering that pervades both texts. Moreover, it establishes a link with the tenor by placing the pastoral scene in the month of the Feast of the Finding of the Cross (3 May: see the incipit of the triplum, «Au doz mos de mai»), which is also that of its pagan precursor, the Feast of the Tree (Maypole). [35] However, while the Latin text of the duplum praises the Cross for its redeeming virtues, by means of its reference to the sweet

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[34] *Ibidem.*

[35] On this topic see MICHAEL A. ANDERSON, *Fire, Foliage and Fury: Vestiges of Midsummer Ritual in Motets for John the Baptist*, «Early Music History», XXX, 2011, p. 47.

(yet most bitter) month of May, the vernacular text of the triplum alludes to it as an instrument of suffering. Thus, its absence in the other sources of the motet may not be accidental. In two of them, Latin texts replace the vernacular poem of the triplum.[36] In *Ba*, for example, the text of the triplum is as follows:

> Cruci Domini
> sit cunctis horis laus parata,
> per quam homini
> salus est data,
> que sustinuit
> illum qui abluit
> omnium peccata
> carne sua mortificata
> que in cruce fuit sacrificata.
> Q*uam* est ergo venerandum
> ac laudandum
> hoc signum
> quod solum dignum
> vite fuit vere precium
> sustinere.

Several portions of it are drawn directly from both the hymn *Pange, lingua* and the verse *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*. Firstly, the new Latin text exhorts the human race to praise the Cross for its saving power; secondly, by borrowing the verb 'sustinuit' from Venantius Fortunatus, it emphasises the fact that the Cross bore the weight of the man who extinguished the sins of humanity; finally, it suggests that the Cross, evoked as a sign («hoc signum»), is the only object worthy of adoration and praise for having borne the weight of the Lord of heaven and Redeemer of the world. Thus, in *Ba* the motet offers two praises of the Cross, one in the duplum and one in the triplum, both sealed by the infinitive «sustinere». The triplum in *Ba* is also found in *LoC*, a source containing fourteen two-part motets, many of them *unica*; therefore, in this collection the triplum of *Ba* becomes the only companion to a tenor labelled *Sustinere*. In the only two-part version of this motet, the congruence of the Latin text with the tenor label is evident even in the absence of the praise in the duplum, a part that is missing from all the motets of the collection.

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[36] On the new Latin texts, in some cases better suited to the melody of the triplum than the vernacular ones, see Dolores Pesce, *The Significance of Text in Thirteenth- Century Latin Motets*, «Acta musicologica», LVIII, 1, 1986, pp. 91-117: 100.

The second Latin substitute for the vernacular text focusing on the shepherdess' lovesickness while waiting for her Robin is found in *MüB*, where the tenor is omitted despite the careful arrangement of the staff meant to accommodate it. Here too, the new text is a palimpsest of quotations from ancient songs in praise of the Cross:

Arbor nobilis
super alias venerabilis
que portasti regem glorie
tuum enim pondus miserie
despersos honere pie
relevavit sanguine
eos redimes
a perpetuo carcere:
ergo veneranda vere
quia celorum dominum
et redemptorem mundi
meruisti sustinere.

Aside from closing with «sustinere», which unites all three parts as a result (a unique case in the repertory), the text of the triplum contains a large number of quotations and allusions: the noble and venerable tree above all others («arbor nobilis super alias venerabilis») comes from the *refrain* of the hymn *Pange, lingua*; and again the king of glory whose burden it bore («portasti regem glorie»); the weight («pondus»), though not that of Christ or of the nails, but of the tree; the Lord of heaven («celorum Dominum»). Even though the new texts in *Ba* and *MüB* make no mention of nails, «sustinere» is used there with the exact same meaning as in the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*, since the subjects are respectively the Cross and the tree whose branches, like the «dulce lignum», can support the weight of a human body. These two tripla establish a very strong link with the duplum of their respective motets. Nevertheless, the absence of the tenor in the case of *MüB* and its alternative labelling in that of *Ba* indicate that, towards the end of the century, a point of no return had been reached in the process of substituting «Sustinere» with «Portare».

Conclusion

The survey carried out so far shows how the persistence of *Sustinere* in the labeling of the tenor of three of the seventeen motets of the family is always motivated by the intertextual relationship it entertains with the upper parts.

Particularly evident in the third of the three cases examined, the pattern also emerges, indirectly but with some degree of likelihood, in a fourth case. The motet *Plus joliement / Quant li dous tans / Portare* is contained in the seventh fascicle (thus, in the *corpus novum*) of *Mo* and in I-Tr, Varia 42/2 (= *Tu*), a manuscript whose compilation can be dated to the 1310s.[37] The vernacular texts of the duplum and triplum are replaced by two Latin texts in praise of the Cross in GB-Ob, Lat. Lit. e. 42 ('Missale Bugellense' = *MB*), a missal compiled around the middle of the 14th century for the church of Santo Stefano in the town of Biella which, at the time, was under Visconti rule and under the authority of the bishop of Vercelli.[38]

Triplum	*Duplum*
O crux admirabilis christifera,	Cruci truci domini
evacuans criminum vulnera,	laus sit erogata,
fulgida decora	de qua equa homini
te tincxit regis sanguis,	vita est collata.
per quem dirus anguis	Hec est arbor vite,
qui primum circumvenit	in qua delimite
parentem, invenit	sunt spine peccatorum
resistenciam,	ob lignum decorum
et clementiam	membris summi regis,
perpessus victus iacet.	quem cum ferret, for[ma l]egis
Mortis pena tacet	veteris terminum acceperat,
prostrata a vita,	cui novum tempus gracie succeserat.
anima lita	Dulce lignum
peccatorum vota	vite signum,
cruore occiso lota	tu privignum
in mortis huius morte	facis dignum
redempta est a sorte	heredem patrium,
et sata cohercet.	mutans in filium.

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[37] *Mo*, ff. 279r-280v; *Tu*, 22r-23v.

[38] *MB*, f. 5v f. The folia containing the three motets handed down in *MB* are reproduced and transcribed in F. Alberto Gallo, *Mottetti del primo Trecento in un messale di Biella (Codice Lowe)*, in *L'Ars Nova Italiana del Trecento,* III, 1970, pp. 223-245. The presence of motets in a manuscript compiled in the mid-14th century on this side of the Alps is a remarkable fact in and of itself, considering that codex I-IV, ms. CXV (= *Iv*), a large anthology containing compositions of various kinds, including 37 motets, copied in Avignon shortly after 1360, did not reach Ivrea – a town a few kilometers from Biella annexed to the County of Savoy in 1356 – until the mid-1360s. See the facsimile reproduction and the introductory study in *The Manuscript Ivrea, Biblioteca Capitolare 115,* edited by Karl Kügle, Lucca, LIM, 2019.

In this late, peripheral, and therefore very interesting source the tenor appears unlabelled. In all likelihood, this omission may be attributed to the transformation of a secular motet in French into a sacred motet in Latin: once the vernacular texts of the triplum and duplum were replaced by two Latin texts in praise of the Cross, there was no longer any reason to retain the 'modern' label *Portare* documented in *Mo*'s *corpus novum*. Such a choice is consistent with the function of the Biella manuscript, a missal that assigns the verse *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*, without the reading 'portare', to the Mass for the Feast of the Finding, and possibly also to the other feasts of the Cross.[39]

In conclusion: viewed in diachronic perspective, the replacement of *Sustinere* with *Portare* in the labelling of motet tenors handed down in the manuscript tradition occurred in a very short period. With the sole, and questionable, exception of a *hoquetus* from the early *Mo* fascicle, all the pieces, based on the tenor derived from the melismatic setting of the verb «sustinere» in the verse *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* and handed down in sources datable within the first two-thirds of the 13th century, retain the original designation, *Sustinere*. Obviously retained in the various versions of the *organum*, which sets the text of the verse in its entirety, and in the *clausula* conceived as its integrating element, «Sustinere» also appears in some compositions created by extracting the melisma from its original context and by reusing it as a tenor part – namely, a *hoquetus* and three of the seventeen motets that make up the *Portare* family. In this family, the label *Portare* first appears in sources from around 1270, coexists with *Sustinere* in sources compiled by the middle of the following decade, and finally supplants it altogether in those compiled from the late 1280s onwards. This substitution has its roots in the liturgical context where the verbs originally derived, in their nature as imperfect synonyms, and in the stability of the melody they label, firmly anchored to the *finalis* and *repercussio* of the mode. The fact that the terminological change coincided with Jacopo da Varagine's redaction of his extraordinarily successful *Golden Legend*, which steadily adopts the verb 'portare' as a replacement for 'sustinere' in its narration of the events of the Cross, stands out as a background element of a long-lived and fascinating cultural development.

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[39]   The syntagma «Dulce lignum» in the new Latin text of the duplum may be a clue pointing to such a practice. It is not possible to validate this point against the liturgical practice of the time due to the lack of missals and graduals from that area. However, the *Alleluia. Dulce lignum* appears regularly in several liturgical books from an earlier period held in the capitular archive of Vercelli, the latest of which is an antiphonary dating to the second half of the 13th century: cf. I-VCd, Ms. CXL, f. 31*r*.

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Abstract
The tenors of medieval motets are occasionally variable, turning up with abbreviated or modified labels or, rarely, entirely different labels. This article examines two labels alternatively used to name a single tune, namely the imperfect synonyms "sustinere" and "portare." Differing slightly in their meaning, the two labels are connected to a melody (Ludwig's M22) that functions as a tenor in a *clausula*, two hockets, and seventeen motets. Although the manuscript dissemination of these pieces has led to a sense of equivalence and interchangeability in musicological literature, an inquiry into the liturgical contexts from which the two verbs derive discloses a shift from "sustinere" to "portare" occurring in a time span of fewer than two decades. While the motets whose tenors share this tune are normally considered members of the "Portare"-family, the "Sustinere" label played a significant role in the earliest phases of this tenor's history. This article is devoted to the identification of the historical and cultural factors that lead to the irreversible replacement of "Sustinere" with "Portare" for a single tenor melody that took place in the second half of the thirteenth century.

Keywords
Hymn *Pange, lingua*; *Alleluia. Dulce lignum*; Liturgy of the Cross; *Golden legend*; *ars antiqua* motet

English translation by Elisabetta Zoni