

The Concept of *Copula* Reconsidered

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The manuscripts of the Notre-Dame repertory have blocks of two-part organa, which are considered to have three rhythmic patterns: *organum per se*, which consists of a sustained tenor part and an organal voice in free rhythm; *copula*, which has a sustained tenor part and an organal voice in modal rhythm; and *discantus*, whose tenor and organal voice are both in modal rhythm. These definitions were established by Fritz Reckow's 1967 interpretation of Johannes de Garlandia's statements, which had been considered problematic: "there are three species of organum: *discantus*, *copula*, and (specific) *organum*"; "*copula* is that which is between *discantus* and *organum*"; and "*copula* is that which is produced by proper measure equivalent to a single sound." Reckow explained: "*copula* is between *discantus* and *organum per se*; therefore when *discantus* has *modus-rectus* style in both parts and *organum per se* has *modus-non-rectus* part over sustained-note tenor, *copula* must have *modus-rectus* part over sustained-note tenor" and this has been widely accepted. However, it is difficult to determine whether the organal voice is written in free rhythm or modal rhythm, although whether the tenor of the specific portion is written with sustained tones or in modal rhythm can be immediately recognized. In short, it is impossible to distinguish an *organum per se* portion from a *copula* portion.

Observations reveal that the explanation of *copula* given by treatises coeval with Garlandia holds as its central characteristic "between *discantus* and *organum*" rather than "sustained-note tenor and modal-rhythm organal voice." Some other characteristics that the treatises share regarding *copula* include: "keeping some kind of 'correct sequence'" and "related to closing of a phrase." As a result of comparative examinations of the music mentioned in relation to *copula*, this paper proposes a revised definition that the *copula* is a repeated sequence, the function of which is to connect *organum per se* and *discantus*.