"'Pauses musicales et mise en scène:' Comparing the Role of Music in Three Saint Martin plays"

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Comparative Table of Three Saint Martin plays:

Title:	S. Martin 53	S. Martin / Savoy	S. Martin / la Vigne
Performed in:	Tours / 15th c.	St. Martin-La-Porte / 1565	Seurre / 1496
Performance days:	1	2 (2 sessions)	3 (6 sessions)
Number of lines:	4 074	3 871	10 444
Number of roles:	53	73	152
Number of didascalie:	194	134	305
Number of staging stations:	11 + 8 (non-décor)	7	6 + 30 (temporary)
Number of musical interludes:	12	56	86
References to minstrels/music:	1	0	20
References to Hell noises:	0	1	13
Number of cited hymns/songs:	12	9	9
Liturgical hymns :	-Ave Maris Stella -Eterne Rex Altissima -Iste Confessor -Sanctorum Meritis -Subvenite Sancti Dei Occurite -Te Deum Laudamus -Veni Creator Spiritus -Vexilla Regis	-Ave Maris Stella -Defensor Nostre Aspice -Iste Confessor -Jesus Nostra Redemptor -O Crux Ave Spes (Vexilla Regis) -Pange Lingua Glorios -Te Deum Laudamus -Veni Creator Spiritus	-Honor, Virtus et Potestas -Te Deum Laudamus (x 2) -Veni Sancte Spiritus (x 2)
Lyrical/popular songs :	-Iesus beau sire -Ho ho ri ha he fla -Rofle trudaine -Ru ma reflue la dacort	-Ores il faut quallie chantant	-Endure, povre cuer, endure -Et amye, je vous aime -Scavez vous pourquoi la mort -Touchez moy la -De Martin le bon catholique

French hagiographic mystery plays of the late medieval period have been generically characterized as works that narrated visually the life or martyrdom of a significant saintly personage in locally-sponsored productions. Or, in Alan Knight's insightful re-reading of the generic definitions of late medieval drama, historically-focused plays, including saints' plays, drew upon the religious culture that permeated the everyday lives of medieval populations in order to commemorate accepted notions of past events through material images.[1] Local church leaders, *bourgeois*, tradesmen, merchants and dignitaries thus convened to organize, finance and reenact culturally-significant events that might demonstrate to a local population the common thread that bound them all to an eternal plan as well as to an established social order. At the heart of that collective process of rejuvenation, commemoration or admonishment was a community's identification of or identification with a locally-relevant saint.

Four Saint Martin plays from four different urban communities in late medieval France have survived to the present day. The present study limits its scope to the three plays that were composed in French.[2] Saint Martin was the patron saint of a local church in each of the three sponsoring communities; namely, Saint-Martin-La-Porte in Savoy, Seurre in Burgundy, and Tours, where Martin had served as bishop in the fourth century. Born into a pagan, military family, young Martin had been educated in Italy. He converted to Christianity but was enlisted, against his will, into Emperor Constantine's cavalry. Stationed in Amiens, he encountered a naked beggar

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[1] Alan E. Knight, Aspects of Genre in Late Medieval French Drama (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 21.

[2] The fourth such play was written in Provençal for a sixteenth-century performance in Saint-Martin-de-Queyrières (Hautes Alpes).

and tore his coat in two in order to clothe the man, thus setting the stage for the most memorable iconographic image of the future saint. Following a prophetic dream, Martin was baptized and left the army to begin life as a soul-searching hermit. He then met Saint Hilaire and, after a series of saintly adventures, founded the first monastery in Gaul. Martin was elected bishop of Tours in 371, devoting himself to saving souls, destroying pagan idols and building churches. After his death, the simple shrine erected in his memory was increased to a great basilica that became a major pilgrimage site in subsequent centuries.

Because they are dependent on the same hagiographic material, including Sulpice Sévère's fourth-century biography of the saint, the thirteenth-century Légende dorée, and other related sources,[3] the three French Saint Martin plays share many of the basic components of this narrative tradition. There is also incidental evidence that links Philippe, marquis of Hochberg, who had inherited the castle in Seurre and had contributed to that city's 1496 production, to the Duke of Savoy.[4] That evidence has been used to suggest that the Savoyard court may have known the Seurre play well before the township of St. Martin-la-Porte chose to compile its own version. However, aside from this familial coincidence and despite one scholar's references to numerous and intriguing textual parallels between the two texts,[5] critics have tended to agree with André Duplat's conclusion that any narrative similarities between the Seurre and Savoyard productions confirm their

[3] Scholars have traced individual episodes from these plays to sources ranging from Fortunat's sixth-century Life of Saint Martin to an anonymous Vie et Miracles de Monseigneur Saint MartinTranslatee de Latin en Francoys published in Tours in 1496.
[4] André Duplat, "Comparaison des quatre mystères de saint Martin récités ou présentés aux XVe et XVIe siècles, en français ou en provençal," Atti del IV Colloquio della Société Internationale de l'Etude du Théâtre Médiéval, eds. M. Chaibò, F. Doglio and M. Maymone (Vitterbo, 1983), 240.
[5] Jacques Chocheyras, Le Théâtre Religieux en Savoie au XVIe Siècle avec des Fragments Inédits (Geneva: Droz, 1971), p. 64.

common hagiographic sources rather than any textual inter-dependency between the two.[6] As for the third text, it has not been identified with any one of the documented performances of a Saint Martin play that took place in Tours between 1441 and 1511,[7] but the play's twentieth-century editor agreed with Gustave Cohen's earlier assessment linking that play to that urban hub of Saint Martin cults.[8] Poet André de La Vigne, who composed the Seurre play in 1496, apparently did so without an anonymous biography, entitled Vie et Miracles de Monseigneur Saint Martin Translatee de Latin en Francoys, that was printed in Tours that same year. His primary source, according to Duplat, was instead the Sulpice Sévère narrative.[9] The Tours biography, however, seems to share several features with the Saint Martin play from the same city, although it is unclear which of the two texts appeared first.[10] In his comparative analysis, Duplat further maintained that the Tours mystery text shares few of the structural and poetic features to be found in either the Seurre or the Savoyard text, thus reaffirming critical consensus that these three dramatic versions of Saint Martin's hagiographic legend were most likely composed independently of each other.[11]

Their independent compilation may be further corroborated by the fact that hagiographic performances in the late medieval period were generally composed locally in response to local performance mandates. Their regional or local perspectives are the trait that distinguished saints' plays from the pervasive Passion

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[6] Duplat, "Comparaison," 239.

[7] Katharine Anne Knutsen, ed., Le Mystère de la Vie et Hystoire de Monseigneur Sainct Martin (University of Massachusetts, 1976), 37-38.

[8] Knutsen (2) cites Cohen ("Rabelais et la légende de Saint-Martin," Etudes d'Histoire du Théâtre en France au Moyen-Age et à la Renaissance (Paris: Gallimard, 1956), 102).

[9] Duplat, ed., Mystère de Saint Martin d'André de La Vigne (Geneva: Droz, 1979), 15.

[10] Knutsen, 80.

[11] Duplat, "Comparaison," 236.

plays of the same era, according to Charles Mazouer.[12] Each hagiographic mystery text, because it was based on a locally-focused cult, was a product not only of the differing circumstances that dictated its composition, financing, performance and reception, but also of the particular identification that each sponsoring community enjoyed with its saintly protagonist. The material images that were recreated on stage represent not only the over-riding cultural imperatives that defined these collective commemorations generically, but also the late medieval guilds, municipal leaders and religious orders who were actively redefining their own place within a rapidly-changing social and economic order.[13] As cultural artifacts emanating from within both literary and performance traditions, hagiographic mystery plays, represented by the three Saint Martin texts that are the subject of the present study, diverge from each other for reasons both implied and imposed by their locally-focused performance mandates despite the commonality of their legendary sources, in spite of the dominant cultural conventions to which they conform, and beyond the variable poetic prowess of their respective authors. The following analysis is intended to illustrate the different mandates of three such plays.

As the attached Comparative Table illustrates, Seurre's Saint Martin text consists of more than twice the number of lines as both the Tours and the Savoyard works. More importantly for our purposes, Seurre's performance schedule is three times longer than that of the other versions, and it features twice or three times as many acting roles. However, owing to their common narrative sources, all three productions share at least six permanent staging stations on the constructed

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[12] Charles Mazouer, Le Théâtre Français du Moyen Age (Paris: SEDES, 1998), 217.
[13] Numerous studies have linked the practice of urban theater to a show of civic authority during periods of social unrest, upheaval, and even as a result of the collective psychological fears brought on by plagues, wars and their consequences.

scaffolds; namely, Paradise, Hell, Rome, Poitiers, Tours and Milan (Martin's paternal

home). Beyond that concession, the plays vary widely in the number and nature of

their staging stations. The Tours prologue, for example, includes references to

numerous characters who were apparently located near or on the staging *parc*, but

who were not assigned to one of the eleven constructed stations.[14] In the case of the

Seurre production, the relatively small number of permanent stations was

supplemented by the addition of numerous transportable props that were evidently

brought onto the staging platform, or 'parc,' when needed.[15] The Savoyard text

contains few explicit clues to its staging platforms, but spoken and inter-textual

references combined would seem to imply a set décor of seven permanent stations,

some of which could be transformed into different sites by using various props, and

around which radiated several sundry groups of secondary characters.[16]

Another obvious measure of the different performance mandates that

characterize these three Saint Martin plays is the way in which each play

incorporates music as a requisite element in these collaborative celebrations. Music

is present in these productions in a variety of ways either outside the narrative where

it serves as a staging device or inside the narrative where it enhances the edifying or

entertaining message. First, music finds its way into the numerous stage directions or

didascalie that punctuate the spoken texts of all three plays and that were intended

to cue actors where to move, how to gesture, and when to change costumes.

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[14] Mystere de la Vie et Hystoire de Monseigneur Sainct Martin, ed. Katharine Anne Knutsen (University of Massachusettes: unpublished dissertation, 1976), 151-154.

[15] Graham A. Runnalls, "The Staging of André de La Vigne's Mystère de saint Martin," Etudes sur les Mystères (Paris: Champion, 1998), 362.

[16] For example, the second day's performance repeats the same stations as the first, substituting Tours and its associated stations for the previous day's Milan. Each 'city' included set numbers of priests, soldiers or paupers who came forward when called upon to perform, consistent with most of the staging stations in such plays.

The number of stage directions in the three works is relatively proportionate to their over-all length, as might be expected, but they vary significantly across the three texts in content and level of detail.[17] A significant number of these stage directions explicitly call for some kind of musical interlude or accompaniment. This is the case eighty-six times in the Seurre production and fifty-six times in the St. Martin-La-Porte play, but only twelve times in Tours. Taking into account that the Seurre performance consisted of six sessions over three days, there were on average fourteen or fifteen musical 'pauses' in each session. In the case of the Savoyard performance, each of the two sessions, which are characterized in one of the play's prologues as two-hour performances,[18] contains an average of twenty-nine musical interludes. The Tours production, unlike the other two plays, may seem quite restrained in its use of musical interludes, which are five times less frequent than they are in the Savoyard text, despite the fact that the latter is slightly shorter in length. However, it must be noted that the Tours text is the only one of the three to have survived in printed rather than in manuscript form. As a result, there is reason to believe that the infrequent and inconsistent presence of musical interludes in that text is a by-product of the sixteenth-century printer's editorial decisions rather than the compiler's performance intention.[19]

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[17] In part because each surviving text represents a different step in the production and post-production processes of the three performances, stage directions may vary from single words to entire paragraphs. Most directive instructions are no more than one or two sentences long, and may be used to further or clarify the narrative for reading purposes as well as for staging. However, some performance-focused stage directions are long, descriptive passages with references to the placement of props, lighting, costumes or even protracted simulations. The latter type of stage direction can be found frequently in the Seurre text, which is more closely linked to a specific performance.

[18] Histoyre de la vie du glorieulx Sainct Martin, evesque de Tours en Touraine, patron de la communauté de Sainct Martin de la Porte en Maurienne, ed. Florimond Truchet (Gulliermet, 1882), 91.

[19] Early printed editions of post-performance play manuscripts are often characterized by the elimination of stage directions which were irrelevant to reading the text and expensive to include. The

Music served as a staging mechanism in a variety of ways in these productions. Often, music was used to signal to spectators that action around the 'parc' was transitioning from one staging station to another. Other times, a musical interlude gave actors the time required to move into position or between locations on the staging platform. In a few cases, it is clear that a musical interlude served to represent symbolically the passage of time. The Seurre production, for example, relied with regularity on instrumental music to cover, or accompany, staging modifications, travel between stations and costume changes. In fact, it does so proportionately more often than either of its counterparts. The performance's 'procès-verbal,' which documented the circumstances of this production, informs us that each of the sessions was some four hours long.[20] Therefore, the Seurre performance required at least twice the amount of time to recite approximately the same number of text lines as did the St. Martin-La-Porte and Tours productions. This fact is explained in part by the intricacy of Seurre's staging. As already noted, in addition to six permanent stations, the 'parc' was decorated with temporary props that represented caves, prisons, bedrooms, and dining tables, but also horses that were mounted then dismounted to music, and a myriad of secondary scenes which required a temporary designation and one or more actors. Thus, in La Vigne's text, music often accompanies actors who leave a station for another one, or even Martin as he eats or sleeps. In one typical instance, minstrels play while actors ride across the staging area toward a vaguely defined city.[21] Either the play's pageantry offered a visual and auditory feast that superseded the narrative underway or the variety and

Tours text is typical of this phenomenon: most of its stage directions are short narrative cues. Its 'pauses' are also oddly placed; none occurs in the last 120 pages (nearly half) of the play.
[20] <u>Mystère de Saint Martin</u>, ed. André Duplat (Geneva: Droz, 1979), 121.
[21] <u>Mystère de saint Martin</u>, ed. Duplat, 230.

number of props involved required extensive positioning and repositioning. Thus, the

play's compiler specifies the musical interludes as ranging from 'petite' to 'prolixe.'[22]

The Savoyard play, on the other hand, uses music most often to announce a

transition between scenes. Thus, a 'pause' might simply indicate that a devils' tirade

has ended and that the Fol is about to speak,[23] or that the angels have reported back

to God in Paradise and that the action is shifting to the Vicar of Tours.[24] Moreover,

although music might accompany a travel scene, the stage direction often refers to

these as 'petites pauses.' This is even the case when Martin and his page, dressed in

military uniforms, "marcheront par les eschauffaux et arriueront au camp" (will walk

around the scaffolds and then arrive in the (Roman) camp).[25] The same strategy

occurs in the Seurre text, as in the case of the horsemen crossing to another site, but

the latter draws attention to the ceremonial act of arriving on the central 'parc' and

then returning quite conspicuously to one's assigned place in the scaffolds. The

Savoyard play contains, as already noted, more musical interludes per session than

does the Seurre text, but it uses musical interludes as a kind of punctuation between

unrelated but consecutive parts of the story. Its incorporation of a Fol, who

comments on the action and wanders from station to station, likewise punctuates the

spoken text, underscoring a staging difference between André de La Vigne's

production and the Burgundian version.

Despite the fact that the Tours text has only preserved a dozen musical

interludes, it too incorporated them in order to provide transitions between

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[22] For examples of La Vigne's musical interludes, see (Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat) 'pause petite,' (178) and 'pause prolixe,' (395).
[23] Histoyre …Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 29.
[24] Histoyre …Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 162.
[25] Histoyre …Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 40.

sequences or to cover transition time on stage. Thus Martin and his cousin travel to the latter's castle, and, the text announces: "Icy fait on pause" (Here there is a musical interlude).[26] In addition, like the Seurre production, a well-placed musical interlude in the Tours text allows Martin to sleep.[27] However, given that there are few such interludes in the extant text, most travel and transitions in the play are unaccompanied by music. For example, one stage direction states that Martin will walk around the 'parc' until he arrives at the spot were the hermit is located,[28] but it does not explicitly call for music. In other instances where one character is about to travel from one station to another, he announces his intention, seconded by a stage direction that leads him away just as another character takes his place and begins to speak.[29] If printed as intended by the compiler, such sequences would not require music. Since the Tours text appears to be a one-day performance of undetermined duration, it may have relied less on instrumental interludes in order to move through its narrative more efficiently, or, alternatively, this sequencing could imply that the staging stations were close enough in proximity not to require any formal transition. Because it is impossible to know whether the Tours text as compiled and performed included more musical interludes than it presently does, we can only suppose from the evidence available that interludes did play a part in providing some transitions between sequences, but not with the same regularity implied by the other two texts.

One traditional musical transition common to mystery plays occurred when the action shifted from the human plane of events to the lofty realm of paradise.

[26] Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 160.
[27] Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 202.
[28] Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 175.
[29] In one instance, (Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed., Knutsen, 208) of the text a messenger utters one stanza as he heads for the woods in search of Martin followed by the Prince d'Acherance's arrival and subsequent speech.

Whether performed by organs, flutes, trumpets or choirs, the 'siletes' announced

that divine beings would speak in turn before descending from paradise to reward

the worthy with miracles or that they were returning to their heavenly realm with

saintly souls in tow. All three Saint Martin productions incorporate such interludes,

although both the Tours text and La Vigne's production refer to them consistently

with the more generalized term of 'pause' rather than the term 'silete.' The Savoyard

text more often than not distinguishes between the standard musical interlude and

the heavenly 'silete,' opting for the latter term to announce sequences that take

place in paradise. Likewise, that text even specifies that "les anges chanteront silete"

(the angels will sing the 'silete'), providing time for other actors to move into position

for the next sequence.[30]

Beyond the external function that musical interludes provided to these

performances, music also occurred within the narratives in various settings. The

most pervasive example of inter-textual music is the liturgical hymn which survived in

mystery plays as a remnant of the religious origins of these plays. As is the case with

most hagiographic plays, hymns are performed in the three Saint Martin plays by

angels as they descend to earth and subsequently return to paradise. As the

Comparative Table illustrates, the Savoyard and Tours texts each incorporate eight

different hymns, five of which occur in both plays.[31] However, all eight hymns,

including the "Te Deum" generally sung by the entire audience, are performed by

angels in the St. Martin-La-Porte production. In most instances in that text, Raphael

and Gabriel sing one hymn as they descend onto the 'parc' and another as they

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[30] Histoyre … Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 134.
[31] These strophic hymns, without refrains, were borrowed from the Office hours, and were intended to be sung for Vespers. Others were processional hymns or hymns sung to honor the dead.

return to their heavenly station.[32] In one case, the same angels perform "Veni Creator" as they descend but, as already cited, the title of the hymn sung during their ascent to paradise is unspecified. In the final case, the two angels sing ("Iste Confessor") as they bring sleeves to Martin who is about to participate in mass but it is unclear at what point they retreat from that sequence to return to heaven.[33]

The Tours text divides its hymns among angelic and human singers, but retains for these works a clearly ceremonial and para-liturgical intention. In only one sequence do angels descend ("Vexilla Regis Produent") and then ascend ("Ave Maris Stella") singing different hymns.[34] In two other instances the same two angels, Raphael and Michael, sing a hymn while either descending or returning to paradise. In yet another case, the angelic hosts sing in heaven ("Eterne Rex Altissime") to rejoice in the arrival of a new soul. One hymn ("Subvenite Sancti dei Occurrite") is performed by the soul of Saint Ambroise but the remaining two are sung first by religious characters carrying Saint Martin's reliquary in a procession ("Iste Confessor Domine") and then by the entire cast and public, who, at the conclusion of the performance, are invited to join a procession into the church singing the traditional "Te Deum Laudamus." The Seurre text, on the other hand, includes only three cited hymns, all of which are performed in ceremonial fashion in church. In each of these cases, the text announces that the cantor will begin to sing ("Veni Sancte Spiritus" and "Te Deum Laudamus") and "qui voudra" (whoever likes) is encouraged to join in.[35] Angels too, sing as they travel between the 'parc' and paradise, but La Vigne's

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[32] See Histoyre ... Saint Martin, ed. Truchet, for three such sequences: "Ave Maris Stella" (33) and "Pange Lingua" (34); "Defensor" (54) and "O Crux" (55); "Jesus Nostre" (153) and "Te Deum" (162).
[33] Histoyre ... Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 139.
[34] Mystère ... Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 318 and 319.
[35] See, for example, Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 364, 394, 416 and 418.

text specifies only that God and his angels may sing whatever they wish as they ascend to their station.[36]

Furthermore, the number and nature of popular songs to be found in these plays appear to further underscore the likelihood that La Vigne's text was not as liturgically-minded as were his counterparts in Savoy and Tours. The Seurre production includes five vernacular songs. Three are apparently lyrical love songs performed by thieves in an entertaining sequence.[37] The fourth is a 'rondeau' sung by angels who accompany Martin's soul to heaven[38] and the fifth is a decidedly devilish ditty entitled "Touchez moy la" ("Touch me here"). St. Martin-La-Porte's production includes only one popular song by a beggar who is lamenting his fate,[39] while the Tours text includes a drinking song ("Iesus beau sire")[40] and three nonsense ditties performed by pagans.[41] As Knutsen surmised, most of the popular songs in these plays were well-known to the spectators and performers alike, but it is impossible to know much more about them.[42] Of the three plays, the Tours production, which has the smallest number of instrumental interludes, includes the highest number of songs, with a clear contrast drawn between the sacred and the profane. The Seurre and Savoyard plays contain an equal number of songs, but the distribution in the latter play is heavily weighted on the liturgical side, while La Vigne's production includes more popular and lyrical selections than it does specific references to liturgical hymns.

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[36] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat , 210.
[37] See Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 264, 266 and 267.
[38] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 573.
[39] Histoyre … Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 166.
[40] Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 274.
[41] Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 183, 200 and 212.
[42] Knutsen, 146.

Despite the fact that Tours' Saint Martin play survives in a lone facsimile of a

sixteenth-century edition that may not be a reliable indicator of the intended role that

music played in that production, it does retain a few other musical features.[43] When

the future saint visits the home of his sister and brother-in-law, a celebration ensues.

Barbaranne calls on minstrels:

> Menestriers auancez vous
>
> De nous faire dancer trestous
>
> Parmy la salle a haulte gamme.
>
> (Minstrels, come forward
>
> So that we might all dance
>
> Merrily around the room).[44]

This textual reference, which includes the appropriate stage direction telling

the minstrels to move into place to perform, is the only such allusion in the Tours

play. The Savoyard text includes no references at all to any musical instruments,

although they were obviously present to perform the many musical interludes called

for in that text. La Vigne, on the other hand, refers directly to minstrels some twenty

times, often reminding them that they are to play until actors are in place, as in this

example: "Pause de menestriers, cependant que Dieu s'en vient apparestre a saint

Martin en son dormant" (Minstrel interlude, to continue until God has come to

appear to Saint Martin in his sleep).[45]

Other music also inhabits the narratives of these three plays. The Seurre text

seems, once again, to have been the most sonorous: trumpets blare frequently and

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[43] Knutsen's edition of this work includes a complete description of all the musical features in the extant text (139-146).
[44] Mystère … Sainct Martin, ed. Knutsen, 162.
[45] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 209.

church bells regularly ring out "ou plus ou moins" (a little or a lot).[46] Neither sound is

reproduced textually in the Savoyard version, but in Tours trumpets do resound

several times. Another type of music, though hardly melodious, is likewise specified

in two of the three texts under discussion. In La Vigne's text the devils come raging

out of hell in a clamorous display thirteen different times throughout the

performance. In fact, the play opens with just such a sequence, as devils spurt from

the Hell mouth onto the central 'parc,' hissing and howling.[47] In other instances,

these 'pauses de tourments' also include cannons, fire and fireworks.[48] Although the

Savoyard text only mentions one such instance in which "se fera grand bruit en

enfer" (a great deal of noise will come from hell),[49] it is likely that the many other

sequences in which the devils appear were equally chaotic. The same could well

have been true for the Tours performance as well, despite the fact that the surviving

text does not substantiate that likelihood by mentioning that event.

Finally, some musical notes in these plays are difficult to qualify. The Seurre

text, for example, declares occasionally that characters should sing, as in the

funerary procession for the departed saint, but does not identify any title or lyrics;[50]

alternatively, singing or chanting is also implicit when a text calls for characters to

intone a response as part of the reenactment of a liturgical ceremony. In the St.

Martin-La-Porte production, for example, characters respond in scripted form to a

benediction being intoned by the saint.[51] Finally, it is also possible that other parts of

the spoken texts of these and other mystery plays were sung in one fashion or

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[46] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 545.
[47] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 139.
[48] See, for example, Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 368.
[49] Histoyre ... Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 149.
[50] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. Duplat, 584.
[51] Histoyre ... Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 119-120.

another, although they are not explicitly described as musical numbers. From the ironic hazing by a Fol to a devil's 'complainte' or an eloquent 'ballade' performed by a saint or a king, it is feasible that the performance act included any number of interpretative, and even improvised, renditions that have not been documented by the textual remnants that have survived the performance itself.

In fact, in analyzing the textual remnants of the three Saint Martin plays in the present study, their differences are indicative not only of diverse performance mandates but also of the unique nature of each surviving text. The Tours text, for example, preserved as a modern copy of a sixteenth-century edition, is bereft of some of the performance features retained in the other two texts. This is evident in the infrequent and inconsistent utilization of musical interludes, and in the absence of textual allusions to traditional hell noises and to instrumental music (except for the single case where minstrels play within the narrative). This deficiency would seem to subvert what must have been a fairly complex spectacle, given the number of staging stations, the sequence-switching presentation style and the many hymns that the text does contain. The Tours prologue, in carefully identifying some nineteen stations or groups of characters, points toward a detailed performance, but the text itself has apparently been edited for reading rather than for a performance mandate. Thus, while reminiscent of a performance text compiled, according to its editor, by a cleric or priest to commemorate the anniversary of Saint Martin's death,[52] the extant text retains only abbreviated directions that would have facilitated reading the narrative by followers of the saint's cult.

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[52] Knutsen, 39.

The fact that La Vigne's Saint Martin play has earned more critical attention

than the other two plays in the present study is due in part to the fact that it is among

the best documented of such performances in the late medieval era but also, no

doubt, to the lyrical style of this celebrated 'rhétoriqueur.' The extant copy of the play

is a post-production manuscript version authorized and signed by the poet himself. It

is therefore only removed from the 1496 performance by the time required to copy it

after the fact.[53] As such, and given La Vigne's attention to detail and penchant for

pageantry, the Seurre version of Martin's exemplary life is rich in performance-

specific information. This is evident in the number and variety of musical interludes,

in the numerous references to minstrels, and in the descriptive and enthusiastic

allusions to hell noises. However, despite reenacting rituals visually on stage, the

play's song choices underline its dual sponsorship by both civic and church leaders,

all of whom were named in the play's 'procès-verbal' and most of whom also played a

role in the performance itself. They acknowledge, in conventional fashion, that their

goal was to demonstrate to the common people how Martin had lived a devout and

saintly life.[54] In other words, the play would provide social cohesion to the larger

population, and, ultimately, well-earned prestige to a merchant class keen on

demonstrating its own commitment to the city's status in the region. It can be no

coincidence that the performance took place at a time when the city was feeling the

political and military pressure of the wars raging around it.[55] La Vigne's play, with half

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[53] Some critics have held that this was in fact the director's copy of the text used by La Vigne during the performance. However, textual revisions made to the surviving manuscript suggest that it was copied after the fact. See Vicki L. Hamblin, "Performing the Text: A Comparative Analysis of Three French Mystery Plays," Mainte belle oeuvre faicte: Etudes sur le théâtre médiéval offertes à Graham A. Runnalls, eds. Denis Huë, Mario Longtin, and Lynette Muir (Orleans: Paradigme, 2005) 193.
[54] Mystère de Saint Martin, ed. André Duplat, 117.
[55] Louis Petit de Julleville, Histoire du Théâtre en France (1886; Geneva: Slatkine, 1967) II: 67.

as many staging stations as the Tours version, nonetheless amplified the narrative with frequent music and the considerable presence of the city's most important personalities, into an intricate and distracting form of edifying entertainment.

The surviving manuscript of the St. Martin-La-Porte performance announces, on its title page, that, in 1565, the city chose to sponsor this play because the population had been spared from the plague "par l'intercession dudict benoict sainct Martin" (by the intercession of the so-named blessed saint Martin).[56] The manuscript copy commemorates that performance, but, as Jacques Chocheyras noted, it contains sufficient structural and copying errors to bring into question the means at hand to preserve the event for prosperity.[57] On the other hand, the text's stated intention is clearly demonstrated in the performance itself. As noted, nearly all of the production's many songs are performed by angels and its staging is restrained both in the number of staging stations required and in its use of non-liturgical forms of music or singing. Furthermore, the use of frequent musical interludes as a means of transitioning from one dramatic sequence to the next, rather than as occasions for repeated pageantry, also speaks to the simple organization of this play that was sponsored by and for the citizens of a small village in Savoy.

Each of the plays in the present study demonstrates just how relevant the performance features of late medieval French hagiographic mystery plays are to a more focused appreciation of the various sponsoring communities and of the surviving texts. One indicator of the differences among the three Saint Martin texts analyzed here has been pointed out by literary critics focused on the plays' linguistic

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[56] Histoyre ... Sainct Martin, ed. Truchet, 7.
[57] Chocheyras, 64.

features. Seurre's text contains only a very few local references, as Duplat concedes,[58] while the Savoyard text includes not only a *badin* who speaks the local dialect but numerous linguistic features which indicate that the narrative has been adapted to benefit a local audience.[59] In the Tours version, references to local monies and vocabulary also seem to imply that the compiler was working locally for an audience familiar with that region.[60] These details, when seen through the performance lens that was used to compare the role of music in these three plays, magnifies the importance of the sponsoring communities, their stated intentions and their local identities.

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[58] Duplat, « Comparaison, » 241.
[59] Duplat, « Comparaison, » 241.
[60] Knutsen, 2.