

# Carolingian Chant:

## Roman, Frankish-Roman, Frankish

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As the Carolingian Franks picked their way—figuratively and literally—among the Roman ruins, they encountered many strange and wonderful things. But it is a mistake to think that they learned about these in a systematic fashion, starting from a core of well-defined principles and procedures. Instead, they encountered these things in a state where the cultural system had disappeared. The Franks had to deal with items individually, out of context, without relationship to each other. They extrapolated from single, isolated items, combining these with other items not according to a tradition of cultural coherence but only according to Frankish imagination and resourcefulness.

Learning about the music of the Roman world involved several different—indeed disparate—matters. Closest to hand was the repertory of Christian Latin chant sung in Rome, especially by the papal choir. Then there was a corpus of theoretical writings about the music of secular Latin culture.<sup>1</sup> These theoretical writings were accessible in comprehensive summaries by Boethius (d. ca. 524) and Martianus Capella (fourth or fifth century); the musical practice, however, on which these writings were based was almost certainly no longer available to the Franks. And the Roman musical practice that they could and did learn had no direct connection to the theoretical writings. The Franks learned both the theory and the practice, and eventually made them go together, but with results that were completely new as far as the Latin West was concerned.<sup>2</sup> This same

process went on in more detailed ways in a number of different contexts and affected the ways the Franks learned and used all aspects of music—indeed, the very nature of music as they conceived it.

In this chapter I will be concerned only with the Franks' learning of the Roman chant, the chant they found sung in the city of Rome, at Mass and in the Divine Office.<sup>3</sup> The process of learning was begun in earnest under Pepin III, right after 750 and carried out under Charlemagne as a function of his political program; leadership was provided especially by Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, along with others. The activity took place first and foremost in the environment of the Carolingian homeland, the broad triangle between the Seine and the Rhine rivers.<sup>4</sup> The program involved the highest levels of episcopal and monastic organization, although the work itself devolved mainly on the monastic cantors. In contrast, the learning of theory was without either official backing or any defined goal and was completely a function of individual, isolated monastic scholars; it was slow to produce results. But the Franks worked hard at learning the Roman chant, and by 850 there was in place in the north a repertory of chant that had not been there before. The important historical question is, exactly what came from Rome? We can see precisely what was the state of things "after," because one of the steps the Franks took was to develop written records of the melodies; but we have no such records from Rome and are at a loss to say just what the Roman melodies were. Much of modern chant scholarship is devoted to reconstructing the melodies as sung in Rome.<sup>5</sup>

The situation is complicated by the fact that the Franks edited the chant they received from Rome. In fact, their editions are the only ones we have. So even when we have a chant or group of chants that we are reasonably sure came from Rome (usually on the grounds of liturgical use), there is a further question of what the chant sounded like in Rome and how much the Franks changed it. For repertorial purposes we can call a chant Roman if liturgical evidence warrants it; but in order to reflect accurately the sources in which the chant comes to us, we should have to call it Frankish-Roman. The situation is complicated even more by the fact that the Franks became very skilled at imitating Roman chant. We can tell which the imitations are, and how good they are, by various technical aspects of liturgy and documentation. Hence we can distinguish with moderate reliability among chant imported from Rome (even if edited), chant made in the land of the Franks in imitation of Roman chant, and Frankish chant developed from a Roman model but significantly modified.<sup>6</sup>

Over against those kinds of musical activity stands the development of

new, different musical styles and repertories. These are represented most clearly by the genres of hymn, trope, and sequence. In their extreme examples they are very different from Roman chant. These genres are represented—first only by small numbers of instances—in the north from around 800 on; therefore they qualify as specifically “Carolingian” musical productions.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, there are several moments in the Carolingian learning of Roman musical practice: (1) the maintenance of the chant repertory from Rome; (2) the extension of the chant repertory from Rome (especially in the Office); and (3) the development of new forms and styles by the Franks.

All these developments were, in the north, in the hands of a Frankish cantor, who was the director of music either in a monastery or at a cathedral.<sup>8</sup> His job was to maintain the repertory of chant sung at Mass and in the Office in that place. His regular duties included learning and singing the newly imported Roman chant; training and leading a choir and—in a monastery—the whole community in certain portions of the Office; teaching everyone, but especially young boys in the school, their Latin; copying, or having copied, chant books and maintaining them in the library; keeping track of the calendar, or computus. As further extensions of these activities, the cantor, if he was musically gifted and motivated, might provide new chants, either for traditional occasions or new ones (such as a new saint’s day), and either in the traditional Roman style (as the cantor understood it or modified it) or in the new Frankish style.



The first type of musical activity to be illustrated is the maintenance of the Roman repertory. (I use the term “maintenance” to avoid the term “tradition,” the application of which is problematic within the context of contemporary discussions of “oral tradition.”) The principal example of Roman chant as maintained by the Franks can well be the most elaborate kind of piece, called a *Responsorium graduale*, or Gradual. There are about 115 such chants in the Frankish-Roman repertory in a total of about 500 Frankish-Roman chants for Mass.<sup>9</sup> The Gradual “Constitues eos principes” was sung at Mass on feasts of the apostles, especially Peter, between the Epistle and Gospel.

### **Responsorium graduale, for Apostles (Roman)**

Constitues eos principes super omnem terram;  
memores erunt nominis tui, Domine.

V. Pro patribus tuis nati sunt tibi filii:  
propterea populi confitebuntur tibi.

Constitues . . . <sup>10</sup>

Con- sti- tu- es e- os prin- ci- pes su-  
per om- nem ter- ram: me- mo- res e-  
runt no- mi- nis tu- i. Do- mi- ne.  
Pro- pa- tri- bus tu- is na- ti sunt ti- bi fi- li:  
prop- te- re- a po- pu- li con- fi- te- bun- tur ti- bi.


EXAMPLE 1

This elaborate style of Roman chant is called melismatic because it occasionally sets many pitches to a single syllable, in a melisma; this is only the most obvious manifestation of a melodic effusiveness that is at the same time carefully worked out and so varied as to sound spontaneous. This style is so impressive that there does not seem to be much one can do except admire it; and that was what the Franks did. Not much new musical activity appears to have been inspired by this particular kind of Roman chant. How much they admired it, however, can be gauged by the care with which they preserved it.<sup>11</sup>

Frankish cantors learned such chants in the first place by memory from a Roman cantor. At one time memorization of the chant repertory was considered not believable; but with the realization that memorization was a standard—if not the standard—method of learning in earlier times (as well as a more accurate assessment of the extensive use of memorization by modern musicians) this no longer seems a problem. Some Carolingian scholars must have memorized thousands of lines of Virgil, and monastics memorized the Psalter as a matter of course. But then the Franks developed a system of musical notation to record all these chants, to supplement their memories and stabilize the repertory. This notation, which resulted in complete chant books in standardized format by 900, is remarkable in showing great care to record subtle nuance of performance. The notation does not, however, include much pitch content. Clearly the pitch content of these melodies is the easiest element to remember; what the notation was designed to do was to preserve not the pitch content, but rather the subtle, intricate nuance of rhythm and phrasing.<sup>12</sup>

Different systems of notation were developed in different localities, and comparison among the earliest completed chant books (a major activity of chant scholars, especially in recent years) shows on one hand an overwhelming agreement among the sources, perhaps on the order of eighty or ninety percent, and on the other hand slight but persistent variation in detail, both in pitch and nuance. Such variation has the principal effect of alerting us to the importance the scribe and cantor (often the same person) must have attached to nuance as an essential feature of the excellence of Roman chant. An illustration of the function of memorization is given by the way the melisma at the end of example 1 is notated in two earliest sources, one from Laon, the other from Saint Gall. The two notations diverge decisively at this melisma, and the notation from Laon is incomplete, which we can tell from collation and also from the use of a melodic formula for the terminal melisma.



  
 St. Gall    tu- is

  
 Laon        tu- is

It may be that neither version is wrong, that is, not "authentic"; it may be that such differences merely represent the different ways the chant was sung in two localities. Nonetheless, the cumulative effect of the nuances could make a substantial difference between local practices.

The Franks' learning of these chants was carried out by direct imitation of the model through memorization, supported by the resourceful development of a whole new method of written documentation. The result was a remarkably systematic and permanent preservation of these elaborate chants for Mass. As it turned out, the Franks composed relatively little new chant in this Roman style. The immediate significance of these Roman Mass chants was that the Franks learned them and sang them daily. The eventual significance was that these chants were the "classics" of their musical literature, providing standards of taste and excellence even though not models for new styles or structures.

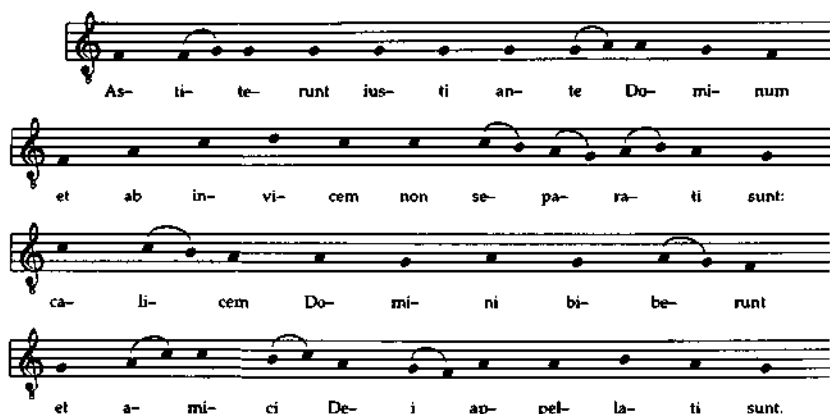


With other types of chant we find other conditions, and with the repertory of antiphons for the Divine Office we move into the second phase, that of development of the repertory past simple maintenance.<sup>17</sup> Antiphons are—generically at least—much shorter, simpler pieces used in conjunction with psalms. The antiphon "Astiterunt iusti" for Ss. John and Paul (example 2) can illustrate a Roman antiphon of moderate length.<sup>18</sup>

**Antiphon at the Magnificat, for Ss. John and Paul (26 June)  
(Roman)**

Astiterunt iusti ante dominum  
et ab invicem non separati sunt:  
calicem Domini biberunt  
et amici Dei appellati sunt.<sup>19</sup>

Deceptively simple, such antiphons conceal a wealth of very refined choices in the succession of pitches—and this is true even though this an-



EXAMPLE 2

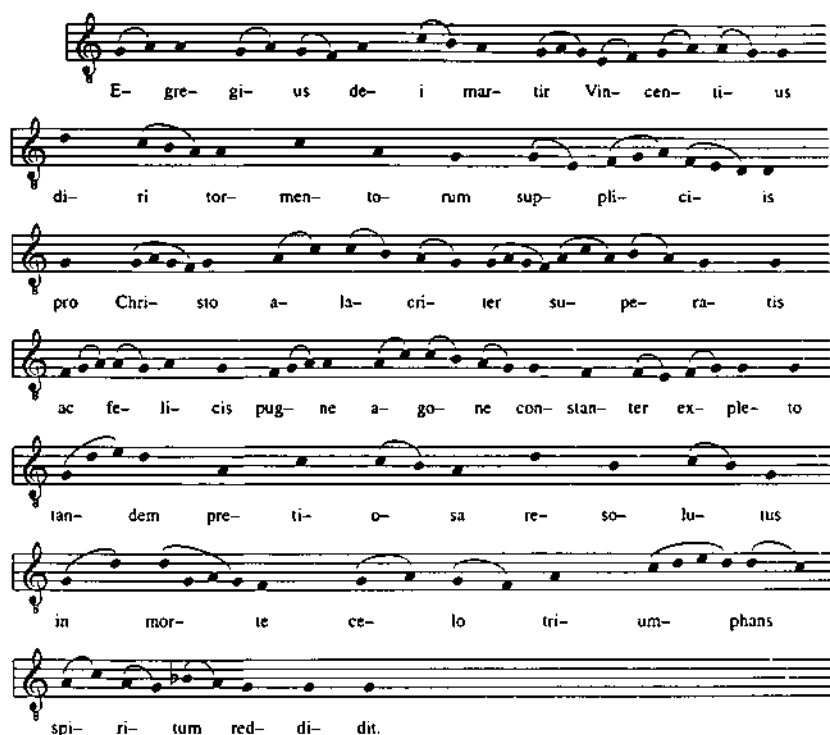
tiphon belongs to a large group of two or three hundred that share a relatively small stock of idioms. The Divine Office, unlike the Mass, offered abundant opportunity for new occasions and new chants, and the Franks enthusiastically embarked on a program of massive development, which included at least doubling the size of the antiphon repertory, from less than one thousand brought north from Rome to more than two thousand by the high Middle Ages. These repertories are the subject of current research. The antiphon "Egregius dei martir Vincentius" seems to be Frankish antiphon and has a good chance of being early enough to be Carolingian.<sup>20</sup>

**Antiphon at the Benedictus, for St. Vincent (22 January)  
(Frankish)**

Egregius dei martir Vincentius  
 diri tormentorum suppliciis  
 pro Christo alacriter superatis  
 ac felicitis pugne agone constanter expleto  
 tandem pretiosa resolutus  
 in morte celo triumphans spiritum redidit.<sup>21</sup>

This example (example 3) can represent hundreds of antiphons produced in the north, using the idioms of the Roman repertory of Office antiphons while expanding the dimensions of the typical antiphon and—in ways too intricate to discuss here—modifying and developing both the





EXAMPLE 3

idioms and the pitch context in which they appear.<sup>22</sup> In individual cases the modification is perhaps not such as to produce a noticeable difference compared to Roman antiphons; indeed, the intent of the Frankish cantor seems to have been to reproduce the style of the Roman antiphon.

The feature of the Roman chant that I feel the Franks most admired and most carefully re-created was the perpetual variety in the melodic and rhythmic flow at the lowest level, the level of single syllables and the pitches that went with them. Roman antiphon style avoided a series of two-note groups over successive syllables, for example, or a series of three-note groups; such groups were usually alternated with each other and with single notes to produce a varied, seemingly casual succession. Similarly with melodic direction: continuous ascents or descents were avoided, and instead these simple melodies turned and twisted up and down in unpredictable ways. The Roman cantors clearly had word accents in mind but treated them in a bewildering variety of ways. Modern attempts to find system in all of this have not, I feel, been convincing and, more impor-

tant, seem to miss the musical point, which is the variety in succession.<sup>23</sup> The Franks, in any case, admired this variety—so much so that even though they systematized and regularized many other aspects of music, the variety persisted until the end of the Middle Ages. The style itself, as used by the Romans, is peculiarly analogous to and appropriate for prose texts (as from the Latin Psalter); but the Franks used it even for verse texts, as we shall see.

There was, however, a difference between the way a Frankish cantor used this style and the way it had been used by the Romans—a difference I feel reflects a basic attitude of the Franks toward the antiquity they were assimilating. Eventually, by the end of the Middle Ages, this resulted in a very different style of chant; but even during the ninth century such an effect may be perceptible. While the Frankish cantor made full use of families of Roman idioms in composing new chants, he did not necessarily use the Roman melody types—that is, he did not necessarily follow exactly a Roman melody. In many antiphons he tended to move in Roman style freely throughout an appropriate pitch set, filling it systematically with movement up and down. The resulting melodic movement had something abstract about it—going through the precise Roman idiom, it seemed detached from specific Roman melodies. While the end result has a weakened relationship to Roman melodic style, it greatly strengthened the pitch set as it occupied the interval of a fifth or an octave—and this led directly to the kinds of pitch sets and melodies characteristic of European music for the next several centuries.<sup>24</sup>

In connection with the melismatic chants for Mass (as in example 1), we saw the kind of elaborate notation the Franks developed to assist the maintenance of that repertory. Such notation was less important for the large and growing repertory of antiphons; but for this repertory the Franks developed another system, that of modal classification. To summarize an extensive topic as briefly as possible, an antiphon was sung before and after (sometimes also within) a psalm as a frame; the psalm was sung to a “psalm tone” or simple formula, which had to be compatible in its selection of pitches and with the melody of the antiphon.

All of this came from Roman practice, but what did not come north with the Roman chant was any systematic way of insuring tonal compatibility. The Frankish cantors early on developed such a system, drawing, apparently, upon a Byzantine model (concerning which we have no knowledge that can be documented earlier than the Franks themselves). First, the Franks stabilized the psalm tones themselves into a set of eight standard ones; then they devised ways of classifying antiphons into eight

classes so as to be directly matched up with the eight psalm tones. This development took place some time between 750 and 850. The documentation after 850 gives abundant evidence that the working out of the system involved much resourcefulness and individual—sometimes eccentric—solutions; but the end result was clear and orderly and was one of the first manifestations of an indigenous Western theory of music. It is also a manifestation of what seems an overriding need on the part of the Franks to learn something by systematizing it, a need that is surely one of our main concerns here.<sup>25</sup>

Once having developed a system, the Franks seem to have had a consequent need—less evident, perhaps—to use it to create something new. This happened, at any rate, with the modal classification of antiphons. In order to explain the result, I need to describe briefly the plan of the Roman Night Office. On feasts and saints' days the Night Office consisted of a succession of three psalms, each with its antiphon, then three lessons, each followed by a responsory; all of this was repeated three times, each time with different material. So in the Night Office as a whole, for any given feast or saint's office, there were nine antiphons (and also nine responsories, but these are not our concern here). In Roman practice there was no apparent plan to the use of antiphon melodies and psalm tones in the Night Office. On some occasions a single antiphon melody might have been used for many of the antiphon texts; on other occasions there might have been more variety.

Some time during the ninth century the Frankish cantors had the idea of applying the newly forged modal classification directly to the production of new antiphons for new Offices. They put the first antiphon in the first class or mode, the second antiphon in the second mode, and so on throughout the Night Office. At the eighth antiphon, of course, they ran out of modes, and the most frequent solution (but not the only one) was to begin again with mode one for the ninth antiphon. Such a "numerical" set of antiphons is ascribed to Hucbald (ca. 850–930), the Frankish cantor best known to us. The same principle was extended over the whole Office, that is, a single twenty-four hour cycle of services, by Bishop Stephen of Liège in three Offices he composed in the years around 900.<sup>26</sup> This method of composing eventually became very popular, resulting in hundreds of numerical Offices by the end of the Middle Ages. Why the Frankish cantors did this and what the musical result was are subjects too far-reaching to go into here; but the phenomenon surely shows the Franks making their pedagogical systems bear fruit in musical practice.

In example 4 the Frankish chant is a little more clearly distinct from its

Al - le - lu - ia.

Chri - stus re - sur -

gens ex mor -

tu - is, tam -

non mo - ri - tur: mors

il - li ul - tra -

non do - mi - na -

bi - tur.

EXAMPLE 4

Roman model than in the case of the two antiphons in examples 2 and 3—perhaps not on first hearing, but after a more extended acquaintance the differences would emerge.<sup>27</sup> Of the proper chants for Mass in the Roman repertory (Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, Offertory, Communion), the Alleluia was the least numerous, and perhaps for that reason was the most cultivated by the Franks; as I mentioned, they scarcely added to the other Mass genres at all. A scholarly edition of the earlier Alleluia melodies runs to some four hundred items, of which many if not most are Frankish.<sup>28</sup> These Alleluias were used regularly at Mass and so appear to the casual modern observer to be part of the Roman repertory. In this case the Frankish cantors followed the Roman musical format of the Alleluia, and only a study of the inner workings of the melodies reveals the differences from the Roman style. Example 4 shows the Alleluia for the Fourth Sunday after Easter—by consensus of specialists it is Frankish not Roman—and by the happy instance of a datable document we are assured that it existed by the second quarter of the ninth century, almost within Charlemagne's lifetime.<sup>29</sup>

#### **Alleluia, for Paschaltide (Frankish)**

Alleluia. V. Christus resurgens ex mortuis, iam non moritur:  
mors illi ultra non dominabitur. Alleluia.<sup>30</sup>

Frankish features to be studied here include the systematic use of the melodic material on the word "alleluia" in the verse "Christus resurgens," with both literal repetition and motific extension; the inner structure of the mighty melisma on "mors"; and the very firm way the whole melody sits in its framework of pitches—so firmly that the modern observer is apt to exclaim, "True Dorian!" But in fact the melody makes little if any use of the idioms found in Roman Graduals in this mode, and there seems to be no Roman Alleluia model. The conclusion I draw from this and many other such cases is that our modern understanding of "true Dorian," and more generally of "true Gregorian," is one based largely on the Frankish development.



The examples so far have been taken from a stylistic continuum that leads from Roman to Frankish chant. As long as we look at types of chant cultivated by the Romans, the differentiation of the Frankish chants depends on stylistic considerations. All of the following examples, however, in-

volve types of chant not cultivated by Romans, as far as we can tell, and the differentiation is in the first place one of documentation and repertory. Here, the stylistic differentiation may at first be slight but becomes increasingly obvious.

The hymn of praise, "Gloria in excelsis," was sung at Mass by the Romans in the eighth century, but we cannot be sure what melodies were used; all the melodies we have are from Frankish documents. And these melodies do not appear in the Frankish documents that purport to represent the Roman repertory, documents that contain the Roman proper chants for the Mass. Repertorial studies and collation present as "Gloria A" the melody that seems to be the earliest Frankish one we have for this text; it would be a Frankish supplement to the Roman chants to be sung at Mass. The melody might be "Gallican," that is, northern and pre-Carolingian; more likely it is early Carolingian.<sup>31</sup> The beginning of the text includes the quotation from Luke's Gospel and four acclamations.

#### Gloria in excelsis (Frankish)

Gloria in excelsis deo: et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te.

Benedicimus te.

Adoramus te.

Glorificamus te. (etc.)

This is one of the most elaborate, most melismatic, settings of the text we have, among the fifty or so preserved in medieval sources.<sup>32</sup> It seems to be the principal melody the Carolingians used for festal occasions, to replace whatever very simple, congregational recitations of the text they might have got from Roman practice. (Most of the melodies in modern chant books are of demonstrably northern origin, some late in the Middle Ages.)

The text of the "Gloria in excelsis" as used in Christian worship goes back to the fourth or fifth century, but its position at Mass was not stabilized until later—the sixth or seventh century in the West.<sup>33</sup> The text is of a type that can be called stichic, consisting of *stichs*, or one-line elements that are combined in an aggregate. The sources that preserve the melody of example 5 also preserve further stichs of Carolingian origin to be added *ad libitum* to the Gloria. The Carolingian term *trope*, which means essentially the same thing as the term *versus* (verse) in the sense of "stich," can have the specific meaning here of a stich added after the base text has been

Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - - - o

Et in ter - - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - nae

vo - lun - ta - tis.

Lau - da - mus te.

Be - ne - di - ci - mus te.

A - do - ra - mus te.

Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te.

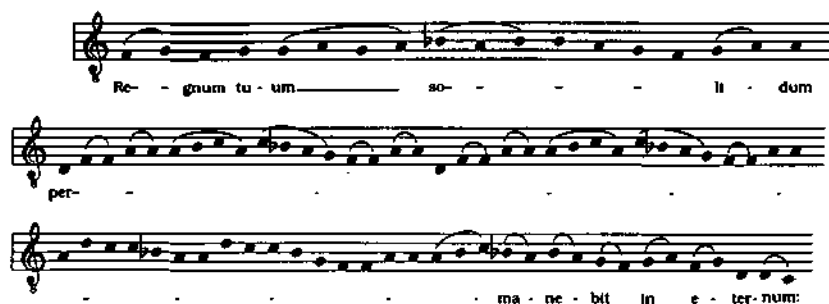
The musical score consists of seven staves of music in a single melodic line. Each staff contains a series of notes with various rhythmic values (minims, crotchets, quavers) and rests. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating that a single note or group of notes spans multiple syllables or words. The lyrics are: "Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis de - - - o", "Et in ter - - ra pax ho - mi - ni - bus bo - nae", "vo - lun - ta - tis.", "Lau - da - mus te.", "Be - ne - di - ci - mus te.", "A - do - ra - mus te.", and "Glo - ri - fi - ca - mus te.".

## EXAMPLE 5

canonized. The point is, there is nothing new about stichic combination; it is a very old and widespread habit, seemingly indigenous to ritual song in any form. Many of the Psalms, in particular, can be understood as stichic aggregates, and the Roman practice of combining psalms with antiphons can be understood as an extension of stichic practice.<sup>34</sup> The Carolingians' use of tropes goes hand in hand with their concern to use base texts already canonized, or to canonize such texts themselves. Here is a favorite stich or trope added to the end of the Gloria, just before "Cum sancto spiritu . . ."

### Trope to the end of Gloria (Frankish)

Regnum tuum solidum per——manebit in eternum.<sup>35</sup>



EXAMPLE 6

The trope in example 6 includes a Frankish melisma, with the same kind of internal melodic repetition as in "Alleluia Christus resurgens." This melisma could also be underlaid with words, one syllable per note, and we refer to that phenomenon by the Carolingian term *prosula*, although none of these terms was used by the Carolingians as systematically as by us.

Much more elaborate sets of tropes were provided for the "Gloria in excelsis," and these represent another new category of chant developed by the Franks. Example 7 shows a set of four lines beginning "Laus tua"; these are to be inserted line by line before the first four acclamations in the Gloria text, as indicated. Trope and base text could be sung in alternation between different singers or groups of singers—the practice referred to in Greek by *antiphona*, in Latin by *alternis vicibus*, or some similar expression.

### Tropes to the beginning of Gloria in excelsis (Frankish)

Laus tua deus resonet coram te rex: LAUDAMUS TE

Qui venisti propter nos rex angelorum deus: BENEDICIMUS TE

In sede maiestatis tuae: ADORAMUS TE

Gloriosus es rex Israel in throno patris tui: GLORIFICAMUS TE

(etc.)<sup>36</sup>

This is only the beginning of this set of tropes; it continues to the end of the Gloria, approximately doubling its length. Like a few of the other early sets, this one is moderately unstable: lines can be used separately, or other lines can be substituted. Soon the sets became more stabilized, taking on the aspect of a fixed composition. Some sets, like this one, are in prose, but some are in verse, and for the Carolingians this often involved



1. Laus tu- a de- us re- so- net co- ram te- rex: LAUDAMUS TE

2. Qui ve- - - - ni- sti pro- pter nos rex an- ge- lo- rum de- us: BENEDICIMUS TE

3. In se- de- - - - ma- ie- sta- tis tu- ae: ADORAMUS TE

4. Glo- ri- o- sus es rex Is- ra- el in thro- no pa- tris tu- i: GLORIFICAMUS TE

EXAMPLE 7

imitations of classical verse models in quantitative meters—another antiquity, represented by Virgil and Horace, as well as other Latin poets. What is fascinating in the musical application of this antiquity is to see it peacefully coexisting with other unrelated antiquities or with novelties. Example 8 shows a fixed set of tropes by Hucbald, written around 900, in dactylic hexameters.<sup>37</sup>

### Tropes for the "Gloria in excelsis," by Hucbald (ca. 900)

Quem vere pia laus quem solum condecet hymnus:

LAUDAMUS TE

Cuncta super quia tu deus es benedictus in evum:

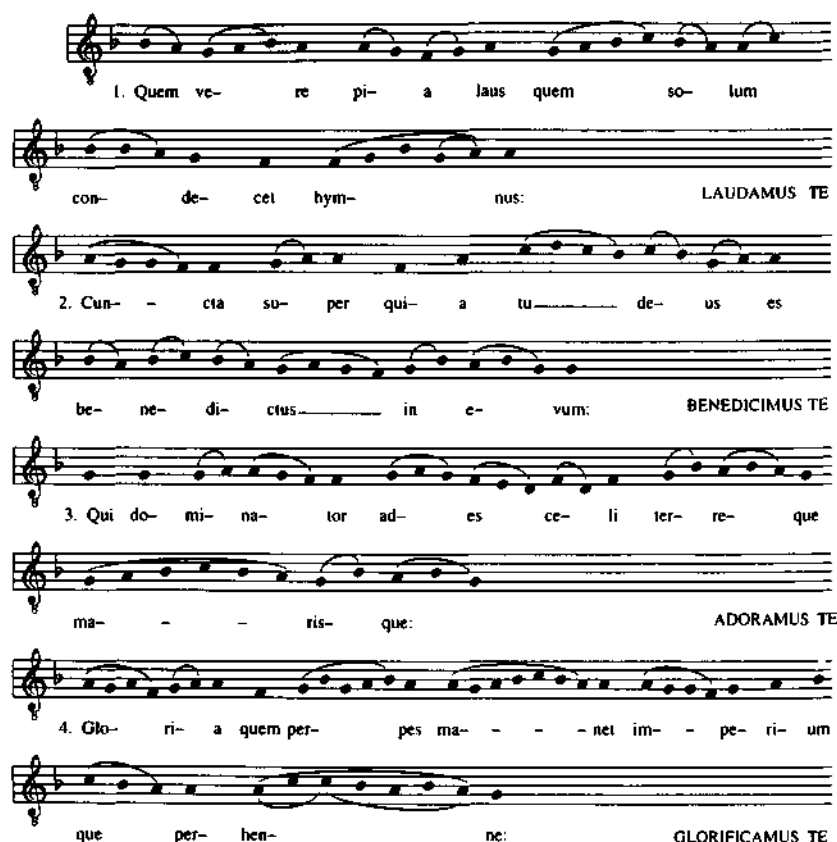
BENEDICIMUS TE

Qui dominator ades celi terreque marisque:

ADORAMUS TE

Gloria quem perpes manet imperiumque perhenne:

GLORIFICAMUS TE (etc.)<sup>38</sup>



1. Quem ve- re pi- a laus quem so- lum  
con- de- cel hym- nus: LAUDAMUS TE

2. Cun- - cta su- per qui- a tu de- us es  
be- ne- di- ctus in e- vum: BENEDICIMUS TE

3. Qui do- mi- na- tor ad- es ce- li ter- re- que  
ma- - - ris- que: ADORAMUS TE

4. Glo- ri- a quem per- pes ma- - - - net im- - pe- ri- um  
que per- hen- ne: GLORIFICAMUS TE

EXAMPLE 8

The Carolingians composed thousands of hexameters and frequently set them to chant, especially as tropes. They used the Roman antiphon style as they had learned it in connection with prose texts; they set the hexameter syllable by syllable, as if it were prose, with single notes or groups of notes in the free variety of the Roman style, observing only the caesura and the number of syllables in each hexameter verse. For these purposes they simply ignored the classical quantities. The syllable count, already identified by the Venerable Bede as the "number of syllables," became the single most important factor—and often the only one—taken into consideration in verse, especially as it related to musical setting. Throughout the trope repertory (which eventually became large) the favored style of musical composition was that of the antiphons the Franks

provided for the Office, such as in example 3, "Egregius dei martir Vincen-tius." Much more numerous than Gloria tropes were tropes for the Gregorian Introit; these were developed into large repertories in the tenth century, recorded in chant books in the order of the liturgical calendar on the model of the Gregorian chant books.

The Frankish interest in verse found a much more productive category in the hymn, and for this they turned to yet another antiquity, the hymns of Ambrose, bishop of Milan (d. 397). Ambrose had developed a type of stanza for hymns, with a fixed number of syllables and verses; he provided a small number of texts in this form.<sup>39</sup> They found their way into the Benedictine Office, but not into the Office as sung in Rome, since the Romans had an abiding mistrust of text other than those from canonical Scripture.<sup>40</sup>

The rest of the world, however, sang and composed new texts, and those by Ambrose provided what became the most popular model. Other models were provided by Prudentius (348–413) and Venantius Fortunatus (d. after 600).<sup>41</sup> All of these were enthusiastically taken up by the Franks, resulting in something like ten thousand items by the end of the Middle Ages (as collected in the *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*). I believe this to be an extremely important development; medieval texts set to music are—except for the Gregorian—largely in verse (as are texts set to music since the Middle Ages); and much of it is in stanzaic form. The Ambrosian type of hymn represents an extensive corpus of verse in stanzaic form set to music centuries before the later medieval repertories of song; it precedes those later repertories diachronically and, I believe, is their morphological basis.

Even though the text "Veni creator" is no longer attributed to Hrabanus Maurus, it can still be dated to the ninth century. We cannot be sure the melody is Carolingian, but it may fairly represent the style first used by the Franks for hymns.<sup>42</sup> This is, again, the melodic style of their Office antiphons. The Ambrosian stanza consists of four lines of eight syllables each, and the lines are grouped two plus two; the caesura at the end of the second line is almost always observed, while the first and third lines may run on. The melodic settings reflect this systematically but set individual syllables with the same variety of single notes and groups of two or three notes observed in antiphon style. There the rhythmic variety coexisted easily with the prose of the texts, while with the exact and regular syllable count of hymns it seems anomalous. It may be that in their rendition they equalized the duration of each syllable, singing two or three notes in the time of one as needed. For Frankish purposes the original quantitative meter—iambic dimeter—was again ignored.

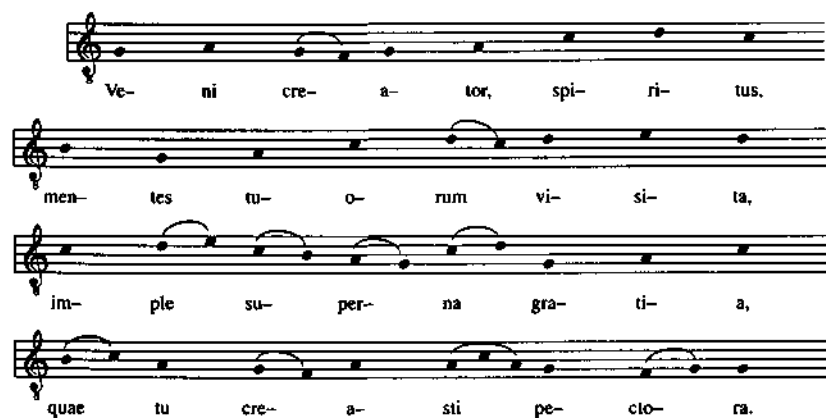
# Hymn (Frankish)

Veni creator spiritus, mentes tuorum visita,  
imple superna gratia, quae tu creasti pectora.

Qui diceris Paraclitus, altissimi donum dei,  
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas, et spiritalis unctio.  
(etc.)<sup>43</sup>

Example 9 includes the first two stanzas; Ambrose's own hymns had eight stanzas. Later medieval hymns could have up to twenty or thirty stanzas. Other stanzas favored by the Carolingians were the sapphic, on the model of Horace and used especially for saints' offices; and the "Pange lingua" model of Fortunatus.<sup>44</sup>

Of all the new types of chant discussed here, the Carolingian sequence illustrates best the ambitions and achievements of the Frankish cantors.<sup>45</sup> In music as well as words it is clearly distinct from anything that came north from Rome. It often assumes large dimensions and, through extensive pitch range and brilliant use of the upper register, can present an impressive melodic display. Individual sequences show strong tendencies toward carefully worked out plans and details, resulting in fully integrated, independent compositions. The melodic style is forceful and direct—and unmistakably different from Mass chants of the Frankish-Roman "Gregorian" archetype. And as a sign of the success of the sequence and the importance the Franks attached to it, they inserted the sequence into the liturgy of the Mass, right after the most important Gregorian chants,



EXAMPLE 9

the Gradual and Alleluia; the Alleluia, as we saw, was the only Mass proper extensively cultivated by the Franks.

The Carolingian sequence also illustrates well the Frankish tendency to appropriate single artistic elements of words and melody from wherever, then to combine them to produce new styles and forms. Antecedents can be found for almost all elements of the ninth-century sequence, but the resulting combination seems new as of around 850; at any rate, no well-documented example has come to light from an earlier date.

The words of a sequence are in prose, not verse—hence the technical term *prosa* regularly used in the Middle Ages. It is not the prose of the Psalter nor of the Gospel narrative (used frequently for the larger antiphons, Frankish as well as Roman, of the Office). Rather, it is the prose of ceremonial and festal commemoration, often acclamatory, used by the Franks for a number of purposes, such as (for instance) their new antiphons for saints. This kind of prose tends to be highly structured; indeed, the prose style of sequences has long been identified with so-called art prose, derived by the Carolingians from the elaborate style of the later Roman empire.<sup>46</sup>

So, being in prose, the lines of a sequence are frequently much longer than the nominal maximum of sixteen syllables for a line of verse. Nevertheless the lines of an early sequence are usually arranged in pairs, like couplets, based on the number of syllables. Each line of a pair has the same number of syllables so each can be sung to the same melody; then the next pair has a different number of syllables and is sung to a different melody. The arrangement of the whole sequence is progressive and open-ended, moving through a succession of couplets of varying length, each with its own phrase of melody. The words, then, do not lack structure, but only the systematically regular repetition of verse; similarly the melody does not lack structure, only the stanzaic repetition of an Ambrosian hymn melody. In the case of both words and melody, antecedents for the structures can be found, but they are not combined and integrated with each other in the imposing dimensions of the early Carolingian sequence.

The melodies make little or no use of the ornamental antiphon style the Franks used for Office antiphons and for tropes; rather, the sequence melodies are set with one note per syllable in a lean, highly directed style. There is nothing new about "syllabic" setting of text (it is used extensively, for instance, in the psalmody of the Office), but there are no models for syllabic settings with melodies as wide-ranging and highly inflected as the early sequences. These do seem to represent a new kind of music on the Carolingian scene.

The sequence in example 10 is not one of those for which Notker the Poet of Saint Gall provided a text, and hence is not one of those discussed in my study of the early medieval sequence.<sup>47</sup> It is nonetheless a ninth-century sequence and Carolingian, and Wolfram von den Steinen suggested for it a place of honor among the first generation sequences.<sup>48</sup>

### Sequence (Prose) (Frankish)

1. Nostra tuba
- 2a. nunc tua clementia Christe regatur iam iamque pia.  
b. Exaudi precamina te laudantia mente devota.
- 3a. Ita nam laus est tibi grata vox si quod nostra sonat conscientia  
canat.  
b. Quod ut omnibus praeveniat indefesse divina precentur auxilia.
- 4a. Nam quicumque digne merentur ea  
b. Omnia semper ei salubria;
- 5a. Quibus sine humana cogitata non utilia.  
b. Relinquentes igitur itinera nimium lata,
- 6a. Angustam viam gradiamur que nos patriam ducat ad almam,  
b. Haec enim sacra vestigia redemptori pio placita.
7. Qui nostra tempora pie disponat semper nosque protegat;
8. Canticaque ei nostra placeant per cuncta seculorum secula.<sup>49</sup>

A previous example (example 5) was a setting of "Gloria in excelsis," one of the chants at Mass whose text does not change from one occasion to the next. Late medieval and modern usage groups such chants together under the name "Ordinary of the Mass"; but in the ninth century the Franks were providing special melodies for such texts one by one, with no consideration of them as a group. By the end of the ninth century there might have been half a dozen festal settings of "Gloria" and perhaps the same number of settings of "Kyrie eleison," to be sung just before "Gloria" at the start of Mass.<sup>50</sup> The Kyrie in example 11 is perhaps one of the earliest of the Frankish settings and certainly the most elaborate and brilliant of the early ones.<sup>51</sup>

Carolingian settings of the Kyrie to be sung at Mass included relatively extensive Latin acclamations to expand and enhance the bare Greek expressions. These come in sets of nine, because simultaneously the Franks stabilized the Kyrie into thrice "Kyrie eleison," thrice "Christe eleison," and again thrice "Kyrie eleison." The language of the Latin acclamations is prose—the kind of prose found in sequences—and sometimes these



Kyries were called *prosa*e for that reason. But the language seems closer to verse, perhaps because the lines tend to be shorter than those of the sequence and because the thrice three grouping of lines has something of the regularity of verse forms. At any rate, such Kyries were sometimes called *versus*. The melodic settings show the same syllabic style found in the sequence and sometimes the same tendency to rise toward a climax at the end, with steadily expanding, and eventually subdivided, phrases.

1. Ti- bi Chri- ste sup- pli- ces ex- o- ra- mus  
cun- cti- po- tens, ut no- stri di- gne- ris e- lei- son.

2. Ti- bi laus de- cet cum tri- pu- di- o iu- gi- ter  
at- que ti- bi pe- ti- mus do- na et e- lei- son.

3. O bo- ne Rex qui su- per a- stra se- des et  
Do- mi- ne qui cun- cia gu- ber- nas e- lei- son.

4. Tu- a de- vo- ta plebs im- plo- rat iu- gi- ter  
ut il- li di- gne- ris e- lei- son.

5. Qui ca- nunt an- te te pre- ci- bus ad- nu- e  
et tu no- bis sem- per e- lei- son.



6. O the- os a- gi- e sal- va vi- vi- fi- ca  
re- dem- ptor no- ster e- lei- son.

7. Cla- mat in- ces- san- ter nunc quo- que con- ci- o et di- cit e- lei- son.

8. Mi- se- re- re fi- li De- i vi- vi no- bis tu e- lei- son.

9. In ex- cel- sis De- o ma- gna sit glo- ri- a e- ter- no Pa- tri  
Qui nos nu- mi- ne gu- ber- nat pro- pri- o re- si- dens  
in ar- ce su- per- na  
Di- ca- mus in- ces- san- ter om- nes u- na vo- ce e- lei- son.

## EXAMPLE 11 continued

## Kyrie eleison (Frankish)

1. Tibi Christe supplices exoramus cunctipotens, ut nostri digneris eleison.
2. Tibi laus decet cum tripudio iugiter atque tibi petimus dona eleison.
3. O bone Rex qui super astra sedes et Domine qui cuncta gubernas eleison.
4. Tua devota plebs implorat iugiter ut illi digneris eleison.
5. Qui canunt ante te precibus adnue et tu nobis semper eleison.
6. O theos agie salva vivifica redemptor noster eleison.
7. Clamat incessanter nunc quoque concio et dicit eleison.
8. Miserere fili Dei vivi nobis tu eleison.

9. In excelsis Deo magna sit gloria eterno Patri,  
 Qui nos numine gubernat proprio residens in arce superna  
 Dicamus incessanter omnes una voce eleison.<sup>52</sup>

Example 1, the Roman Gradual, while no less impressive than this Kyrie, was a much less obvious, perhaps more sophisticated piece of music. As I tried to suggest, the Franks were in intimate contact with the Roman art of singing, were responsible for preserving it for us, and indeed may have had much to do with the final edited form in which it comes to us. My examples have been selected to show the Frankish cantors moving, in a few short decades, from learning that Roman art, passing through imitation and subtle modification, to the development of new styles and forms. This development surely is a demonstration of education bearing fruit in experience.

## Notes

1. See the survey of sources in Nancy Phillips, "Classical and Late Latin Sources for Ninth-Century Treatises on Music."
2. General discussions in Joseph Smits van Waesberghe, *Musikerziehung: Lehre und Theorie der Musik im Mittelalter*; and Lawrence A. Gushee, "Questions of Genre in Medieval Treatises on Music."
3. Introduction to these repertories, with tools and material, in Richard L. Crocker, "Liturgical Materials of Roman Chant"; see also David Hiley, "Recent Research on the Origins of Western Chant"; and Richard Pfaff, *Medieval Latin Liturgy: A Select Bibliography*. The standard reference work is now Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook*.
4. See the account in Bruno Stäblein, "Einführung"; see also Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789-895*.
5. See Helmut Huckle, "Karolingische Renaissance und gregorianische Gesang"; Huckle, "Gregorianische Fragen"; Kenneth Levy, "Charlemagne's Archetype of Gregorian Chant"; Levy, "On Gregorian Orality"; David Hughes, "Evidence for the Traditional View of the Transmission of Gregorian Chant"; Leo Treitler, Levy, and Hughes, "Communications"; Crocker, "Liturgical Materials of Roman Chant"; Hiley, "Recent Research on the Origins of Western Chant"; James McKinnon, "Christian Antiquity"; McKinnon, "Emergence of Gregorian Chant in the Carolingian Era"; and Peter Jeffrey, *Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures: Ethnomusicology in the Study of Gregorian Chant*.
6. Exploration in connection with antiphons in Crocker, "Matins Antiphons at St. Denis."
7. Survey in Crocker, "Medieval Chant."
8. Introduction in Margot E. Fassler, "The Office of Cantor in Early Western Monastic Rules and Customaries: A Preliminary Investigation."

9. A synoptic display of the words of the chants in the eighth- and ninth-century Frankish-Roman repertory is in René Jean Hesbert, *Antiphonale missarum sextuplex*. A modern edition of words and melodies is in *Graduale Triplex, seu Graduale Romanum Pauli PP.VI cara recognitum et rhythmicis signis a Solesmensibus monachis ornatum, Neumis Laudunensibus (Cod. 239) et Sangallensibus (Codicum San Gallensis 359 et Einsidlensis 121) nunc auctum* (Solesmes, 1979) (cited hereafter as *Graduale Triplex*), a Roman Catholic Gregorian chant book. Discussion of the repertory of Gradual responsories is in Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, pp. 344–63; and Crocker, "Chants of the Roman Mass."
10. Hesbert, *Antiphonale missarum sextuplex*, Mass formulary 122.
11. *Graduale triplex*, p. 426.
12. See Hiley, "Recent Research on the Origins of Western Chant"; Solange Corbin, *Die Neumen*; Eugene Cardine, *Gregorian Semiology*; Treitler, "The Early History of Music Writing in the West"; Treitler, "Reading and Singing: On the Genesis of Occidental Music-Writing"; Johann B. Göschl, "Der gegenwärtige Stand der semiologischen Forschung"; and Levy, "On the Origin of the Neumes." The best summary discussion is in Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, chap. 4.
13. *Graduale triplex*, p. 426; Saint Gall MS 359 in *Cantatorium (IXe siècle): No. 359 de la Bibliothèque de Saint-Gall*, Paléographie musicale, 2nd ser., 2 (Tournai, 1924), p. 103 of the fasc. = p. 123 of the manuscript; Laon MS 239 in *Antiphonale missarum Sancti Gregorii (IXe–X siècle): Codex 239 de la Bibliothèque de Laon*, Paléographie musicale 10 (Tournai, 1909), p. 135 of the fasc. = fol. 68 of the manuscript. The abbreviation in the Laon manuscript is expanded using RG Convertere, at "tuos"; *Graduale triplex*, p. 295 = Laon, p. 151.
14. As cited in n. 13, above.
15. As cited in n. 13, above.
16. As cited in n. 13, above.
17. See Roger Reynolds, "Divine Office," for an outline of the Divine Office. An introduction to the chant of the Office can be found in Crocker, "Chants of the Roman Office." Basic inventories and catalogues of chants can be found in Hesbert, *Corpus antiphonalium officii*.
18. *Antiphonale of Saint-Denis*, ca. 1140–50: Paris, B.N., lat. MS 17296, fol. 174.
19. Hesbert, *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, vol. 2, Office formulary no. 100; vol. 3, no. 1505.
20. See, in general, Huckle, "Musikalische Formen der Officiumsantiphonen"; Michel Huglo, "Antiphon"; and Crocker, "Matins Antiphons at St. Denis."
21. Hesbert, *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, vol. 2, Office formulary no. 46; vol. 3, no. 2618.
22. *Antiphonale of Saint-Denis*: Paris, B.N., lat. 17296, fol. 65.
23. The best summary of the problem of the relationship of words and melody is John Stevens, *Words and Music: Song, Narrative, Dance, and Drama, 1050–1350*.
24. Compare the observations in Jeremy Yudkin, *Music in Medieval Europe*, p. 204.

25. General discussions in Harold Powers, "Mode"; Charles Atkinson, "The Parapteres: *Notbi* or Not?"; Terence Bailey, "Accented and Cursive Cadences in Gregorian Psalmody"; Michel Huglo, *Les Tonaires: Inventaire, analyse, comparaison*; Crocker, "Chants of the Roman Office," pp. 165-69; and Crocker, "Medieval Chant," pp. 278-83.
26. Antoine Auda, *L'Ecole musicale liégeoise au Xe siècle: Etienne de Liège*; and Crocker, "Matins Antiphons at St. Denis," p. 445.
27. *Graduale Triplex*, p. 226.
28. Karlheinz Schlager, *Alleluia-Melodien I (bis 1000)*; also Schlager, *Thematischer Katalog der ältesten Alleluia-Melodien aus Handschriften des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts*; and Schlager, "Alleluia I: Latin Rite."
29. Smits van Waesberghe, "Zur ursprünglichen Vortragsweise der Prosulen, Sequenzen, und Organa" (with facsimile); and Smits van Waesberghe, "Notation" (facsimile).
30. Not in Hesbert, *Antiphonale missarum sextuplex*.
31. Bruno Stäblein, "Gloria in excelsis Deo"; Crocker, "Gloria in excelsis"; Crocker, "Medieval Chant," p. 230; Detlov Bosse, *Untersuchungen einstimmiger mittelalterlicher Melodien zum Gloria in excelsis*; but better in Klaus Rönna, *Die Tropen zum Gloria in excelsis Deo*, p. 206; Paul Evans, *The Early Trope Repertory of Saint Martial de Limoges*, p. 254; and Ruth Steiner, "Trope (i) 3: Introit Tropes."
32. Rönna, *Die Tropen zum Gloria in excelsis Deo*, p. 206; Evans, *The Early Trope Repertory of Saint Martial de Limoges*, pp. 254ff.
33. Klaus Gamber, "Die Textgestalt des Gloria in excelsis."
34. See Crocker, "Medieval Chant," pp. 246ff, 264ff. The standard edition of trope texts is now *Corpus troporum*, ed. R. Jonsson et al., vol. 1-, *Studia Latina Stockholmiensia* (Stockholm, 1975-). Melodies for Introit tropes can be found in Günter Weiss, *Introitus-Tropen*, *Monumenta Musica Medii Aevi* 3 (Kassel, 1970).
35. Rönna, *Die Tropen zum Gloria in excelsis Deo*, pp. 179-87.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 211ff.
37. Rembert Weakland, "Hucbald as Musician and Theorist"; Weakland, "The Compositions of Hucbald"; and Crocker, "Hucbald." Musical notation of example 8: Rönna, *Die Tropen zum Gloria in excelsis Deo*, pp. 159, 240.
38. Rönna, *Die Tropen zum Gloria in excelsis Deo*, p. 152.
39. Texts in Guido Maria Dreves, *Lateinische Hymnendichter des Mittelalters*, pp. 10-21.
40. See summaries in Steiner, "Hymn"; H. Gneuss, *Hymnar und Hymnen im englischen Mittelalter*; and Joseph Szövérfy, *Die Annalen der lateinischen Hymnendichtung: Ein Handbuch*, vol. 1: *Die lateinischen Hymnen bis zum Ende des XI. Jahrhunderts*.
41. Texts in Dreves, *Lateinische Hymnendichter des Mittelalters*, pp. 22-46, 70-88.
42. Stäblein, *Hymnen I: Die mittelalterlichen Hymnenmelodien des Abendlandes*, is the first and only comprehensive scholarly edition of melodies for medieval hymns.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 260, from the "Hymnar von Kempten," Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS Rh 83 (ca. 1000).

44. Text in Dreves, *Lateinische Hymnendichter des Mittelalters*, p. 71.
45. General discussion in Crocker, "The Sequence"; and Crocker, *The Early Medieval Sequence*.
46. Originally discussed by Eduard Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa vom VI. Jahrhundert vor Christus bis in die Zeit der Renaissance*.
47. Crocker, *The Early Medieval Sequence*.
48. Wolfram von den Steinen, "Die Anfänge der Sequenzendichtung," 41:21-22, 46-48.
49. Crocker, "The Sequence," p. 279.
50. The difficult early history of "Kyrie eleison" is reviewed by John Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, pp. 242-47.
51. Summaries of Frankish melodies of "Kyrie eleison" in Crocker, "Kyrie eleison"; and Crocker, "Medieval Chant," pp. 271-78. Medieval melodies are catalogued in Margareta Landwehr-Melnicki, *Das einstimmige Kyrie des lateinischen Mittelalters*; a study of an early repertory is in David Bjork, "The Kyrie Repertory in Aquitanian Manuscripts of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries."
52. Landwehr-Melnicki, *Das einstimmige Kyrie des lateinischen Mittelalters*, no. 55; Bjork, "The Kyrie Repertory in Aquitanian Manuscripts of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries," vol. 1, chap. 6, pp. 219-59; cf. Evans, *The Early Trope Repertory of Saint Martial de Limoges*, pp. 266ff.