
As if to mark the passing of the millennium that included more than half of the Middle Ages, the last decade of the twentieth century witnessed the publication of a number of major books on Gregorian chant. These are not by and large meditations on the cultural significance or *longue durée* of the repertory. Rather, at the margins of some and the centres of others looms a twenty-five-year-old scholarly debate about chant. It focuses on such questions as these: How were the Gregorian melodies composed, transmitted and recalled? And, how did oral and written procedures interact during the redaction process? Approaches to these and related questions differ from author to author, and this lack of consensus is noteworthy. It stems from the evidence – not from the lack of it, though it is not nearly as old as we would like, but from profound skepticism about its interpretation. How do written artefacts relate to an oral musical tradition? What can even the earliest notated chantbooks tell us about the formation of Gregorian chant, given the relatively complete and uniform state of the Mass Propers they preserve?

This scepticism helps explain why some scholars have abandoned the traditional philologically based method and instead explored more speculative approaches to chant research. In *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, for instance,
Kenneth Levy examines neglected or previously unknown testimony as well as relationships among graphic forms in early notation to bolster his case for the circulation of an early written exemplar of Gregorian chant. Peter Jeffery’s Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures investigates ethnomusicological parallels for the formation of the medieval sacred repertory. As much as the latter book in particular contributes to our imagining the circumstances under which the Gregorian corpus may have taken shape, it would not be unfair to observe that its argument does not rely on musical evidence, let alone the comparative method. Indeed it contains only two musical examples, both reprinted from Leo Treitler’s work. Other causes of methodological shift include the advent of the ‘New Musicology’ and the incorporation of chant research into medieval and cultural studies. The realities of the book trade, where every musical example increases production costs as it simultaneously restricts the market to specialists, also factor in. Young chant scholars embarking on dissertation research today might reasonably conclude that devoting countless hours to transcribing and comparing dozens of melodies from hundreds of manuscripts, even in the hope of answering central questions in the field, would be an endeavour most charitably described as quixotic. Still, windmill or giant, a vast notated record stands before us, and unless we continue to engage with it we will never quite know where speculation ends and fantasy begins. Why not revisit and extend the terrain the Solesmes Benedictines began mapping over a century ago with more recent discourses in mind?

I imagine this rhetorical question occurred to Theodore Karp, author of the collection of essays under review that seeks among other things to examine the orality of chant in its written traces. Essays 1 to 4 examine the role of melodic formulas in the Gregorian repertory. Matters of definition and function having been addressed in essay 1, essay 2 investigates formulas that cross boundaries of liturgical genre and mode. Essay 3 develops a typology of formulas with reference to second-mode tracts, while essay 4 shows how the melody of a relatively stable chant, the Alleluia, Dies sanctificatus, was variously adapted to texts of different length and structure. Essays 5 and 6 take a new tack, the former arguing that scribes adapted diastematic notation to record melodies containing pitches outside the Guidonian gamut, while the latter examines the transmission of modally ambiguous chants and how scribes notated them in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. Essays 7 to 9 return to melodic formulas, beginning with their deployment in introits and other neumatic chants. Essay 8 revisits material from essay 3, and compares evidence for the transmission of mode 2 tracts in the Gregorian and Roman traditions. This opens up the larger question of the relationship between these repertories, the topic of the ninth essay.

Before proceeding further, I should disclose that Professor Karp had a hand in shaping my own approach to chant research beginning in 1977, when I visited his musicology seminar, and he was already at work on this project. This affiliation will naturally lead to the suspicion that mine will be a friendly review, and in most respects it is. I greatly admire Karp’s intelligence, knowledge of
sources and apparent knack (actually born of hard work) for finding exceptions that cast doubt on the verities of established scholarship. Thus what follows is more *vade mecum* than partisan critique.

Karp makes no apology for the broad scope of his research or the traditional methods he employs, but neither does he give his reader much quarter. The organization of the book into loosely connected essays makes for abrupt shifts in topic. Within chapters, Karp sometimes neglects to telegraph his intentions. Essay 2, for example, opens with a lengthy summary of prior research on the phenomenon of ‘crossing’ in epic poetry without hinting that he will ultimately reject its application to chant. His familiarity with modern research tools can even become a double-edged sword. Less experienced scholars may, for instance, need to have the *Graduale Triplex*, Willi Apel’s *Gregorian Chant* and the Bryden and Hughes *Index* at hand to follow essays 3 and 4. They may also need to review large swatches of the secondary literature on music theory and liturgy, to which Karp refers but over which he seldom tarries. The scope and number of primary sources that he uses is also vast, ranging from the earliest notated sources to the fourteenth-century Berkeley Anonymous, and some arguments sag under the weight. References to multiple readings or related settings complicate the presentation here and there, as do cross-referenced musical examples.\(^6\) The book’s graphic design does nothing to mitigate this problem. Some of its 200 musical examples, which are printed in relatively small type, may include a dozen readings sprawling across the upper three quarters of as many as seven pages. And yet, despite these challenges, this book – by turns brilliant, frustrating, insightful and difficult – ought to be tackled by all chant scholars. It is a major contribution to the field that advances the premise that Gregorian chant was a living and changing musical language from its beginnings, one that thus cannot be described from a single vantage point or with only one or two liturgical genres in mind.

Essay 1 broadly compares Roman and Frankish approaches to chant during the formative stage. Taking a few steps back historically and beginning with early Latin psalmody, Karp reviews the evidence for diversity of practice among Western traditions, commenting on the flexibility with which psalms were selected and excerpted for liturgical use, as well as certain characteristic regional differences in text construction. Yet, he continues, conflicting evidence in the earliest records should not obscure important common elements, such as the use of the *Itala*. A more important indicator of a shared heritage is the interrelationship of extant psalm settings of different liturgical genres, along with those that cross traditions. These lead him to suspect that a standardized tonal architecture

\(^6\) Happily, slips involving the musical examples are rare. The discussion on p. 68 relates to ex. 7, not 8; on p. 290 ex. 117 is wrongly identified as 118; the text on p. 381 refers to ex. 14, not 13. A specific reference to ex. 72 is wanting on p. 239; the reader must consult the index under the incipit (*Caritas Dei*) to locate it. The genres of all chants discussed should have been consistently indicated. Karp’s decision to employ modern Solesmes readings, though understandable, might also have been foregrounded.
for chanting the psalms had taken shape in Rome and had spread elsewhere by the end of the sixth century; and that the distinctive melodic styles associated with different genres emerged in the seventh. Subsequent developments, including the establishment of the schola cantorum and the codification of annalis cantus omnis, combined with the slower pace of liturgical change further to restrict the range of choices and circumscribe innovation, musical and otherwise. Although the schola in particular ‘provided an increasingly prestigious model with regard to melodic style, the degree of freedom in the treatment of melodic formulas, and the shaping of overall melodies’ (p. 30), the crystallization of Roman chant was not their objective. That task fell to the Franks.

Following this premise Karp attempts to reconcile the well-known conflicting testimony surrounding the introduction of Roman chant to Frankland, arguing that it reflects different assumptions about the repertory. Roman singers had for centuries employed melody to complement the syntax and accentuation of Scripture. Their chief concern was maintaining a sense of style, fluency and nuance. New limitations placed on sacred singing in the later seventh and early eighth centuries restricted the Roman singers’ choice of texts and musical strategies, but without creating a need for fidelity in musical transmission. Thus when John the Deacon criticized the crudeness of Frankish singers, he was not reacting to their inability to sing Roman chant note for note, but their failure to comprehend the Roman musical idiom, a formulaic mode of performance, neither self-conscious nor contrived, indigenous to Rome but foreign to the Franks. The exuberance of the Gallican liturgy may have amplified John’s sense of culture clash, although Karp does not suggest this.

The Franks, for their part, were called upon to assimilate a large repertory of sacred monophony that involved stylistic premises that they imperfectly understood. It makes sense that Frankish singers would adapt it to their own musical sensibilities and, in doing so, objectify it. In short, they came to regard Roman chant as a collection of individual pieces. Thus even as the Gregorian repertory was taking shape in the oral environment the Franks were inclined to judge each performance of a given chant against standards of correctness based on local tastes, habits and abilities. And to do this they needed to memorize. As differences between their chant and that sung by Roman cantors became evident, the Franks reacted defensively. ‘It is . . . understandable that, operating from a different set of standards, the Franks should have attributed these discrepancies to poor, spiteful teaching and to later corruptions. For their part, the Romans clearly recognized that the Franks had not mastered the traditional Roman style and therefore could not accept the performances as authentic’ (p. 34). The Frankish inclination to objectify manifested itself in rote memorization, systematic classification and ultimately in musical notation.

The remainder of essay 1 establishes a basis for Karp’s argument that accurate memorization of the Gregorian repertory preceded neumation. He finds no indication in the earliest chantbooks of traits associated with reconstructive memory processes or oral formulaic recomposition. Neither, however, does he
endorse Levy’s hypothesis of an authoritative early neumed archetype. Karp simply cannot accept that the many differences in melodic substance, nuance, degree of ornamentation, principles of notation and groupings of neumes among the earliest manuscripts can be explained by a hypothesis of fresh neumations of a visual model that circulated in the absence of a memorized tradition. He also has greater faith than Levy in singers’ verbatim memories. Most important, though, his study of certain problematic chants suggests that the earliest extant neumed sources do not reflect written transmission but an oral tradition guided by writing.

In an effort to appreciate the nature of the medieval oral tradition, essay 2 examines interrelationships among melismatic chants of sometimes the same, sometimes different modes, a cross-section which Karp estimates to include at least ten per cent of the Sextuplex repertory. To some, the sharing of melodic formulas in alleluias, graduals, tracts and responsories suggests the ‘crossing’ or ‘mixing’ of themes in performances of epic poetry, in which singers pass from one song pattern to another at a point where the two coincide. But Karp observes that indisputable evidence of this phenomenon in chant is rare, outside the central tradition and mostly late. A further problem exists: mixing almost always occurs well into epic singers’ performances of lengthy tales and, according to Albert Lord, signals a memory lapse which experienced listeners and singers might reasonably criticize. Gregorian chants, on the other hand, are comparatively brief. How could singers’ memories have failed so readily? Why would such lapses have been considered acceptable enough to have been fixed in verbatim memories and later codified? Related melodic formulas, moreover, are often found at the beginnings of pieces, where recall would have been the most precise. Why would singers have disregarded the distinctions of genre and mode when they had ample opportunity to maintain them?

These questions aside, the concept of mixing is relevant only if genre and modal boundaries were established within the community of singers, which according to Karp they were not, at least not when Frankish cantors were giving shape to the Gregorian repertory. As James McKinnon has shown, the same chant could be adapted to different liturgical functions in the formative stage; modal vocabulary and identification were also flexible in the period before notation. Thus in Karp’s view the specific interrelationships among Gregorian chants can be no older than the Carolingian adaptation of the Roman cursus, although admittedly these connections ultimately derive from procedures for chanting the psalms that spread from Rome to the hinterlands in the seventh century.

7 Cf. Levy, *Gregorian Chant*, 9–10: ‘My view is that most of the Gregorian repertory had turned to remembered melody before there was any neuming, but the memories fell short of exact recall, and for so long as the transmission remained neumeless the music was only approximately replicated; verbatim reproduction was not even an aspiration until there was neuming’.
century. (The Roman repertory also contains interrelated chants, but these do not generally correspond to the Gregorian, as Karp will show in essays 8 and 9.) Given the circumstances of adoption, which Karp described in the preceding essay, it makes sense that the Roman and Frankish chant repertoires would resemble one another but differ in realization.

The point of departure for essay 3 is a study of the six earliest second-mode Gregorian tracts, which Karp divides chronologically into two layers, the older containing the three tracts most closely related to second-mode Gregorian responsories in their melodic gestures, tonal plans and responsorial performance practice. Of these, he reasons, De necessitatibus was the first: it is at once the most individual and most closely linked to the responsories. After it came Domine exaudi and Domine audivi. The second stratum contains the three longer second-mode tracts which, Karp argues, can be arranged chronologically following a principle of style analysis implied in his treatment of the first three.

In a repertory having a relatively high degree of fixity, those chants having the closest affinities with family members known to be late are themselves likely to be late. The greater the number of affinities that can be demonstrated between a chant of unknown date and one that first appears in our musical sources, the greater the probability that the former is chronologically contiguous with the latter. In other words, a stylistic progression that moves in a single direction is more likely than one that moves back and forth in erratic fashion (p. 102).

Thus Qui habitat came before Deus Deus meus, whose resemblance to Domine exaudi and Domine audivi is less obvious. Finally Eripe me, which according to pseudo-Alcuin is the youngest of the six, serves as a check on Karp’s theory. Style analysis shows how closely this tract resembles Deus Deus meus, with which it shares the same distinctive opening and many of the same cadential and internal formulas.

This discussion, and the sorting out of resemblances and differences that it requires, leads Karp to rethink the term ‘centonization’ and how it relates to the formation of the Gregorian repertory. He proposes a vocabulary to discuss formulaic structures organized in terms of six ‘levels of formularity’, all of which apply in some sense to the earliest second-mode tracts:

1. **Strict formula**: near identity.
2. **Phrase quotation**: near identity in two or more chants.
3. **Formulaic system**: the combination of variable opening and identical conclusion within comparable phrases (or nearly identical opening and variable conclusion).
4. **Formulaic motives**: identity limited to isolated neume formations.
5. **Formulaic themes**: progression of motives occurring in proper order, but no one motive is essential to the make-up of the theme.
6. Formulicity: two or more passages follow the same basic tonal plan and series of shapes.

Although these terms are employed subsequently in the book, they are not developed or even used consistently – a shortcoming of the book’s organization into self-sufficient essays. Moreover, the proposed terminology is cumbersome and should probably be reconsidered in light of Jeffery’s and Levy’s contributions, neither of which were available to Karp when he wrote.10 Readers may also be confused by the category ‘formulaic system’, which though ultimately stemming from Lord’s work was famously, and differently, employed by Treitler.

Essay 4 opens with a study of the transmission of the Alleluia, Dies sanctificatus. Karp observes that variants are few and do not affect the chant’s overall melodic shape; they include the presence or absence of repeated or passing notes and differences of inflection in recitational passages. Moreover, early neumations of the chant are independent of one another to the extent that they do not seem to descend from a common ancestor. Thus it is reasonable to infer that the notational traces of the alleluia were neither the products of improvisation (or reimprovisation) nor of copying. Rather, they reflect a will and capacity to maintain fixity in the oral tradition. Yet, Karp observes as he broadens his focus, not all alleluias of the Dies sanctificatus type were as consistently transmitted. How can these outlyers be accounted for in light of the transmission of the putative source chant?

One might begin by visualizing a spectrum ranging from ex tempore creation involving few restraints to verbatim memorization (although neither extreme reflects historical reality). By placing the Alleluia, Dies sanctificatus close to the verbatim end of the spectrum and the most variable adaptations towards the other, we acknowledge the strong possibility that rote memorization co-existed with freer procedures of reconstruction. This helps account for regional differences among the Dies sanctificatus family involving relationships between text and music, small text variants and uses of different melodies for the same text. All three are encountered when comparing the Roman and Gregorian repertories.11 In a closing section devoted to the Beneventan version of Alleluia, Tu es Petrus, Karp imagines that either the text was transmitted to Benevento with some indication that it was to be adapted to the Dies sanctificatus type or an authoritative group of Beneventan singers decided to reject what they considered an unsatisfactory adjustment of text and music in the more widely transmitted version. Indeed evidence from still later chantbooks suggests that the processes of learning and performing some alleluias of the Dies sanctificatus type remained

10 Jeffery, Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures, 87–115; and Levy, Gregorian Chant, 141–77, respectively.
11 All nine members of the Alleluia, Dies sanctificatus family in the Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex are also found in Roman sources, along with Alleluias, Hi sunt qui cum medieribus and Quoniam Deus magnus. Five of the nine have different matches between text syntax and musical phrases: Video caelos, Vidimus stellam, Hic est discipulus, Justus non conturbabitur and Inveni David. In Video caelos and Vidimus stellam, the third phrase of the Gregorian melody is lacking in the Roman versions.
oral long after notation was commonly used. It may have been that singers were less inclined to memorize late adaptations, or somehow adapted them in accordance with emerging musical considerations, particularly modal theory. But neither the singers’ intentions nor their ability to meet them are, according to Karp, at issue.

The focus of the book shifts to formularity in essays 5 to 7, where Karp makes a case for the primacy of melodic gesture in the formation and oral transmission of Gregorian chant. Essay 5 seeks to demonstrate that at least some scribes using diastematic neumes represented melodies with more than one variable pitch by notating them in what amounts to code. Read literally, different sections of music would appear to be in different modes or otherwise displaced in pitch, but interpreted in a manner similar to scordatura, singers of the time would have understood these shifts as signals to ‘transpose’ what was before their eyes in order to reproduce the melody in their minds’ ears.

Karp’s evidence for this ‘secret chromaticism’ and for the privileging of melodic gesture over tonal coherence in the oral tradition comes from the comparative study of chants cited in the anonymous first treatise of the Berkeley Manuscript. As is well known, the Berkeley Anonymous recommends increasing the standard number of hexachords to account for extra-diatonic tones. This recommendation would appear to stem from the requirements of polyphony, but the fact that all but one of the musical examples come from the earliest layer of the Gregorian repertory leads Karp to see the system of conjunctae as a late and partial accommodation of chant theory to practice. The question becomes: how could this degree of chromaticism have survived the strictures of the Guidonian gamut and accurately heightened notation? The theory advanced by earlier scholars and accepted here is that, for some chants with more than one variable degree, pitch levels of tonally problematic passages should be understood as being different from the surrounding music. Of course, our remove from the medieval oral tradition makes it impossible to know the true pitch content of these chants or understand how effectively singers managed the proposed transpositions. Moreover, versions of some melodies incorporate displacements so skilfully that they might be considered reworkings of the ‘originals’, bringing them into conformity with music theory after Guido. Nonetheless Karp’s fifth essay plants a seed of doubt concerning the fidelity of pitch notation and, more important, reinforces the centrality of melodic gesture in the formation and oral transmission of the Gregorian repertory.

Essay 6 likewise focuses on formula, this time as an element in defining mode. From the beginning, determining the mode of a chant was a matter of assessing small groupings of intervals at key points in the musical structure: the openings of antiphons, introits and communions; the endings of responsories, offertories and gradual responds according to Aurelian of Réôme and Regino of Prüm. Although neither theorist always observed this rule of thumb, as classifications based on the opposite criterion prove, and they disagreed on the modal assignment of some chants with the same text incipit, the connection between gesture
and mode is beyond question. (Conflicting assignments have led modern scholars to suspect that the two men were either focusing on different details of the same melody or had different settings in mind. Karp favours the former explanation.) In addition, Regino identified a handful of mixed-mode introits and Office antiphons, which he termed *cantus nothi*, which opened in one mode and closed in another. Again here, as Karp argues, Regino’s classifications were based on the resemblances of melodic formulas in these and less tonally ambiguous melodies.

With this in mind, Karp surveys the *cantus nothi* introits in their manuscript transmission, demonstrating that while earlier sources support Regino’s description, some later ones do not. For example, early diastematic readings of *Deus in adiutorium* (*Graduale Triplex*, 315) begin on $c’$ with a formula associated with mode VIII, but close on $g$ with a figure encompassing a minor-seventh descent; unheightened sources support this reading. Comparing this version with later ones, Karp shows that some late eleventh- and twelfth-century scribes attempted to bring the melody into conformity with the emerging concept of mode as scale. These versions both begin and end on $g$, the melody being displaced up a fifth near the beginning. The transmissions of other *cantus nothi* introits over time reveal similar revisions in favour of tonal unity. In *Judica Domine* (*Graduale Triplex*, 150), for example, a fourth-mode opening is paired with a seventh-mode ending and psalm tone in early adiastematic sources; some later diastematic readings have a revised fourth-mode ending. Thus diastematic notation and changes in modal theory led to the ironing out of tonal ambiguity, a conclusion that parallels the findings of essay 5.

As essay 6 unfolds, the reason why no single definition of mode or approach to modal classification could be valid for the entire Middle Ages becomes clear. Gesture was of primary importance at the earliest stage to the extent of being a factor in cases where Regino apparently misclassified pairs of chants of the same mode and type as *cantus nothi* when only one melody met the criteria; the other, though sharing some traits with the former but lacking the requisite tonal ambiguity, was sung on a successive day or opened with a similar text incipit. This associative quality, along with the importance of gesture, reinforces the intuitive nature of modal classification in Regino. The availability later of neumed chantbooks permitted singers, scribes and theorists (including Regino) to compare beginnings and ends of melodies; but as Karp argues, gesture remained central to modal classification even at this stage. The widespread use of diastematic notation and the scalar concept of mode created the goal of tonal unity. Yet even as range, octave species and pitch became the criteria for modal classification, gesture continued to play a role, albeit one rapidly receding into the background.

Essay 7 investigates formulaic usage among Gregorian introits. Here Karp classifies various approaches to the use of stereotypical material, ranging from the near identity of some passages to formulaic theme. Introits also differ with respect to the density of formulas, varying from nearly centonate to idiolic, though, as he observes, no modal group “escapes the imprint of traditional forms
of oral creativity’ (p. 313). The essay includes useful comparisons involving offer-
tories and communions, and offers some tentative conclusions concerning their
use of formulas.

In an effort to illuminate the relationship between Roman and Gregorian chant
essays 8 and 9 return to genres and themes treated earlier. Essay 8, a comparison
of second-mode tracts, opens with a summary of the findings of essay 3 and a
tentative chronology. Turning to tracts in Roman transmission, Karp notes the
agreement of the manuscript readings, pace Paul Cutter.12 This and the relative
independence of the sources lead him to posit a written tradition in Rome before
1071, the date of the earliest surviving source, the Geneva Bodmer manuscript,
a hypothesis that also figures in the final essay. Next, comparing Roman and
Gregorian tracts he finds that despite similarities of range, motivic content and
organization, none of the pairs agrees consistently in the division of text or
choice of tonal goals for the verses; openings also tend towards difference, unlike
half cadences and some final closes. More important, though, the interrela-
tionships between tracts and other genres in the Gregorian repertory, particularly
responsories, do not match up with the Roman situation. This means that ‘either
the Gregorian singers created a nexus [of formulaic interrelationships] where
none had previously existed, or a previously extant nexus dissolved in the Roman
transmission’ (p. 353).

Regardless of which explanation is closer to the truth – the evidence is conflict-
ing – one can no longer reasonably explain the differences between Roman and
Gregorian chant ‘merely in terms of transformations wrought in individual melod-
ies’ (pp. 362–3; emphasis mine). A broader explanation is needed, one that
accounts for the evidence system-wide and that goes beyond recourse to the
vagaries of oral transmission. This is the objective of essay 9. In the more limited
context of essay 8, Karp hypothesizes that Roman tracts were transmitted to
Metz and/or affiliated centres in two stages beginning with the three that most
closely resemble responsories. As Frankish cantors made these chants their own,
they created networks of melodic relationships which observed the basic prin-
ciples of Roman construction but differed in procedure and pattern. That would
explain the general resemblance between comparable tracts, and why some pass-
gages seem to be ‘translations’ or descendants of a common ancestor while others
appear unrelated (except perhaps to other chants in the same repertory).

Karp extends this hypothesis in his closing essay, which tackles the central
problem of the Roman-Gregorian connection. According to his formulation the
Franks did not at first encounter the cantus romanus as a collection of individual
pieces, a conception that emerged at the later stage of memorization, but in
stages of transmission. As these unfolded, the Franks came to imagine it as a
totality, a repertory characterized in musical terms by a high degree of for-

12 Paul Cutter, ‘The Old-Roman Chant Tradition: Written or Oral’, *Journal of the American Musicological
Society* 20 (1967), 167–81. According to Karp (pp. 319–20), the degree of uniformity varies from
one liturgical genre to the next.
mularity. In their efforts to master it, they became mindful not only of the recurrence of the same or similar motives in numerous melodies, but also that these formed networks that connected chants of one genre and tonality to others. Perhaps due to insufficient or isolated exposure to Roman style, or strong musical predilections of their own, the Franks incorporated only a portion of the specific interrelationships of the model into their realization and created many not found in it. Roman singers may subsequently have done similarly, resulting in still more disparities between written-out Roman and Gregorian chants.

Essay 9 thus develops a view that sees in Roman as well as Gregorian chant diverse traits, conservative and progressive. Karp elaborates this by re-examining the Gregorian melodies for the Third Mass of Christmas and comparing them with their Roman counterparts. As was the case with tracts in essay 8, he demonstrates that formulaic interrelationships characteristic of a chant in one repertory may be absent from its counterpart in the other, and that the divergences become even more pronounced across genres. These observations lead Karp to critique two previous explanations for the differences between Roman and Gregorian chant – one based on geography, the other chronology, and both insufficient. Imagining that the differences between medieval southern and northern European music systems may help us understand the prevailing conjunct motion and, in places, ornamental filigree of Roman chant takes us no closer to accounting for the incomparability of formulaic networks. As for chronology, much has been made of the nearly two centuries that separate the earliest extant sources of the two repertories with respect to formulaic content. But even if we posit that Roman chant was transmitted orally fully 175 years longer than the Gregorian, Karp predicts that we may find almost as much ‘thrift’ in the use of formulas in the latter repertory as in the former.13 If this be true, then the earliest extant sources of both may arguably contain comparable residues of the oral traditions that preceded their neumation.

Apart from the assumption that the extant Roman manuscripts represent the first attempts at written preservation, something else bothers Karp about the prevailing assumption: scholars tend to seal them off from the possibility of outside influence, perhaps as a result of the wide chronological gulf between them and the first witnesses of the Gregorian tradition. True, some Gregorian chants were adopted in Rome, but these had no impact on the musical content of other chants in the Roman musical orbit, as Karp himself demonstrates. Examining Roman versions of chants of unstable tonality, including some cantus nothi, however, Karp finds an affinity for the tonally unified revisions found in Italian sources of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This means that we can no longer take for granted that Roman chantbooks preserve a melos that predates the Gregorian, since tonal unity became a priority only after the adoption of the

Guidonian gamut and diastematic notation. Roman scribes thus appear to have been struggling with some of the same problems of tonality that occupied their brethren outside papal territories. That we can no longer safely consider Roman chant *Old* disrupts its place as evidence of the model for the Franks. Karp closes his book by considering some possible avenues of future research into this model, including investigating parallels in Byzantine chant practice.

Having opened by noting how scepticism has affected recent chant scholarship, it is fitting to close by taking stock of Karp’s own brand. *Aspects of Orality and Formularity* strongly suggests, among other things, that the notated forms of many Gregorian chants do not reflect their true pitch content; that transmissions of different realizations of a melody type differ depending on a host of factors; that trends in eleventh- and twelfth-century music theory changed the shape of some Roman chants prior to their earliest surviving neumations; and that neither improvisation nor copying fully accounts for all the facts. This is not, in other words, a skepticism that would lead us to abandon the scholarly approaches of the last quarter century, including style analysis and the comparative method. On the contrary, it compels an ever more thorough and critical engagement with the primary sources. One hopes that the implications of this study, particularly as regards the relationship between Roman and Gregorian repertoires, and its common-sense approach will prove worthy of the time and efforts of the next generation of chant scholars.

**JAMES BORDERS**


The four tracts that make up the Guidonian theoretical corpus – the *Micrologus*, *Regule rhythmice*, *Prologus in antiphonarium* and *Epistola ad Michaelem* – are among the music treatises most widely disseminated during the Middle Ages, second only to Boethius’ *De institutione musica*. Although the seventy-odd manuscripts transmitting these texts range in date from the late eleventh to the sixteenth centuries, most of them were compiled in the twelfth and thirteenth. The enormous popularity of the Guidonian writings during the Middle Ages is paralleled by an exceptional interest on the part of modern scholars. Then and now, part of their appeal comes from them being seemingly directed towards singers at different stages in their learning of the liturgical chant and at different levels of competence in performing it. The focus of modern studies, consequently, has been those Guidonian notions considered to be ‘practice oriented’ and viewed as early manifestations of later medieval developments, such as staff notation, the hexachord system and solmization.
Guido’s treatises have been available in edited form since the venerable publications of Gerbert and Coussemaker. In light of the crucial role Guido’s writings played in the history of medieval music theory, Dolores Pesce’s new edition of his three ‘minor’ treatises is more than welcome. The *Micrologus*, the earliest of the Guidonian writings, was given a ‘modern’ edition by Joseph Smits van Waesbergha half a century ago, and has been available in the English translation by Babb and Palisca for more than twenty years. Two of the treatises included in the present volume, the *Regule* and the *Prologus*, were edited by Smits van Waesbergha in the *Divitiae musicae artis* series. Pesce’s work supersedes Smits van Waesbergha’s earlier editions, however. Not only does it conform more closely to modern editorial practices and offer critical editions for all three of the minor treatises, including the *Epistola*, but it also provides a rationale for her editorial choices that is based on a thorough discussion of the affiliation of all the manuscript sources, and also a functional English translation.

The volume conveniently brings together the Latin texts and English translations on facing pages, together with a substantial introduction, a comprehensive inventory of the contents of the manuscripts that transmit the Guidonian corpus and a very detailed discussion of the stemmatic relationships among these manuscripts. There are also three important appendices: Appendices A and C contain the manuscript readings for the musical examples in the *Regule* and *Epistola* respectively; Appendix B documents the manuscript transmission of the two versions of the *constitutiones* diagram featured in the *Regule*. The volume concludes with a comprehensive bibliography, an index verborum and an index nominum et rerum.

The introduction first presents the external and internal evidence for Guido’s biography and authorship of the treatises, drawing primarily on a critical assessment of the secondary literature on the subject. Pesce subscribes to the generally accepted dating of the Guidonian corpus, 1026-33, and to the chronology of the four treatises put forth by Smits van Waesbergha and Palisca – Micrologus, Prologus and Regule, Epistola. She discusses in some detail the authorship of the *Regule*, concentrating in particular on the *Guido* acrostic and the verse ‘Omnibus ecce modis’ that frame the main body of the text. Despite their being written in a quantitative form of dactylic hexameter that stands in sharp contrast to the accentual form of trochaic tetrameter catalectic in which the *Regule* verse proper is cast, and despite some inconsistencies among the manuscript sources, Pesce rightly concludes that both the acrostic and the ‘Omnibus’ verse have to be included in the edition by reason of the prevalent medieval transmission of the *Regule* text.

A cursory examination of the organization of the *Epistola* and a helpful analysis of it in the context of the *ars dictaminis* as codified in the late eleventh century leads Pesce to a discussion of influences on Guido’s treatises. Pesce’s consideration of the relationship between the Guidonian corpus and Boethius, the *Enchiridion* treatises and the *Dialogus in musica*, like her brief discussion of some rhetorical and grammatical aspects of the text, summarizes previous scholarly findings.
Some of the rhetorical and grammatical implications of the Guidonian discourse that she finds could have been strengthened, however, by a discussion of some passages in the very treatises edited in the present volume, not just the by-now familiar material that she draws from the Micrologus. Be this as it may, Pesce’s keen technical analysis of the poetic features of the Regule that concludes this section, as well as her healthy scepticism directed towards Smits van Waesberghe’s arguments that Guido wrote Chapter 15 of the Micrologus and all of the Prologus in rhythmic prose are very perceptive.

The discussion of the overall manuscript environment of Guido’s writings includes a helpful statistical evaluation of the manner in which the chant examples from the Regule and Epistola are distributed in the extant manuscripts. The interpretation of the manuscript environment itself poses some methodological problems, however. There is no clear sense of whether the author makes a distinction, as one certainly should, between codicologically homogeneous sources, on the one hand, and collection manuscripts bound at a later date, on the other. A careful codicological analysis of the manuscripts that according to Pesce transmit Guido’s texts in a quadrivial or trivial context suggests that some of them are in fact the products of late medieval or even Renaissance binding practices: Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Ms. 1998; Pommersfelden, Graf Schönbornschen, Schloßbibliothek, Hs.45 (2915); Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Philos. 84; and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 14663, among others. Although some of these codicological data can be located in the inventory of manuscript contents that Pesce provides later in the volume (see the description of Darmstadt 1988 on pp. 60–3, for example), they had little impact on Pesce’s arguments. In some of these sources, such as Darmstadt 1988 or Munich clm 14663, Guido’s texts are transmitted in what originally were independent manuscripts with exclusively music-theoretical content, sources that were only later bound with other manuscripts with differing sorts of content. Furthermore, the codicological make-up of some other manuscripts, such as Pommersfelden 45, Göttingen Philos. 84 and perhaps even Wolfenbüttel, Cod. Guelf. 4.11 Aug. 4⁰, provides evidence that the Guidonian corpus sometimes circulated as an independent libellus, a situation that would yield patterns of transmission even more complicated than generally assumed or suggested in the present volume.

Pesce’s treatment of Guido’s pedagogy and theory as they pertain in principle to issues of musical notation, the ut-re-mi method and modal affinitas and proprieitas, is, as expected, excellent. Particularly interesting is her analysis of several difficult Guidonian terms, such as affinitas, modus vocum and proprieitas, and of their relation to both specific theoretical constructs in the Guidonian writings and conceptual counterparts found in the Enchiriadis corpus and the work of Herman of Reichenau. Furthermore, her reconstruction of the process involved in the learning of chant, as that process can be construed from Guido’s music-theoretical terms and concepts as well as from his explicit and implicit pedagogical programme, is quite convincing.
Pesce’s comprehensive inventory of the contents of the manuscripts transmitting Guido’s texts will certainly be very helpful to scholars of medieval musical thought in general. The detailed accounts of each codex often supplement or improve on the descriptions found in RISM and other reference works. The reader should beware, however, that this section, besides using a somewhat awkward format, is replete with typographical errors and spelling inconsistencies (e.g., ‘Pythagorus’ instead of ‘Pythagoras’ on pp. 209 and 210, ‘Pergau’ instead of ‘Pegau’ on pp. 105 and 249). Moreover, some conspicuous distortions of titles of works that are not part of the music-theoretical literature are particularly bothersome, such as Rhetoricorum ad Herennium and De inventione rhetorica (p. 207) and De arte poetica (p. 191) instead of Rhetorica ad Herennium, De inventione and Ars poetica. Furthermore, concerning non-musical writings once again, the reader is referred sometimes to old and long superseded editions, such as Wrobel’s 1876 edition of Calcidius (repr. 1963) and Migne’s edition of Isidor of Seville’s Etymologiarum in the Patrologia latina instead of the standard Waszink and Lindsay editions, respectively. It is also unfortunate that, in spite of its wealth of information, this section is not represented in the final indices.

The analysis of the stemmatic relationship among the Guidonian manuscripts prepares the ground for the edition. On the basis of a thorough yet somewhat painstaking analysis of textual variants, the sources for each of the three treatises are grouped in several large families and ranked in terms of their proximity to Guido’s presumed archetype. Despite very complex patterns of stemmatic interrelation and despite a number of manuscripts that could not be accounted for in the stemma (especially in the case of the Prologus) Pesce’s meticulous philological enquiry provides convincing evidence that the most relevant branches of the transmission consist of a group of manuscripts compiled in the Rome-Lazio and Tuscany, which she labels the ‘Florence group’, followed by a group of ‘north-central’ Italian manuscripts (compiled in centres north and south of Arezzo), and by an ‘Austrian and German’ group. These meticulous analyses of the textual variants and stemmatic interrelationships validate the editorial policies adopted in the editions of the text that follow: for each of Guido’s three treatises the preferred readings come from the most relevant branch, the Florence group of manuscripts.

Pesce’s editorial policy distinguishes her work from that of earlier Guido scholars; it helps her establish a reliable text that is grounded in, and faithful to, not only Guido’s presumed archetype but also its medieval transmission. Her English translation is dependable and is often supplemented with explanations of the more difficult passages or equivocal musical concepts. Although some readers may challenge details in the edition, translation or introductory material, or they may find the physical format of the volume to be unwieldy, there can be no question that Pesce’s work is an important scholarly contribution that lays the foundation for future investigations into medieval musical thought, and particularly Guidonian theory.

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