FRANKISH PSALMODY:
THE EVIDENCE OF THE COMMENORATIO BREVIS

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the Frankish psalmody of the early medieval period. The most important source of this practice in existence today is the tenth-century treatise, the *Commemoratio Brevis de Tonis et Psalmis Modulandis*. During the last fifty years there have been several attempts by musicologists to come to terms with the evidence of this source but these, unfortunately, were based on a faulty eighteenth-century edition of an incomplete manuscript. The present study, however, is based on a new edition of the only complete source: the *Wolfenbüttel Ms. Gud. lat. 2° 72 (4376).*

The method has been to reconstruct the evidence of this treatise—the musical examples of psalm tones and the commentary of the text—and to compare it to the standard practice of the late Middle Ages. Errors perpetuated unwittingly by the eighteenth-century edition have been corrected. The introduction summarizes the methods and origins of psalmody; the role of the Franks in the formation of the Gregorian repertoire; the subsequent decay and reform of the chant; and the role of the psalms in the liturgy. The first four chapters consider the many inflections of the psalm tone individually:
the first intonation, the termination, the tenor and the mediant melody. The final chapter is devoted to a study of the special tones which were probably the remains of a practice even earlier than that of the tenth century.

The Gregorian psalm tones appear at first sight to be sterile ground for historical investigation—almost featureless in their simplicity. Closer inspection reveals, however, a number of discernable strata belonging to quite different epochs.

The earliest portion of the psalm tone is the tenor. There can be little argument that the most primitive usage involved the recitation of liturgical texts on a single pitch (hardly a musical phenomenon, more properly described as a method of public address). The next stage involved—for the purpose of articulating the verses of psalms—the affixing of intonations and terminations. In the earliest epoch, before the Carolingian reforms, it would seem that a psalmody of intonations, tenors and terminations was not yet formed into a coherent system. It is generally believed that the system of the eight modes was itself only introduced into the West at the time of the great Emperor. It would be difficult therefore to argue that the practice prior to this introduction had any connection with the eight-mode system. It would seem, rather, that local usages involving many patterns, some of them made venerable by great antiquity, were in force.
The next stage in the evolution was to provide a correlation between the new system of the octoechos and the psalmody. At this point most of the older free practice was abandoned. Some remnants, however, have remained—we have suggested that this is an explanation for the special tones in the *Commemoratio Brevis*—either owing to the force of tradition or the difficulty of making indisputable modal assignments.

The attitude to the text of the psalm did not remain unchanged throughout this long period of evolution. In the earliest period the text accent was treated quite casually, as an examination of the intonations and the terminations shows clearly. At a later stage, however,—and here the mediant portions of the psalms with their quite different attitude toward text accent are instructive—the musicians approached the problem quite differently, taking extraordinary care that the correct inflections of the words were projected. It is tempting to associate this new approach, which reminds one so much of the Renaissance, with the well known Carolingian rebirth of knowledge.

The history of the psalm tones subsequent to the *Commemoratio Brevis* is one of progressive refinement: a reduction to a practice both supple and logical, the last stage of which is represented by the Vatican Edition of 1908.
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INTRODUCTION

METHODS OF PSALMODY

The long history of psalmody in the Christian cult reveals three methods of psalm singing. What would seem to be the most ancient of these was the recitation of the psalm by a "single soloist, who monotoned the greater part of the psalm, but inserted various cadences or inflections at certain points of distinction in the verse."¹ This method is usually known as direct psalmody, as the interjection of refrains by the congregation or a choir was not practiced therein. The opinion that direct psalmody was not an ancient practice has been put forward by Peter Wagner,² but more recent investigation has established proof that direct psalmody in Christian worship existed as early as the fourth century.³

It is, however, reasonable to assume that such a method of psalm singing which favoured soloistic

³ Paolo Ferretti, Esthétique grégorienne (Tournai, 1938), p. 138.
performance—and thus excluded much participation of all those involved in public worship—had little appeal for the crowds which populated the basilicas of the early Christian Church. A remedy which provided a participating role for the congregation was gradually evolved. Interjections of short responses by the congregation were added at the conclusion of each verse of the psalm. This second method of psalm singing is known as responsorial psalmody.

In ancient times the texts of the responses or refrains seem to have been extremely short. They consisted of a single word such as "amen" or "alleluia," "or some pregnant sentence drawn from the psalm which was being sung."4 Walter H. Frere5 considers that such a simple form of responsorial psalmody did not endure for any length of time since little or nothing survives of this simple practice. What does remain is an elaborate form which Frere believes to be "the result of the growing artistic feeling, [and] in consequence of the existence of trained singers in the great song school of Rome. . . ."

This elaborate form of responsorial psalmody is performed by a soloist who sings the verses of the psalm in

4 Frere, "Responsorial," p. 130.
5 Ibid.
alternation with a choir who respond with the refrain. In his discussion of this form, Frere points out that:

\[\ldots\; it\; was\; impossible\; to\; sing\; the\; whole\; psalm\; to\; a\; highly\; ornate\; chant\; habitually,\; and\; thus\; certain\; verses\; were\; selected\; from\; the\; psalm\; for\; this\; elaborate\; treatment;\; and\; there\; grew\; up,\; therefore,\; the\; musical\; form\; called\; the\; Respond,\; which\; consisted\; in\; its\; simplest\; shape\; of\; a\; choral\; melody\; (called\; the\; Respond\; proper)\; alternating\; with\; one\; or\; more\; verses\; sung\; by\; the\; soloist.\]

This type of responsorial psalmody, although exhibiting signs of subsequent elaboration, is to be found in the music of the Mass and the Divine Office where it serves "as an interlude between the reading of the lessons." At the Mass it is called Responsorium Graduale or simply the Gradual, while at the Office it is called Responsorium. In addition, simpler forms of responsorial music "modelled on the elaborate responds of Matins" are employed at the lesser offices (Prime, Terce, etc.). Such shortened forms are called Responsorium breve. Examples of the Responsorium Graduale and the simpler Responsorium are also to be found in Frere's article.

The third method of psalm singing (the one which will be our main concern) is antiphonal psalmody. For this type the choir is divided "into two groups which sing the verses

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in alternation, one group echoing the other.⁸ The basis of this style is certainly the Hebrew verse form in which each verse of the psalm-text "is divided into two members that balance each other as antecedent and consequent."⁹

A refrain called the antiphon was originally used between all verses and, as well, by way of an introduction and a conclusion to the singing of a psalm. This great amount of repetition made the full performance of a Psalm an unduly protracted affair, and in the 9th or 10th century the singing of the antiphon was normally restricted to a single repetition at the end of the psalm. Today, the first appearance of the antiphon is further reduced to an incipit.¹⁰

THE ORIGINS OF PSALMODY

A study of the history of psalm singing yields evidence that antiphonal psalmody was practiced in very ancient times. Peter Wagner¹¹ was able to establish the "prominent use" of alternating choirs as early as the 4th century:

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⁹ Ibid., p. 170.
¹⁰ Ibid., p. 172.
¹¹ Wagner, Introduction, p. 18ff.
From Antioch psalmody in alternating chorus spread over the whole Christian world, both in the Greek and the Latin Churches.

The merit of making the West acquainted with the antiphonal chant belongs to S. Ambrose of Milan, who at the time of his persecution by the Empress Justina (386) instructed those who were faithful to him in the singing of antiphons and hymns.

A source of useful information concerning early psalmodic practice is the detailed account of the service as it was "celebrated in Jerusalem about A.D. 385."

In this early document entitled *Peregrinatio Etheriae*, it is often remarked that "Hymns are said, and Psalms are sung with responses, and also Antiphons," or that "responsorial Psalms are said, in alternation with Antiphons."

Apel and other scholars consider that the use of the word antiphon as used in this document "means full Psalms sung antiphonally."

It was, perhaps, the gradual establishment of a trained body of singers as a permanent and vitally important member of the Latin Church in Rome that finally established

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13 Ibid., p. 46.
antiphonal psalmody (this position will be taken up later) as the very generator of the official chant. Although the foundation of a song-school in Rome by Pope Silvester (314-336) lacks historical proof, Peter Wagner believes its existence to have been most probable.

The introduction by Pope Celestine I of antiphonal chanting for the Introit of the Mass presupposes a choir of instructed singers. . . . Such were the beginnings from which the Roman song-school descended, which later became so flourishing and influential.14

CHANT - GREGORIAN OR FRANKISH?

The Gregorian practice as it has been known for centuries is not purely Roman. The formation of the chant occupied many musicians in diverse regions for the first millennium of the Christian civilization. The loose appellation of the resulting repertoire as Gregorian Chant has led to a state of confusion regarding the true sources of the music as it survives today.

In earlier times it was considered that a decisive role had been played by Pope Gregory I (590-604) in the creation of the chant. In fact, during the Middle Ages a number of legends were perpetuated to surround the memory of this famous Saint. These include allegations "that Gregory added four plagal tones to the four authentic

tones supposedly introduced by St. Ambrose, and that he received his melodies by inspiration from the Holy Ghost. . . ."\textsuperscript{15} Countless medieval artists pictured Gregory receiving the melodies of the chant from a dove (the symbolic representation of the Holy Ghost) singing into his ear. But this hazy evidence and the fact that there are in existence no manuscripts which contain musical signs or notation from Gregory's times impugns the credibility of these legends. The problems of the authenticity of such ancient traditions are intensified by the wide gap between the dates of Gregory's activities and those of the most important documents for the support of the Gregorian position. John the Deacon's biography of Gregory's life was written about three centuries after Gregory's death—c. 870.\textsuperscript{16}

As early as the last quarter of the 17th century the Gregorian tradition came under considerable questioning. In the last decade of the 19th century it was thoroughly re-questioned by Gevaert.\textsuperscript{17} Today, most scholars agree that Gregorian Chant is the fusion of a number of rites or

\begin{footnotes}
\item[15] Gustave Reese, \textit{Middle Ages}, p. 121.
\item[17] A. Gevaert, \textit{La Mélopée Antique dans le Chant de l'Eglise Latin} (1895), ix ff.
\end{footnotes}
practices—the old repertoire of Rome itself, with Gallican "and even Ambrosian elements, ... a product of the Franconian renaissance."  

At the beginning of the 8th century there were, it can be shown, a great many versions of the liturgy of the Church in use in the various centres of Western Europe. Among others, these included the Gallican, Milanese and Visigothic rites. But certain political manoeuvres were to result in an eventual unification of all aspects of liturgical matters in the West. This was the formation of a thriving empire on the border lands of present-day France and Germany, the Carolingian civilization.

A full recounting of the ramifications of these political matters is too detailed to be included in the present study. It is useful, however, to recall the close connection that existed between the Frankish kingdom and the papal court in Rome. Pope Leo III (795-816) had been accused of "scandalous crimes," and had been forced to flee from Rome to secure the help of Charlemagne. The latter supported the position of the Pope, and Leo was triumphantly reinstated in Rome. In return, for so it must seem, Charlemagne was crowned by Leo as Emperor of the Romans on Christmas Day in the year 800. By this ritual, and through numerous other political moves in successive years, the

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Roman Empire in the West was re-established. Thus a curious intermingling of temporal and religious power was instigated and propelled toward a position of ascendancy over a great part of Western Europe. This union was also to become a serious rival to the authority claimed by the rulers of the Byzantine Empire in the East.

The first attempt to introduce the papal or Roman rite into the Frankish lands seems to have been undertaken by Charlemagne's father Pepin, who, in 754, declared the rites of the incumbent Gallican Church to be outlawed by royal decree.\(^\text{19}\) Owing to the fact that Roman service books were not readily available, and that much of the diffusion of the Roman chant must have depended on oral transmission, this move met with little actual success. Later, Charlemagne pressed matters more urgently. All books of the older rites were commanded to be destroyed, and "a new Sacramentary . . . was introduced, a mixture of Roman and Gallican rites. This new Sacramentary was henceforth regarded as representing the authentic Roman liturgy."\(^\text{20}\)

As is common with artistic importations, the Roman rite began to be subtly impregnated with Gallican

\(^{19}\) Ibid., p. 184.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.
characteristics. Feasts peculiar to the Gallican Church were introduced into the imported liturgy. Wellesz suggests that the latter part of the ninth century is an appropriate "date for this new Roman-Gallican Antiphonary, because the fusion of the Roman and Gallican feasts and prayers in the Sacramentaries took place at that date." ^21

DECAY AND REFORM OF THE CHANT

The subsequent history of Gregorian chant, from the period of establishment in the 9th century to the present day, requires also some careful consideration. Rembert Weakland considers that Gregorian chant "has continued in unbroken use in the Roman rite..." ^22 It must be pointed out, however, that the practice of the chant was subjected to both considerable abuse and numerous attempts at reform during the centuries that intervene the formation of the chant and the most recent restoration instituted in the late 19th century. In order to reconstruct a clear view of the many issues and events which constitute this history, it is convenient to divide the long period into two sections. The line of demarcation between these periods is the Council of Trent (1545-1563).

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21 Ibid.

The establishment of a universal practice in which the traditional chant of the church would remain in a state of preservation was the concern of the legislations of a number of councils in the pre-Tridentine period. P. Pellegrino Maria Ernetti believes that these efforts against abuses and decadence begin with the Concilio Romano in 853, and goes on to list eight important councils between 1257 and 1317 which were "feroci contro tutti i generi di abusi." The same writer considers that these early struggles toward reform culminate in the celebrated Apostolic Constitutions of John XXII, the Docta Sanctorum Patrum, which date from 1324-1325. The first and third parts of these constitutions were concerned with the problems that arose owing to the intrusion of polyphony into the materials of the monophonic chant. A full discussion of the attempted reforms is contained in Ernetti's volume.

An interesting view of the general state of affairs concerning the liturgy of the church in the 13th century has been provided by S.J.P. Van Dijk and J. Hazelden Walker.

24 Ibid., p. 174.
25 Ibid., pp. 175-192.
The practices of the liturgy in Rome itself were hardly to be called uniform. Considerable differences were to be found between the Office of the papal court and the various churches of Rome. Social and economic problems were also to exert a degree of influence on the difficulties which beset the establishment of a universal practice. The enormous task of performing the Hours of the Daily Office, it seems, was less the result of pious devotion than of a system inaugurated to combat idleness in the monasteries. Lack of opportunity for manual labour in diverse regions was often the source of a sharp increase in official prayer. As a matter of course, there was much criticism voiced against the burden of the Office, and resistance was often openly expressed. Lack of space prevents us from pursuing the ramifications of these problems to a greater degree. It need only be said that the results were a variety of practices which tended to weaken all efforts directed toward the establishment of a universal liturgical practice.

A number of factors were eventually to combine and thus bring about an urgent demand for a number of reforms in church matters. The threat of the Protestant Reformation had become an overwhelming reality during the 16th century and had shaken the Mother Church to her very foundations. The ensuing Counter-Reformation brought to the Roman Church an enormous infusion of new vitality which cried out for a re-ordering of all aspects of church affairs. As a result,
a lengthy series of deliberations and legislations were undertaken by the various committees of the famous Council of Trent.

The musical reforms were dealt with at the twenty-second and the twenty-fourth general sessions of the Council of Trent in 1562 and 1563. A further consideration of musical problems was delegated to a Commission of Cardinals which sat in Rome during the following two years (1564-1565). The results, however, were rather feeble and negligible. "The final recommendations of the Council were negative rather than positive. . . . The Council of Trent simply forbade particular practices and insisted that certain results be obtained, without specifying the means." Although a return to monophonic music was initially strongly advocated, the retention of polyphonic music was insisted upon by a number of influential persons connected with the ecclesiastical circles—the Emperor Ferdinand I, and Duke Albert V of Bavaria, the patron of Lassus. Indeed, a disparaging attitude had arisen toward chant which further assisted in its decline. The Latin accentuation of the Medieval times was thoroughly misunderstood by Renaissance


28 Ibid., pp. 448-449.
musicians. The latter were of the opinion that the manuscripts of the Middle Ages were "defective and sought to correct them." 29

The aforementioned important position of polyphonic music was, indirectly, a further blow to the chant. In the large churches elaborate polyphonic settings of the Masses were performed at important services. The smaller churches had formerly adhered to plainsong as they were not equipped to execute the more complex music. But now, they elected to abandon plainsong and "to emulate the larger churches as far as possible; they consequently called for Masses written as part-music, yet not too difficult." 30 The demand for such short Masses led to the composition of a new and ubiquitous type in a simple musical style known as the Missa brevis.

Immediately following the decrees of the Council of Trent, a stand was made toward the universal adoption of a standard form of the liturgy. Pius V declared in 1568 and in 1570 the use of the Roman Breviary and Missal as obligatory. The only exceptions were to be those rites which had been in existence for more than two-hundred years. 31

29 Ibid., p. 450.

30 Ibid.

The wider employment of a uniformity of the liturgy had at last been rendered practical through the invention of printing and the wide dissemination of printed materials. It was during this same period that several "editions" of the traditional melodic formulas of the chant were prepared and ultimately published. Palestrina was originally appointed to direct the preparation of a new edition, but soon retired from the commission. These editions were principally concerned with a reformation of the melodic formulas in which the melismas on unaccented syllables were to be eliminated. Needless to say, the results were less than successful. The *Editio Medicea*, which was eventually prepared by Anerio and Suriano and published in Rome in 1614, is considered to be a "drastic" version of the chant and is definitely not reliable.\(^32\)

Unfortunately the Medicean edition that resulted from an attempt at reform was not founded on scholarly principles and reflected more the esthetics of the late Renaissance than the early Middle Ages. This edition, however, remained the source of all subsequent editions until the 19th century.\(^33\)

It is not our intention to create the impression that the post-Tridentine period was one of virtual complaisance with regard to liturgical legislation and reform. On the contrary, R. G. Hayburn lists no less than eleven such

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legislations between the Piae Sollicitudinis of Alexander VII which was issued in 1657 and the Declaration of Cardinal Patrizi of 1842 and 1846. 34

A step that would ultimately lead to the standardization of a universal liturgy was taken by Pope Sixtus V. On January 22, 1588, the Congregation of Sacred Rites and Ceremonies was created. 35 "Moderation of the Liturgy" was the prime responsibility of the Congregation, but in actual practice it "has been chiefly concerned with the causes of beatification and canonization of saints." As soon as the authorizations of the Council of Trent had received publication in the form of liturgical books, the Congregation simply limited its activities to "decrees and responses to difficulty." Attempts and efforts toward liturgical reform and revision did not take place until the late 19th century. It was at this time that Pope Leo XIII appointed two additional commissions in order to create a measure of balance with the Congregation's "preoccupation with beatification and canonization." In 1891 a Liturgical Commission was established "to codify past decrees and to advise the Congregation on liturgical questions. . . ."


35 F.R. McManus, "Rites, Congregation of," New Catholic Encyclopedia, XII (1967), 518-519. The information which follows in this paragraph has been drawn entirely from this article.
A little more than a decade later the Historico-liturgical Commission was formed to deliberate on "historical questions, with special reference to the eventual reform of the liturgical books."

The liturgical reforms of the twentieth century continue with the Motu proprio of Pius X which was issued on November 22, 1903. This pronouncement decreed upon the "norms of music" to be employed at the services, and called for "holiness, true art and universality." The list of recommended music was headed by Gregorian chant.

Somewhat earlier a changing attitude on the part of music historians and a new interest in liturgical history had merged to become prime factors in a movement which sought to restore Gregorian chant to its Urform. According to Willi Apel, "the first tangible results" were P. Lambillotte's Antiphonare de Saint Grégoire (Brussels, 1851) and Antiphonarium Romanum (Paris, 1854). Edmonde de Coussemaker's contributions in the form of reprints of medieval theoretical treatises followed between 1864 and 1876.

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The contribution of the justly-famous Benedictines of Solesmes must be considered to be the most decisive factor involved in the restoration of a correct text for the chant during the last hundred years. This work was instigated by Dom Guéranger and carried on by a number of dedicated scholars including Dom Pothier and Dom Mocquereau. The results of their research manifested itself in the *Editio Vaticana*, and the *Paléographie Musicale*.

In 1948 Pius XII appointed a new commission to continue the work initiated by Pius X. Named the "Pontifical Commission for the General Restoration of the Liturgy," this group was entrusted with "a partial revision of the Roman Missal, Breviary and Pontifical."\(^{39}\) For the purpose of a complete reform of all the liturgical books, Paul VI created a new commission, the *Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy*. This was the decree of the Vatican Council II on December 4, 1963 and the *motu proprio Sacram liturgicam*, January 25, 1964.

It is clear from this discussion that a study of Gregorian chant from its modern editions only would be most perilous.

THE PSALMS

The structure of the texts of the psalms is peculiar to the Jewish Synagogue and by inheritance to the Christian

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\(^{39}\) McManus, "Rites," 518-519.
Church. "The psalm-text is composed of a number of nonmetrical verses, each of which is divided into two members that balance each other as antecedent and consequent." This important aspect of the psalm-text was based on the Hebraic penchant for parallelism. Reese notes that "the psalms are rich in more intricate, highly poetic uses of it, as [for example] in the verse: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Eric Werner, in his definitive study of the liturgical and musical connections that exist between the Synagogue and the Church, considers the parallelismus memborium as the very foundation of psalmody. He states that "poetic dichotomy of biblical diction, has been carefully preserved in all translations. . . . It was, moreover, the creative and distinctive element which . . . caused such variegated forms of expression as the Response, the Antiphon, the Refrain-psalm, the Gradual, the Litany, and many others."

THE ROLE OF PSALMS IN THE LITURGY

Before turning our attention to the melodic formulas of Christian psalmody and to the complexities of their


eventual systematization, we must review the main uses of psalmody in the liturgy of the Church. "The great majority of the chants of the Mass and Office are cast in the form of psalmody. Their texts are furnished largely by the 150 Psalms and the Canticles [biblical songs of a psalm-like structure drawn from parts of the Scriptures other than the Psalter of David] of the Old and New Testaments." 43

The psalms occupy a position of enormous importance in the Daily Office. In fact, the prime consideration of the Office Hours appears to have been the singing of the cycle of 150 Psalms once each week. A preponderant number of Psalms were designated for use at the major Hours of Matins and Vespers, while the remainder were relegated to the lesser Office Hours, Prime, Tierce, etc. An explanation of the distribution is too detailed for the present study. The reader is referred to Apel's *Gregorian Chant* 44 for a full description.

The use of the Psalms is not less important in the Mass, but "their presence is less obvious." 45 Here the psalms serve as the source of the text, usually a single verse or line, for the Mass Antiphons, Introits, Graduals,


44 Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, pp. 87-95.

Alleluias, Offertories and Communions. The Mass Psalms are not (or rather, no longer) sung in their complete form as they are employed to accompany or to underline a gesture or an act performed by the celebrant. A most interesting example of such abbreviated texts is the Introit. This was used to accompany the entrance of the priest as he made his way from the vestry at the west end of the church to the altar at the east end. The length of the Introit was thus prescribed by the actual distance between these extremities. (Unfortunately the origin of these acts was often forgotten and the liturgical texts were replaced with meaningless and sometimes tasteless musical accompaniments on the part of organists.)

Since the subsequent study is to be primarily concerned with the singing of complete Psalms further discussion of fragmentary psalm-texts is not appropriate at this point. The more ornate type of psalmody of the Mass, however, will not be ignored when it becomes necessary to include it.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PSALM TONES

The melodic formulas of the Psalms are known generally as psalm tones. The general principles of the present-day practice are the same as those of ancient times. The basic construction of a psalm tone is that of a monotone reciting note (the tenor) which is introduced, brought to a semi-cadence and concluded by three main inflections. These are
known as "the intonation (intonatio, initium), the mediant (mediatio) in the middle and the termination (terminatio) at the end." The intonation introduces the first syllables of the first word while the mediant and the termination are the closing syllables of the first and second halves of the psalm verse respectively. The other words (and syllables) are sung on the monotone tenor. Because all verses of a psalm are not of equal length, a small inflection known as a flex is often interpolated between the tenor and the mediant or the final. This practice appears, however, to be a later addition. It is not prescribed by the most ancient tonaries or service books. A succinct resume of the modern use of the flex is to be found in Apel's Gregorian Chant.

PSALMODY AND MODALITY

In present practice the psalm tones are systematized into nine categories, eight of which are "regular and normal" and are associated with the eight modes. The ninth psalm tone is known as the Tonus peregrinus, literally "strange, foreign," unusual because it has two reciting tones or tenors, "on a for the first half of the verse and on g for


The "normal" eight psalm tones are equipped with one tenor only. In addition, some "medieval books contain several other 'irregular' psalm tones, which apparently were used only for certain occasions and in certain localities." These irregular psalm tones are rarely prescribed in modern books. The tenor notes of the normal modes are in most cases a fifth above the final in the authentic modes and a third above the final in the plagal modes. The exceptions are modes III and VIII in which the tenor is c and mode IV in which the tenor is a.

One of the most perplexing and difficult problems that faces musical scholars concerned with chant is that of a satisfactory and workable connection between the systematization of the psalm tones and the creation of a scalar system, that is, the medieval church or ecclesiastical modes. As we have seen, the psalm tones were melodic formulas which decorated the tenor or reciting note, and it must be granted that the tenor of the psalm tone was the most important note of the psalm-chant. On the other hand, it is well known that in the codification of a modal system the supremacy of the final was very early established. A clear account of the numerous ramifications of modes in all cultures has been prepared by Eric Werner.

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48 Ibid., p. 212.
49 Ibid., p. 213.
50 Werner, Sacred, pp. 373-409.
Presently it is only possible to hypothesize about the necessity to reduce a musical repertoire such as the Psalms to a workable system of modes. Gustave Reese suggests that the following steps may have been the basis of this development:

1. "Melody types of antiphons, responds, etc. [are] classified, but are assigned the rank for symbolical or other non-musical reasons. . . ."

2. "The melodies are recognized as entities aside from their symbolical significance and are assigned a specifically musical status. . . ."

3. "An attempt is made to analyze the melodies."

4. The intervallic combinations of different scales are investigated and codified in theory.

THE SOURCES

The sources required for a study of the psalmodic aspect of Gregorian chant are numerous and diverse. These may be classified in three important groups: tonaries, theoretical treatises and service books—Antiphonals and Graduals, etc.—which contain musical notation. Only those sources which pertain to the period of the formation of the Frankish-Roman chant will be considered useful for the subsequent study which is to be limited to a well-defined chronological span.

51 Reese, Middle Ages, p. 163.
Tonaries often contain examples of the various melodies assigned to each mode, and some further information concerning "distinctions within each modal category." As well, the chants of the liturgy are classified and specified according to the mode to which they are to be sung and to their position in the various rites with which they are associated. Invaluable in regard to the content of the tonaries is the recent publication by the well-known scholar Michel Huglo entitled Les Tonaires: Inventaire, Analyse, Comparaison. Huglo places great stress upon the value of the tonaries in ancient times for singers.

A une époque où la notation musicale n'avait pas encore été inventée pour noter l'ensemble des mélodies de l'Antiphonaire et du Graduel grégorien, le tonaire est un livre éminemment pratique destiné à faire apprendre méthodiquement au chantre les éléments variables d'une psalmodie très évoluée. In an epoch when the musical notation had not yet been invented to notate the collection of melodies of the Gregorian Antiphoner and Gradual, the tonary was an eminently practical book destined to make known methodically to the singer the variable elements of a rather evolutionary psalmody.

52 Willi Apel, Gregorian Chant, p. 52.

53 In medieval times the words modus and tonus were interchangeable. Proof of this statement is to be found in the text of the Commemoratio Brevis (See Chapter I, p. 35f.).


55 Ibid., p. 12.
There are several important theoretical treatises of Frankish origin dating from medieval times which contain a considerable discussion and demonstration of matters peculiar to the psalm tones and to the modes. The treatises of Alcuin and Amalarius of Metz date from the Carolingian era, but their content is so brief and tentative with regard to musical matters that their value is not paramount in a detailed study such as ours. The most useful treatises date from the tenth century. At this time a definite discussion of psalmody was included as one of the central problems considered in the treatises. Fortunately, all are easily accessible in the edition of Martin Gerbert which has been reissued in facsimile.  

Special mention must be made of the *Commemoratio Brevis de Tonis et Psalmis Modulandis*. Several manuscripts in fragments are available. For a complete list of these see *The Theory of Music: From the Carolingian Era up to 1400*. An edition has existed since 1784 in Martin Gerbert's *Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica*. It has since come to light, however, that this scholar published an incomplete manuscript copy. For the purposes of this study, the author


has been provided with an edition based on the only complete manuscript—Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Ms. Gud. lat. 2° 72 (4376). This is an exceptionally important treatise owing to the fact that the melodic formulas of the psalm tones and antiphons are in daseian symbols and are thus easily transcribed into modern notation. Since the Commemoratio Brevis was the product of the early decades of the tenth century it must be considered to predate readable neumes by about a century. In addition, it appears to be the earliest account of psalm tones and modal classification. Indeed, Michel Huglo places this treatise in a position of front rank importance:

... c'est la première fois que nous trouvons par écrit l'exposé complet des règles de psalmodie qu'on chercherait en vain dans les antiphonaires ou dans les tonaires plus anciens. Plus tard, les rédacteurs de tonaires prendront l'habitude de noter, en neumes ou sur lignes, un verset psalmodique pour chaque ton. Plutôt cet élément nouveau dans le tonaire est-il dû à l'exposé de psalmodie de la Commemoratio Brevis. 

... this is the first occasion that we discover in writing the complete outline of the rules of psalmody for which one would search in vain in the antiphoners or in the most ancient tonaries. Later, the writers of tonaries grasped the habit of notating, in neumes or on the lines, a psalm verse for each tone. Perhaps that new element in the tonary is owing to the outline of psalmody of the Commemoratio Brevis.

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60 Huglo, Les Tonaires, p. 65.
In addition to the treatises and tonaries which are readily available for scrutiny and study, a number of important manuscripts of service books have been issued in photographic facsimile by the Benedictines of Solesmes. Each manuscript in facsimile is provided with an accompanying study which contains considerable discussion of some aspect of the chant. A general introduction to the wide scope of the entire topic is included in the first volume. Other aspects such as notation, rhythm, text and musical structure are considered at appropriate points.

A complete and up-to-date volume containing information about all known manuscripts in existence has recently been published by the same group. This is the second series of a critical edition of Le Graduel Romain entitled Les Sources. The content is most conveniently set up in several classifications such as the date of the manuscript, the locale of the original source and the content. As well, a concise description of the various chant types in each manuscript is included.

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61 Paléographie Musicale: Fac-Similés Phototypiques des Principaux Manuscrits de Chant. 2 series, 17 vols., (Solesmes: 1889-).

MODERN EDITIONS

The volumes of Gregorian chant in use in our own times have also been the contribution of the Benedictines of Solesmes in association with the Sacred Congregation of Rites of Rome. Important volumes are the *Graduale Sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae*, the *Antiphonale Sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae*, and a general compendium of selected chants, the *Liber usualis*. The appearance of these books is one of the ramifications of the restoration of the medieval traditions of the chant during the last hundred years. The Solesmes versions of the various chants may not be absolutely final, but they do afford the student and the scholar a useful and relatively reliable source for a comparison of the results of transcriptions.

It must be pointed out, however, that the results of this restoration were a compromise between musicological scholarship and the obligations of the Benedictines to the Church of Rome. For this reason, these volumes must be considered to be a practical edition of the chant rather than an authentic *Urtext*.


Finally, some discussion of the existing literature is necessary. Although an enormous amount has been written on Gregorian chant in general, very little specific and thus useful material is available about psalmody. What has been done appears to be a reiteration of the same vague series of generalities from volume to volume. Even the usually dependable Gustave Reese is hard pressed to arrive at any satisfactory conclusions in his chapters pertaining to chant in Music in the Middle Ages. Indeed, his presentation is disappointingly lacking in authoritative opinion. The aforementioned Gregorian Chant by Willi Apel is thorough but, as will be seen, tends to reiterate a number of conflicting opinions of many other scholars. Extremely problematical are the contributions of some Belgian scholars such as Auda and Gevaert. These writers are at pains to convince the reader of the existence of an intimate link between the modal theories of the ancients of classical times and those of the medieval chant. Auda's book, in particular, is a profusion of scales and diagrams all equipped with a complicated terminology based on the ancient Eastern modes.

66 Reese, *Middle Ages*.

67 Apel, *Gregorian Chant*.


69 A. Gevaert, *La Mélopée*. 
It is by now accepted--regretfully by some--that such a connection is extremely difficult to demonstrate.

This thesis is a study of the Frankish psalmody of the early tenth century. The investigation focuses in particular on the simple psalmody of the Daily Office—the central concern of the Commemoratio Brevis—but references by the author of the treatise to other elements of the chant (antiphons and solemn tones) have not been overlooked. This early practice has been compared, whenever possible, to the late "standard" psalmody, and as a result of this comparison it has been possible to discuss certain of the steps in its evolution.

A few words about the musical examples are necessary. Owing to the fact that the notated examples in the manuscripts of the Commemoratio Brevis employ daseian symbols to indicate the pitches, it would have been an arbitrary exercise to have transcribed them in the neumes of Gregorian notation. In this study, the examples from the source are given in modern notation. Black notes without stems—to give the notes properties of duration and rhythm would only complicate the examples unnecessarily—indicate pitches. The treble clef has been used to avoid the introduction of leger lines. But it is to be understood that the pitches actually sound one octave lower than written. The grouping of notes under slurs indicates that two or more notes are to be sung to a single syllable. In many examples it has
been necessary to consider the relationship of the tenor of the psalm tone with either the intonation formula or the mediant cadence. In these examples the tenor has been written as a breve: \( \overline{\overline{\text{H}}} \). To facilitate a comparison of other sources with our examples from the *Commemoratio Brevis*, the former have also been transcribed into modern notation. This is not the case, however, when the actual neumes of the Gregorian notation are under consideration. In such examples the ancient notation has been preserved.

To indicate pitches in the text, \( c, d, e, \) etc. have been used for the octave below middle C; and \( c', d', e', \) \( d'' \), etc. for the octave above. Upper case, \( G, A, \) etc. has been used for the notes in the second octave below middle C.

The wording for the psalms in the *Commemoratio Brevis* varies in many instances from the Vulgate. No attempt has been made to correct the discrepancies since this would distort the examples.

In keeping with recent practice all Latin and French passages have been provided with translations, the only exceptions being isolated phrases where the meaning is obvious.
CHAPTER I

FIRST INTONATIONS

The first inflection of a psalm tone is an ascending figure of two, three or four notes. This portion is set to the initial syllables of each verse of the psalm to introduce the recitation note (or tenor).

Example 1 The Intonation Inflection of the First Psalm Tone from the Commemoratio Brevis.¹

\[ \text{Beati immaculati} \]

Properly speaking the last note of the intonation figure in our example is the beginning of the recitation. This demarcation is not, however, universal. Some scholars, Apel² among them, insist that the first intonation is

¹ Commemoratio Brevis, Wolfenbüttel manuscript (see note 4, below), f 84.
comprised only of those notes which appear prior to the recitatio. We prefer to consider the matter differently, adopting the authority of the Vatican Edition which includes the first reciting note as a member of the intonation inflection.  

Psalm tones are the central concern of the early tenth-century Frankish treatise the *Commemoratio Brevis de Tonis et Psalmis Modulandis*. The author of this document, a witness to the early practice, sets out a system of eight psalm tones each of which is associated with one of eight modes. But before we go on to discuss the information of this source, it is important—since the treatise has difficulties on this point—to make clear the distinctions that exist between the words "modus" and "tonus."

The confusion surrounding these words is not limited to the document at hand, but has been endemic to the problem in both ancient and modern times. This misunderstanding is exactly paralleled by the perplexed state of affairs which surrounds the Greek words tonoi and harmoniai. To our present understanding, psalm tone refers exclusively to the

3 *Liber usualis*, pp. 113-117.

4 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Ms. *Gud. lat.* 2° 72 (4376).
St. Paul in Carinthia (Lavanthal), Stiftsbibliothek, Ms. 29° 4.2.
entire musical formula—the complete melody, not merely its recitatio—which is employed in the chanting of a single psalm verse. Not to venture too far into this difficult subject, mode denotes, among other things, an organized system of different pitches arranged in scalar order for the convenience of theoretical and historical discussion.

The author of the Commemoratio Brevis evinces some carelessness or confusion about these distinctions. In the first part of his text, "modulatio psalmi" quite clearly signifies "psalm tone." Pitches or tones in the context of the ambitus of a melody are denoted by the use of the word "soni." When "mode"—here considered in its wider sense of a classification of chants—is intended, the word "tonus" is employed.

In the opening portion of the treatise, for his discussion of the standard formulas (neumae regulares), that is, melody types considered to embody the essential features of their respective modes, the author is precise.

5 The Wolfenbüttel manuscript, the only complete source, has been used as the basis of this study. All folio numbers refer to this manuscript unless otherwise indicated. Commemoratio Brevis, f 83.

6 Ibid., f 83.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.
and regular in his choice of words. Later, however, when he embarks upon an explanation of the considerable variability found in psalm tones, a matter with which we will deal at a more appropriate point, confusion arises over the use of "modus" and "tonus".

"Modus" has a specifically musical meaning which we have already discussed. However, it also has a more general meaning: "manner, mode, fashion, way or method." It is clear from the context of the sentences, which at this point are concerned with the "diversity of the antiphons sung with psalms (diversitate antiphonarum quae psalmis adiunguntur)," that the author's attention is directed to matters concerning the manner ("modus") in which variable psalm tones are sung. However, in the first four examples associated with this discussion, the use of the word "tonus" (mode) is inadvertently continued. The author ultimately perceived this error in nomenclature; the subsequent illustrations are correctly entitled "modus." This blunder, found in both manuscript sources, was perpetuated by Gerbert.


10 Commemoratio Brevis, f 84 v.

11 Ibid.

12 Gerbert, Scriptores I, p. 219.
The following table, given as Example 2, contains the first intonations as they appear in the eight normal psalm tones in the *Commemoratio Brevis*.\footnote{Commemoratio Brevis, f 84.}

Example 2 *Commemoratio Brevis: First Intonations of the Eight Normal Psalm Tones*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tonus</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primus Tonus</td>
<td>Beati immaculati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secundus Tonus</td>
<td>Beati qui scrutantus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertius Tonus</td>
<td>Non enim qui operantiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartus Tonus</td>
<td>Tu mandasti mandata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintus Tonus</td>
<td>Utinam dirigantiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sextus Tonus</td>
<td>Tunc non confundar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Septimus Tonus</td>
<td>Confitebor tibi domine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Octavus Tonus</td>
<td>Justificationes tuas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The standard and uniform versions of the psalm tones—the versions more or less as we know them today—were the product of refinement subsequent to the compilation of the *Commemoratio Brevis*.\textsuperscript{14} The later medieval system, except for certain final touches (of no consequence to medievalists and not involving intonations) added in recent times, was established by the eleventh century. This standard practice could be easily demonstrated from early sources. It is more convenient, however, to take advantage of the scholarship of the learned Monks of Solesmes who edited this material and published it in their many service books. Example 3 is a table of the first intonations of the later standard practice.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} Ferretti, *Esthétique*, p. 302.

\textsuperscript{15} *Liber usualis*, pp. 113-117.
A comparison of the ancient practice of the Commemoratio Brevis with that of the Vatican Edition reveals complete agreement in the formulas of the first intonations with the exception of Tones III and IV. As the problem of the fourth tone is more readily explained, we will begin with the latter.

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16 The difference between the intonations of the third psalm tone in the ancient and the later practices involves the tenor. This will be considered in Chapter III (pp. 80-85).
There is an extremely interesting variant of the fourth tone intonation in the manuscript. This contains a most striking substitution for the second note of the formula:

Example 4  Commemoratio Brevis: Variant of the Fourth Tone Intonation Formula

Deus Deus

It would seem clear that this particular error is in fact owing to a copyist's mistake. It will be noted that this intonation is based on a melodic principle which is entirely opposed to the one which underlies the intonations of the eight normal psalm tones. Of the five disjunct intervals contained in the latter, none is larger than a minor third. In the suspect example there are two changes of direction embodying leaps both of which exceed the minor third interval of the normal intonation. Indeed, the second leap of the suspect version is a major sixth. This interval is virtually unknown in the Gregorian repertoire.

17 Commemoratio Brevis, f 85 v.
The state of the text in the two complete manuscripts of the *Commemoratio Brevis* does not inspire complete confidence on the part of the reader. This is not, of course, a problem confined to the present sources. Copyists in the Middle Ages were very frequently unacquainted with the subject matter of their labours. Neither of the existing copies of our treatise is an autograph; both contain errors no musician could have made. Moreover, the copyist—if not the compiler of the treatise himself—is by no means well informed. The oldest surviving source of the treatise, the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, appears to be a digest (perhaps the lecture notes?) derived from the work of another better informed musician. The difficulty over "modus" and "tonus" already referred to, and other similar errors, will attest to this. The same ambiguities are repeated with few exceptions in the St. Paul in Carinthia manuscript which it could easily be shown is a copy of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript of the source. As no independent errors appear in the second source, the descent of the manuscripts seems quite clear: the St. Paul manuscript is a direct copy of the Wolfenbüttel source.

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18 There is an excellent example of this lack of understanding by copyists of the material at hand in another source of the *Commemoratio Brevis*. The Ms. lat. 7211 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, contains some material from a medieval mathematics treatise interspersed with the musical examples of our source.
To return to the problem at hand, it is entirely likely that the use of c for the second note of the suspect example—the actual cause of the problematical divergence—was the result of simple carelessness on the part of the copyist. The pitches of the psalm tones in the Commenoratio Brevis are represented by the so-called daseian symbols. The gamut or range of eighteen possible notes employed in this system is notated through the use of four basic signs. These are repositioned—that is, reversed, inverted, reversed in inversion and inclined—so as to represent the four notes of four disjunct tetrachords of similar construction. For example, the sign (\text{\textit{f}}) is e, but when reversed (\text{\textit{f}'} ) is G, when inverted (\text{\textit{f}}') is f' sharp, when reversed and inverted (\text{\textit{f}''}) is b and when inclined in reversed inversion (\text{\textit{f}'''}) is c'' sharp.

With respect to the case at hand, the manuscript reads:

Example 5 Commenoratio Brevis: Facsimile of the Variant of the Fourth Psalm Tone

\[ \text{\textit{f}} \quad \text{\textit{f}'} \quad \text{\textit{f}''} \]

Deus  Deus

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19 A complete discussion of daseian notation is to be found in E.J. Grutchfield's "Hubald: A Millenary Commemoration," The Musical Times, lxxi, 704-708.

20 Commenoratio Brevis, f 85 v.
The sign \( \textcircled{\textbullet} \) for the problematical note \( \mathfrak{c} \) is the fourth note of the lowest tetrachord. When reversed to \( \textcircled{\textbullet} \) this sign represents the fourth note of the next higher tetrachord, namely \( g_\circ \). This emendation brings the variant formula into line with the intonation of the fourth normal psalm tone. We suggest that the manuscript should read:

\[
\begin{array}{cc}
\text{Deus} & \text{Deus} \\
\end{array}
\]

Example 6  **Corrected Version of the Variant Formula**

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Deus Deus} \\
\end{array}
\]

It is significant that the copyist of the St. Paul manuscript perceived and corrected the error.\(^{21}\) In this source the fourth psalm tone reads as in our Example 6.

It is not so easy to dispose of another discrepancy between the ancient and the modern practice. In four cases the fourth psalm tone in the *Commemoratio Brevis* is seen to begin as follows:\(^{22}\)

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\(^{21}\) *Commemoratio Brevis*, Ms. St. Paul, f 6 v.

\(^{22}\) *Commemoratio Brevis*, Ms. Wolfenbüttel, f 85 v.
Example 7  Commemoratio Brevis: Four Similar Variants of the Fourth Regular Psalm Tone

It should be noted that the commentary of the Commemoratio Brevis becomes especially untrustworthy at this particular point. The discussion at hand is concerned with textual declamation: "... euphony, when articulating vowels (... pro euphonie causa, ut ibi in distinguendo vocales coeunt)." Such matters do not in any way involve intonations. It is entirely unlikely that the author would choose this moment to introduce a new intonation without so much as a passing reference to the novelty. This is not, however, a simple scribal error, for the figure is repeated a number of times. But it must be observed that at this place in the manuscript the discussion is illustrated densely with notated examples of psalms (See Figure 1 p. 45). It is noticeable that the plethora of symbols has caused the number of errors on this particular page to be increased appreciably. It is certainly conceivable that the

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23 Ibid., f 85.
Figure 1.—Psalm tones with daseian notation from *Commemoratio Brevis*, Wolfenbüttel Ms. Gud. lat. 20° 72 (4376) (folio 85v).
scribe might confuse the daseian symbols (the differences between the signs for e and g ( tapped and ) are slight) and continue in his confusion for some time before correcting himself. A simple substitution of one daseian symbol restores the four suspect versions to that of the normal fourth psalm tone:

Example 8 Restoration of the Fourth Psalm Tone Variants

But it must remain a possibility that in early times there may have been more than one intonation formula for the fourth tone.

There is, as noted earlier, a lack of agreement between the initial note in the regular intonations of the Commemoratio Brevis and the Vatican Edition. At first glance this difference might be reasoned and explained as a simple copyist's error.
Example 9  Comparison of the Fourth Psalm Tone Intonation

Commemoratio Brevis  Vatican Edition

Tu mandasti mandata  Tu mandasti mandata

As we have already seen with regard to faulty nomenclature and the foregoing examples concerned with the suspect variants of the fourth psalm tone, the manuscripts of the *Commemoratio Brevis* do contain a number of obvious errors (which, however, Gerbert did not emend). But in the case of several examples of the fourth tone, the discrepancies between the ancient Frankish practice and the later medieval system cannot be reconciled as mere scribal errors. For one thing, there are five further examples of the psalm tone in the text of the *Commemoratio Brevis* which are identical to the version given in our Example 4.24

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Example 10  **Commemoratio Brevis: Intonation Formulas for the Fourth Regular Psalm Tone**

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Dies diei} & \quad \text{Magna est gloria} \\
\text{Hic accipiet} & \quad \text{Quoniam alieni} \\
\text{Justiciae domine}
\end{align*}\]

As this intonation appears a number of times in the text of the source, it cannot be dismissed as the result of an error on the part of a scribe. Rather it would appear to be the standard practice for the fourth tone in the region of the author of the *Commemoratio Brevis*.

The intonations of psalm tones I and II are completely uniform. The examples proper to these tones appear mainly in the first half of the manuscript where the copyist's errors are less frequent and where no other difficulties are encountered. The intonations of the fifth, seventh and eighth psalm tones do not give rise to much discussion on our part since they have not been demonstrated in the generous manner that the author of the source considered necessary for the others. In fact, the seventh and eighth psalm tones are set out in the treatise only once. The fifth reappears near the end of the manuscript in connection
with the presentation of complete psalms. But here the intonation formulas are in complete agreement with their first appearances in the treatise.

It must not be assumed, however, that all other examples of first intonations contained in the *Commemoratio Brevis* are as regular as those we have been discussing. An examination of the third tone does reveal a number of elisions and elaborations. Three complete examples, contiguous to one another in the manuscript, display considerable confusion. In several cases the examples have dispensed altogether with the intonation formula, and begin directly with the *recitatio* of the psalm tone:

Example 11 *Commemoratio Brevis: Third Tone Intonation Formulas*

Deus judicium Hic accipiet

Coram illo Parcet(pauperi)

---


A change of style or principle of this kind would not bewilder those engaged in the chanting of psalms in later times. The late standard practice drastically curtailed the use of the first intonation. The discussion of the eight psalm tones contained in the Liber usualis commences with the following rubric:

The first verse of a psalm is always intoned by the Cantor with the formula of the intonation proper to each tone. The following verses begin on the dominant. This rule is to be observed at all the Hours.

As will be seen, the modern practice permits the repetition of the intonation for all verses of a psalm only in the case of the Gospel Canticles or at Mass.

It can be shown, however, that the practice of the aforementioned rubric was not usual in earlier times. The majority of the examples in the Commemoratio Brevis are equipped with intonation formulas even though the discussion in the commentary may be directed at other aspects of psalmody. On two occasions the author has seen fit to incorporate the complete text of a psalm or psalms in a series of contiguous examples. One appearance of a psalm tone (the fifth tone in this case) occurs near the end of the treatise, and utilizes all eight verses of Psalm 137 and all eight verses of Psalm 96. We are not

27 Liber usualis, p. 112.
28 Commemoratio Brevis, f 86 r and v.
given the first intonations for each of the verses in daseian signs; the discussion at hand does not pertain to intonations. However, the specific occurrence of the intonation for the last verse of Psalm 137 makes it certain that they were to be repeated for the intervening verses. Nevertheless, one can see the four examples *sine intonatio* (Ex. 11) in our treatise, as an early appearance of what was to become the normal practice for psalter antiphons in the later Middle Ages, even if it is clear from the evidence we have already presented that this was not the usual early practice. Here again, the evidence of a different inflection appears more than once. Apparently it is safer to assume that the ancient practice offered more freedom than that of the later medieval style.

The same series of apparently corrupted examples of the third psalm tone contain other differing versions of the first intonation. One of these commences with the reciting note, drops to the second note of the normal intonation and repeats the figure before beginning the usual reiteration of the tenor: 29

> 29  
Example 12  Commemoratio Brevis: Intonation Formula of the Third Psalm Tone

Et humiliabit

Two others omit the second note of the inflection altogether: 30

Example 13  Commemoratio Brevis: Intonation Formulas of the Third Psalm Tone

Suscipiant montes  In sua iustitia

Here again, there are two possible explanations of these different intonations. It will be noted that these intonations remain within the usual outline of the regular intonations. For this reason, they may well be acceptable variants of the normal third tone intonation.

Canticles as well as psalms are employed in three of the Office Hours. There are seventeen Canticles in all,

30  Ibid., f 85 r and v.
each of which has a psalm-like text that has been drawn from a poetic section of the Bible. Three from the New Testament, specifically the Gospel of St. Luke, are known as the major or Gospel Canticles. These form part of the closing section of the Office to which they belong and are preceded and followed by an appropriate antiphon:

Compline: *Nunc dimittis servum tuum*; Luke 2: 29-32
Lauds: *Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*; Luke 1: 68-79

In later practice, the psalmody of the Gospel Canticles (as for the psalmody of the Mass) is considerably more elaborate than that of the simple psalmody of the Daily Office. The explanatory text given in the *Liber usualis* directs that the first intonation formula is to be repeated for each successive verse of the Gospel Canticle "even in the Office for the Dead." Embellished formulas known as the Solemn Tones are used for the Gospel Canticles.

The question of the Solemn Tones is not directly broached by the author of the *Commemoratio Brevis*. However, certain factors suggest that some attention was being given to matters concerning the Gospel Canticles at the outset of the source. The first sixteen musical examples are comprised of antiphon texts and formulas of the psalm tones set to the

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31 Considerable discussion of the Gospel Canticles and the lesser Canticles will be found in Apel, *Gregorian*, pp. 20-22.

32 *Liber usualis*, p. 113.
words of the lesser doxology. It is to be noted that the texts of all these antiphons are those which are employed for the two principal Gospel Canticles: the Benedictus and the Magnificat. Therefore it is clear that the author, in fact, was directly concerned with antiphons which would have received Solemn Tones in a later practice.

Example 8 is a table of the intonation formulas of the psalm tones associated with the Gospel antiphons from the Commemoratio Brevis and the Solemn Tones of the later practice. The intonations of the simpler psalmody of both practices has also been included to facilitate comparison.

33 In addition, three of the examples have marginal references to antiphons not associated with the Gospel Canticles. Commemoratio Brevis, f 83 v.

34 Commemoratio Brevis, Solemn Tones, f 83 r and v and f 84; Regular psalm tones, f 84.

35 Liber usualis, pp. 207-213.
Example 14  Intonation Formulas

Commemoratio Brevis  Vatican Edition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solemn Tones</th>
<th>Psalm Tones</th>
<th>Solemn Tones</th>
<th>Psalm Tones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gloria . . .
It will be immediately noted that the basic framework of all these intonation formulas is quite similar. In fact, the essential outlines of the solemn and the simple inflections of the later medieval practice (with the exception of the seventh tone) are identical. The main difference is the elaboration by means of the addition of two-note groups in the Solemn Tones. On the other hand, the intonation formulas of the Gospel Canticle tones presented in the *Commemoratio Brevis* have not been elaborated at all. Indeed, they are in most cases comprised of the same number of notes as the normal psalm tones. In certain cases, however, they have different outlines.

The subtle differences in the outline of Gospel Tones II, V, VII and VIII found in these examples from the *Commemoratio Brevis* require some discussion. An unusually high degree of clarity with respect to the notation has been attained in this section of the manuscript. Rather than simply assign a daseian symbol to each syllable of the text, the author has seen fit to employ a diastematic system in which the daseian signs are indicated at the side of the page in ascending order complete with tone and semitone markings (see Figure 2, p. 57). The appropriate syllables of the chant text are heightened and lowered to the positions of their assigned pitches. (This incidentally must be regarded as one of the first appearances of an emergent staff notation.) The careful delineation of the melodies of these psalm tones in this manner removes any suspicion that the
Figure 2.--The Eight Regular Psalm Tones from the Commemoratio Brevis, Wolfenbüttel Ms. Gud. lat. 2° 72 (4376) (folio 84).
differences in the pitches are mere scribal errors. It appears more reasonable to conclude again that there was greater freedom in the ancient psalmody than in the more tightly organized system of the later practice.

Although it would seem that the Gospel Canticles were not yet at this time distinguished by an elaborate psalmody, they were being treated in a special manner. On at least two occasions in the course of the commentary the author directs his attention to the Gospel Canticles:

Quas tamen modulationes ubi morosiori cantu est opus, utpote ad cantica evangeliorum cum ad hoc vacat, secundum quod superius expressum est, assumere solemus. 36

These intonations, as was indicated earlier, are used where the performance of a chant is slower, as for instance for the Gospel Canticles.

and

Cantica quoque evangelii altius et morosius ceteris. 37

The Gospel Canticles, however, are to be sung at a higher pitch than the others and more slowly.

Such distinctions, however, belong more properly to questions concerning performance practices and cannot be considered as part of this study.

---

36 Commemoratio Brevis, f 83 v.
37 Ibid., f 87.
CHAPTER II
TERMINATIONS

The concluding inflection of a psalm tone is a descending figure of three or more notes. This portion is set to the last syllables of each verse of the psalm and thus fulfills an important role. This is to function as a decorative cadence for the entire psalm tone, and to articulate the unending flow of the psalmodic cycle. It must be emphasized that the final of a mode has nothing to do with the termination of a psalm tone.

In almost all cases the psalms are sung in association with an antiphon. However, a gradual change in attitude was evidenced with respect to the number of repetitions and the portion of the antiphon to be employed. In very ancient times it appears that the antiphon was sung before and after each verse of the psalm. This practice was to be twice curtailed. In the standard medieval practice, the internal repetitions were omitted—the antiphon was sung only twice: before and after the entire psalm. A further pruning in the late Middle Ages reduced

1 Direct psalmody is employed for a few psalms at the Little Hours. See Apel, Gregorian, p. 179.
the initial antiphon to an incipit of one or two words.  
This last curtailment is in use today.

It has been believed generally that the principle 
which governs the construction of the psalmodic practice 
was one which would provide an association between psalm 
and antiphon and implement the smoothest possible 
transition from one to the other. To accomplish the 
first, two corresponding systems were evolved. Antiphons 
were assigned to one of eight modes, psalms to one of 
eight regular tones. However, the connection between the 
termination of a psalm tone and the incipit of the 
antiphon is somewhat problematical owing to the fact that 
the first notes of the antiphon are quite variable. The 
solution to this was to provide a number of terminations 
for each psalm tone. Thus an appropriate psalm termination 
would be chosen to accommodate the beginning of the 
antiphon. But this (the usual) explanation is an over­
simplification.

For one thing, under closer inspection, the junctures 
would often appear to be anything but smooth. Apel has 
observed that the intervals at the point of connection 
range from the unison to the perfect fifth.\textsuperscript{2}  As we have

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 221-222.
already pointed out, the very nature of the Gregorian melodies is one of a predominantly conjunct motion. It would be difficult to argue that ascending leaps of fourths and descending leaps of fifths satisfy the prescription for smoothness. There is another important indication that the explanation based on the necessity for smoothness was not a simple matter of two adjacent notes. Almost all medieval service books provide several psalm-tone terminations to accommodate antiphons which begin on the same pitch. That is to say, there is often more than one psalm termination which concludes on the same note.

Similarity of melodic contour—suitability of one melodic design to the other—would appear to explain the coupling of psalm termination and antiphon incipit to a far greater degree than the mere nearness of two notes. Terminations ending on the same note were often structured in a manner entirely unlike one another. This melodic independence will be easily seen in the following table drawn from the *Commemoratio Brevis*. Example 1 shows two different psalm terminations of the fourth tone, each of

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3 The connections between psalm tone and antiphon demonstrated in the *Commemoratio Brevis* are, as will be seen, extremely smooth in this respect.

4 *Commemoratio Brevis*, f 85 v.
which ends on g: the difference in structure is notable. The notes in brackets are the initial pitches of the antiphons which follow.

Example 1 Commemoratio Brevis: Terminations of the Fourth Psalm Tone

![Diagram of musical notation]

The research which made possible this fuller interpretation of the connection between the psalm and the antiphon was made by Geveart in his well-known study of Gregorian melodies, La Mélopée antique. This scholar was able to classify approximately two-thousand antiphon melodies into about forty-seven family groups which he calls thèmes. Each group comprises antiphons which have a substantial likeness with respect to their openings. It has recently been noted that groups of antiphons which share a thème are very often assigned to the same termination

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5 Geveart, Mélopée.
and that the melodic structure of the incipit of the antiphon is similar to that of the psalm tone termination. With this in mind, it may be reasoned that the connection between antiphon and psalm tone was based on a thematic similarity rather than the simple correspondance of two tones at the juncture.

Apel has undertaken to demonstrate this theory by comparing terminations of the seventh psalm tone (from the Intonarium of Oddo) with antiphon incipits of the same mode. Example 2, drawn from Apel's Gregorian Chant, "shows Oddo's six terminations (with their present-day designations) as well as the incipits associated with them."  

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7 Gerbert, *Scriptores* II, p. 117.

Example 2  Apel's Comparison of Terminations and Incipits, Mode 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminations</th>
<th>Incipits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I 7.b</td>
<td>Th. 23 var.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seculorum Amen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II 7.c</td>
<td>a Th. 23 b Th. 24 c Th. 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III 7.c²</td>
<td>Th. 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV 7.a</td>
<td>a Th.19, var. b Th.27 c Th.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V 7.d</td>
<td>Th. 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI 7.c²</td>
<td>Th. 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the comparison are effective in that they reveal, for him, a definite likeness of thematic outline between the two. Apel says:

One cannot help feeling that in every instance the termination is well adapted to the ensuing incipit, somehow anticipating its outline and indeed providing a "smooth transition" between the Psalm and the subsequent Antiphon.

\[9\text{Ibid.}\]
One might conclude at least that the whole question of the differentiae is more complex than the simplistic interpretation based on the proximity of two notes at the juncture.

The author of the *Commemoratio Brevis* cannot be said to have been entirely indifferent to the problems associated with the connection of psalms and antiphons. In fact, on one occasion in the course of the commentary, the reader is advised to consider the matter.¹⁰

*Preterea pro diversitate antiphonarum quae psalmis adiunguntur, per omnes pene octo tonarum melodias finis versum variatur.*

Now because of the diversity of the antiphons associated with psalms, the verse endings of nearly all the eight regular intonations are variable.

Nevertheless, the *Commemoratio Brevis* is not at all complete with respect to terminations. The inclusion or the omission of these differentiae varies rather arbitrarily from example to example. While he provides two or three endings for the first tone, to accommodate antiphons beginning on d and f, he does not provide at all for others beginning on other notes. There is an explanation for this casual attitude. The wording of the treatise seems to show that it was intended as an instructive manual for an area much larger than the immediate locale of the author. In his first examples of psalm tones, the author notes that he

---

¹⁰ *Commemoratio Brevis*, f 83 v.
is presenting the "standard formula as it is known in his region. (neuma regularis, quae ita se apud nos habet.)"\textsuperscript{11} From this statement we may readily perceive that terminations—indeed, entire psalm tones—were variable from place to place. In fact, a comparison of the medieval manuscripts shows a great variety in this matter, in many cases exaggerated.

As we have noted in our introduction, the history of the Gregorian repertoire subjected the chant increasingly to change during the centuries which followed its original formation. It may well be that this decay was apparent at the time the \textit{Commemoratio Brevis} was written. It is clear, at any rate, that the original relationship of families of psalm tone terminations and antiphon incipits had been forgotten by this time. And for this reason there were widely divergent local practices in use—practices rather arbitrary in feature. Ferretti has noted this:\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{quote}
Les Antiphonaires et les Tonaires du moyen âge ne sont pas d'accord sur le nombre de ces differentiae; ils en offrent plus ou moins. L'Antiphonaire d'Hartker en donne 41 . . . . . The Antiphoners and the Tonaries of the Middle Ages do not agree on the number of these differentiae; they offer many or few. The Hartker Antiphoner gives 41 . . . .
\end{quote}

We have already established that our author meant the treatise for general consumption: to have insisted too

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, f 83.

\textsuperscript{12} Ferretti, \textit{Esthétique}, p. 322.
forcibly on a set number of terminations for each tone would have been inappropriate on his part.

There can be no doubt that this confused situation of widely differing practices invited reforms. An often ruthless pruning of the chant was to be effected from time to time. These continued unabated until universal standards were established in the early decades of the twentieth century. The employment of one or many terminations differed from community to community. The stricter religious orders, such as the Cistercians, permit the use of only one termination for each psalm tone, while others, especially the Benedictines, permit the use of a great many. It must be kept in mind that the terminations in present use in the Vatican Edition were chosen, in the last analysis, arbitrarily, from a vast repertoire.

For the purpose of our comparison of the early Frankish psalmody with the standard practice, the following examples show the essential similarities of both. The notes in square brackets at the conclusion of each example from the *Commemoratio Brevis* indicate the note upon which the succeeding antiphon commences. The omission of this note indicates that the example in the source was not equipped with a corresponding antiphon. The letters in upper and lower case which have been placed in the beginning of each example taken from the Vatican Edition indicate the final note of the termination. When this letter is written in upper case, the
final note is the final of the corresponding antiphon mode. In the examples of the same edition, the black bar lines denote one, two or three preparatory syllables before the accent, while the bar lines comprised of spaced dashes denote the syllabication after the final accent in the text. The square white notes accommodate extra syllables.

Example 3 Terminations of the First Regular Psalm Tone

Commemoratio Brevis 13                                Vatican Edition 14

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Commemoratio Brevis} & : \\
\text{Vatican Edition} & : \\
\text{seculorum a-men} & : \\
\text{lege domini} & : \\
\text{seculorum a-men} & : \\
\text{seculorum a-men} & : \\
\text{seculorum a-men} & : \\
\end{align*}
\]

13  
Commemoratio Brevis, f 84 v; f 84; f 84 v.

14  
The terminations of the Vatican Edition in our examples have been drawn from the Liber usualis, pp. 113-117.
We include here the termination of the so-called solemn tone. This melody is identical to the first termination in this table.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnote}
\text{seculorum a-men}
\end{musicnote}
\end{music}

\textbf{Example 4} \textit{Terminations of the Second Regular Psalm Tone and the Solemn Tone}

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnote}
\text{sole ending}
\end{musicnote}
\end{music}

\textbf{Commemoratio Brevis}\textsuperscript{16} \hfill \textit{Vatican Edition}

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnote}
\text{ex quirunt eium}
\end{musicnote}
\end{music}

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnote}
\text{seculorum amen}
\end{musicnote}
\end{music}

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Commemoratio Brevis}, f 83.

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, f 84 r and v.
Example 5 Terminiations of the Third Regular Psalm Tone

Commemoration Brevis

Vatican Edition

sole et ante lunam

filio regis

filios pauperum

ambulaverunt

seculorum amen

Ibid., f 85 v; f 85; f 85 v; f 84; f 84 v.
Example 6  Terminations of the Fourth Regular Psalm Tone

Commemoratio Brevis
Vatican Edition

Ibid., f 85 v; f 84; f 85 v.
Example 7  
Terminations of the Fifth Regular Psalm Tone

Commemoratio Brevis

Vatican Edition

Example 8  
Terminations of the Sixth Regular Psalm Tone
and the Solemn Tone

Commemoratio Brevis

Vatican Edition

19  
Ibid., f 85 v.

20  
Ibid., f 84; f 83 v.
Example 9  Terminations of the Seventh Regular Psalm

Tone and the Solemn Tone

Commemoratio Brevis 21  Vatican Edition

\[ \text{indicia tua} \]

\[ \text{seculorum amen} \]

\[ \text{seculorum amen} \]

\[ \text{seculorum amen} \]

21  
\textit{Ibid., f 84; f 83 v; f 86.}
Example 10  Terminations of the Eighth Regular Psalm Tone
and the Solemn Tone

Commemoratio Brevis 22  Vatican Edition

As would be expected, a number of terminations are
given in the Commemoratio Brevis which are not represented
in the service books and editions of the Monks of Solesmes.
The appearance of different terminations is, of course, a
demonstration of the local practice. Example 11 is a table
of these different concluding inflections. It will be noted
that the author of the source has assigned each one to a
specific antiphon, each intended, doubtless, to represent a
family of chants represented by thème.

22  Ibid., f 84; f 86.
Example 11  *Commemoratio Brevis: Terminations Peculiar to the Region of the Author*

Tone III\(^23\)

\[
\text{seculorum amen}
\]

Tone IV\(^24\)

\[
\text{seculorum amen}
\]

\[
\text{seculorum amen}
\]

\[
\text{seculorum amen}
\]

\[
\text{seculorum amen}
\]

\[
\text{seculorum amen}
\]


24  *Ibid.*, f 85 v; f 83 v; f 85 v.
(Example 11 continued)

Tone V

\[ \text{seculorum amen} \]

Tone VII

\[ \text{seculorum amen} \]

25 Ibid., f 83 v; f 84.

26 Ibid., f 86.
CHAPTER III

TENORS

The most ancient part of a psalm tone is the reciting note or tenor. This reiteration of a single note appears twice in a psalm tone owing to the binary structure of each psalm verse. (In the introduction to the present study, the parallelism which underlies the texts of most psalm verses has been pointed out.) All the syllables of the psalm text other than those assigned to the other three inflections—-the intonation, the mediant, the termination—are sung on the tenor recitation. Thus it may be said that the recitatio is the very centre of the psalm tone, framed as it were by the other members.

A need to relate the actual practice of psalmody with a concise and regular system of modal theory seems to have pervaded much of the thinking of many Western musicians. The results of this coupling have led to some rather confusing conclusions. As has been pointed out in the chapter concerned with terminations, the final of a mode has nothing to do with the conclusion of a psalm tone. On the other hand, the position of the tenor in relation to the other notes of the tone (and mode) has given rise to certain theories, according to which, the
tenor is to be considered the "dominant" of the tone or mode. This "dominant" is seen to appear regularly on the fifth above the final in the authentic modes and the third above the final in the plagal modes. Indeed, although he is elsewhere forced to abandon this theory, Apel has featured this concept in his writings:

The decisive element of the psalm tones is not the final, but the tenor, which is determined by the rule that it falls on the fifth above the final in the authentic modes, and on the third above the final in the plagal modes . . . .¹

This, as will be seen, applies (imperfectly) to the music of a much later age, and in the case of the psalm tones appears to be more a result of coincidence than of underlying structure.

The following is a table of the tenors of three systems:

1) The most ancient psalmody represented by the practice of the *Commemoratio Brevis*.²

2) The tenor (or "dominant") as it would appear according to the prescriptions of the aforementioned theoretical system.³


² These were deduced from an examination of all the tenors given in the source.

³ Reese, *Middle Ages*, p. 152.

Table 1  Psalm Tone Tenors Determined by Three Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commemoratio Brevis</th>
<th>Dominant Theory</th>
<th>Vatican Ed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone I</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>c'</td>
<td>c'</td>
<td>c'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>d'</td>
<td>d'</td>
<td>d'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>c'</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be noted that there are disagreements as to the pitch of the tenor in tones III, IV and VIII.

It is easy to dispose of the tenors prescribed in the calculations of the "dominant" theory. While this system appears to be tenable for five of the eight tones, the fact that it does not agree with either the Commemoratio Brevis or the Vatican Edition in the other three tones readily supports our belief that this theory is a result of mere coincidence. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the tenor of the eighth psalm tone (b) prescribed in the "dominant" theory is different from those of the other two

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4 Liber usualis, pp. 113-117.
versions. (The latter do agree.) It has been claimed that this b was raised one half-tone to c' to avoid the tritone implications which surround b. However, an examination of the entire melody of many psalm tones of both versions fails to support this allegation; the note f, (the lower element of the tritone) does not appear in this tone.

It would be pointless to question the tenors of the Vatican Edition. This book is an edition (for modern use) of standard practice which, established in the eleventh century, has continued in uninterrupted use to the present day. The reciting tones found in the *Commemoratio Brevis*, however, have had an interesting and intriguing history, and in the case of the fourth tone have given rise to a series of puzzled explanations on the part of some of the most eminent musicologists, Ferretti and Apel among them.

The difference between the *recitatio* of Tone III in the ancient and the standard practice involves the heightening of this note one half-step. It has been suggested that this alteration was effected for the same reason we have just cited with respect to the three versions

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of the eighth psalm tone. The note b has the problematical and suspect relationship of the tritone built above the finalis f. This relationship, however, is entirely hypothetical when it is considered as a factor of the early medieval system of psalm tones. The gamut consisted, in those times, of four disjunct symmetrical tetrachords:

1. The tetrachord of the Graves, (called by the author of the Commemoratio Brevis) tetrardum gravium (the lowest tetrachord):7

G A B flat c

2. The tetrachord of the Finales, tetrardum terminalem, (lower tetrachord):8
d e f g

3. The tetrachord of the Superiores, tetrardum superiorum, (upper tetrachord):9
a b c' d'

4. The tetrachord of the Excellentes, tetrardum excellentum, (highest tetrachord):10
e' f' g' a'

7 Commemoratio Brevis, f 83.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., f 83 v.
The author of the *Commemoratio Brevis* makes it very clear at the outset of the treatise that the underlying concept of the gamut of four tetrachords is the basis of the chant. The ambitus and the disposition of the notes of the various melodies for each of the standard formulas (*neumae regulares*)\(^{11}\) are described—in terms of these structures—as ascending or descending to certain degrees of one of the four fundamental tetrachords. (It is also noteworthy that the basis of the daseian notation was the employment of the same four signs in each of the four tetrachords. The repositioning of these signs, which we have already discussed, indicated the actual tetrachord to which a sign belonged.) The reader will note at once that none of the symmetrical tetrachords contains a tritone. It is only when one considers two notes of different tetrachords that the question of a tritone relationship is evidenced at all.

It is not difficult to deduce at this point that the whole question of a tritone (and thus a chromatically inflected \(b\)) was prompted by the cultivation of polyphony in a later age when the range of the melodies was greatly expanded and one part was juxtaposed against another. The insistence on the use of \(c'\) as the reciting note of the third tone may well have been the result of later considera-

\(^{11}\) *Ibid.*, f 83.
tions. It is interesting to note that the Monks of Solesmes have come to realize that they too liberally applied b flat to their earlier editions of the Gregorian repertoire. In recent times they have reconsidered and curtailed their zeal; there are fewer b flats in the more recent volumes of the *Paléographie Musicale* and in later practical editions of the chant.

In spite of this tritone rationale, so eagerly postulated by many, the much vaunted "diabolus in musica" does not appear to have concerned the ancients at the time of the *Commemoratio Brevis*. The dozen or so examples of the third psalm tone given in the source clearly recite on the note b. And, in fact, the inherent tritone structure of the third tone—as envisaged by later theorists (the *finalis* is e, the *recitatio* is b)—appears only once in the melodies given in the source. This rare appearance of an implied tritone is to be found in a termination formula near the end of the treatise. In this, the penultimate note is f and thus a tritone relationship is formed with the *recitatio*.

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Example 1  *Commemoratio Brevis: Termination for Psalm Tone III*

\[\text{Example 1 Commemoratio Brevis: Termination for Psalm Tone III}\]

\[\text{seculorum amen}\]

The significance of this example, however, is open to question. The note $f$ is simply a passing note. The same formula is presented (in association with the solemn tones) at the beginning of the treatise and does not contain the problematical note. This normal appearance is as follows:

Example 2  *Commemoratio Brevis: Termination for Solemn Tone III*\(^{13}\)

\[\text{Example 2 Commemoratio Brevis: Termination for Solemn Tone III}\]

\[\text{secula seculorum amen}\]

Moreover, there are numerous places in the manuscript where unmistakable examples of the tritone appear. These are both direct and implied tritones.

\(^{13}\) *Ibid.*, f 83.
Example 3  **Commemoratio Brevis: Mediant Cadence (Tone V)**
containing a Direct Tritone\(^{14}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dirigantum viae mee, } & * \text{ ad custodiendas} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Example 4  **Commemoratio Brevis: Mediant Cadence (Tone I)**
containing an Implied Tritone\(^{15}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mansuetudinem et justitiam: } & * \text{ et dediti} \\
\end{align*}
\]

The **recitatio** of the fourth psalm tone found in the **Commemoratio Brevis** has been a serious problem to musicologists. For many years it was believed that this tone had two differing tenors: \(g\) for the first half of the verse, \(a\) for the second half. This misapprehension can easily be traced back to Gerbert,\(^{16}\) who in his edition of the

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\(^{14}\) Ibid., f 84.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., f 84 v.

\(^{16}\) Gerbert, *Scriptores I*, p. 217.
Commemoratio Brevis continued to use the daseian notation.
This last scholar represented the fourth psalm tone by the following:

Example 5 Gerbert, Scriptores I: The Fourth Regular Psalm Tone

\[
\text{Example 5 Gerbert, Scriptores I: The Fourth Regular Psalm Tone}
\]

\[
\text{Tu mandasti, mandata tua custodiri ni mis.}
\]

This reads in modern notation as:

Example 6 Gerbert's Version of the Fourth Regular Psalm Tone in Modern Notation

\[
\text{This version, rather than the manuscript of the source, has been used as the basis of study for centuries and,}
\]

as a result, has been the basis of a considerable discussion.

Paolo Ferretti appears to have found both the tenor and the termination of this tone to be quite exceptional and interesting, for he devotes considerable space to the problem. It is strange, however, that he was concerned more by the brevity of the second half of the text than by the appearance of two different reciting notes. To the former he gave the following explanation:

Un fait remarquable et de grande importance au point de vue historique et esthétique, c'est dans le 4ème Ton, la double Teneur sol et la, tierce et quarte au-dessus de la finale. Dans l'exemple de la Commémoratio Brevis, la brièveté du texte ne permet pas de voir clairement la seconde Teneur; mais avec un texte plus long, toute la difficulté disparaît.

Ferretti's concern for the brevity of the text in this psalm tone prompted him to create a substitute version. He has obviously paraphrased the text and applied the rules he thought to be in operation in the original example in the Commémoratio Brevis.\(^17\)\(^18\)

---

17 Ferretti, *Esthétique*, p. 308.

18 Ibid.
Example 7  

Ferretti's Version of the Fourth Regular Psalm Tone from the Commemoratio Brevis

1er Teneur

In manda-tis tu-is exercebor: *

2e Teneur

et conside-rabo vi-as tu-as.

In his attempt to tidy up what to him was an embarrassing situation, Ferretti equates the double tenor with a more solemn psalmody:  

Ces Teneurs sont parfaitement normales, car, comme nous l'avons vu plusieurs fois, dans la Psalmodie classique plagal à plusieurs Teneurs, Celles-ci son à la tierce et à la quarte au-dessus de la finale du Mode, et dans la Psalmodie solennelle et ornée, à ces deux Teneurs, ou à l'une des deux, s'ajoute toujours aussi celle sur la finale du Mode. 

These tenors are perfectly normal, because as we have seen many times, in the classic plagal psalmody of many tenors, they are a third and a fourth above the final of the mode, and in the solemn and ornate psalmody, to these two tenors, or to one of the two, they are always joined to the final of the mode.

As recently as 1958, Apel saw fit to worry about the same problem but without any apparent change of view.  

The fourth psalm tone of the first series has a tenor on a; but for that of the second series a recitation on g is clearly indicated, at least for the first half

19  

Ibid.

20  

Apel, Gregorian, p. 211.
of the verse, while a similar indication for the second half is unfortunately missing because of the shortness of the text, so that it is difficult to decide whether, for a more protracted text, the recitation would have been made on g or a.

Apel goes on to reproduce the slightly differing versions of the termination of this psalm tone as given by Wagner\textsuperscript{21} and Ferretti and continues the discussion of the short text of the termination. He finally concludes:\textsuperscript{22}

At any rate, it appears that at the time of the \textit{Commemoratio Brevis}, the tenor of the fourth psalm tone was either g or g-a. It also appears that the change to a, adumbrated here and established not long thereafter, could not possibly have been made in consequence of the raise of the tenor in the third psalm tone, since this tenor had not yet changed.

In this last statement, Apel is referring to an opinion which has been put forward to explain the difference between the reciting note prescribed by the "dominant" theory (g) and that of the ancient and the later practices (a). While it is not impossible to believe that musicians in ancient times would have seen fit to alter for theoretical reasons the melodic configuration of a perfectly acceptable psalm melody, it is difficult to believe that the ancients could have obligingly changed to conform to a theory which was not postulated for another thousand years.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{21} Wagner, \textit{Ursprung und Entwicklung}, III, p. 90.

\textsuperscript{22} Apel, \textit{Gregorian}, p. 212.
It is only when we return to the manuscript of the source that we are able to perceive that the whole problem was caused by the careless copying of a single daseian symbol. Apparently Gerbert confused the daseian signs for the notes g and a—\( \text{\textsuperscript{\textregistered}} \) and \( \text{\textsuperscript{\textregistered}} \). As we have seen, scribal errors such as these are easy to make in this notation system. (Gerbert's version is our example 5.)

In this case only (the other psalm tones on this folio are absolutely clear) the daseian signs in the Wolfenbüttel manuscript have been positioned rather carelessly and do not regularly coincide with their assigned syllables. This is especially noticable in the second half of the verse. (This may have been the cause of the uproar concerning the awkward termination.) In addition, the direct \( \text{\textsuperscript{\textregistered}} \) which implies a continuation of the reciting note in the first half of the verse has been omitted altogether. The following figure is a facsimile of the Wolfenbüttel manuscript:23

---

23 *Commemoratio Brevis, Wolfenbüttel Ms. f 84.*
The St. Paul in Carinthia manuscript, however, is perfectly clear and leaves no doubt as to the correct placement of any of the signs. Nor is the "direct" for the continuation of a as the reciting note of the first half of the verse missing. Figure 4 is a facsimile of the St. Paul manuscript:

24 Ibid., St. Paul Ms. f 3 v.
This, in modern transcription, is as follows:

Example 8  **Commemoratio Breviss: The Fourth Regular Psalm Tone**

\[\text{Tu mandasti mandata tua, * custodiri nimis.}\]

It is most peculiar that Gerbert did not notice this correction since it can be shown that he used the St. Paul in Carinthia manuscript as the basis of his edition—his printers proofs have been retained in the St. Paul library. This last point seems to imply that the error was the result of undue haste or was a simple oversight. At any rate, as a result of this slip, much unnecessary effort has been expended on the part of others. In the light of this evidence there can be no doubt that, at the time of the **Commemoratio Breviss**, the sole tenor of the fourth psalm tone was \(a\).
CHAPTER IV
THE MEDIANT MELODY

It is customary in present times to consider the connection between the first and second halves of the psalm verse as being comprised of two separate musical entities—a mediant cadence leading to a fixed stop at the end of the first verse, followed by a second and unprepared intonation of the tenor. We shall later show that this interpretation of a rigid central formula was not current in Frankish times, but rather, was the imposition of a subsequent age. This was effected in order that the complexity and the great variability of the entire psalm melody be reduced to a more simple and universally understood principle. Indeed, it is entirely possible that this standard practice is the product of very recent times. It has been pointed out that the texts of the Psalms in the Vatican Edition are "fitted" to the melodies of their corresponding tones "according to definite rules, so that it is not necessary for the books to print out music for each psalm." ¹ An effort of this sort—to regulate the

¹ Reese, Middle Ages, p. 174.
multitudinous array of texts and chant melodies which constitute the vast Gregorian repertoire for the faithful of the entire modern world—is perfectly understandable and cannot be questioned. However, when these modern simplifications are held to be the only possible solutions to the correct setting of the central portion, indeed, any portion of the psalm, serious difficulties and misunderstandings arise. The expectation of this later system has created some insurmountable problems for some scholars attempting to unravel the complexities of the mediant melodies given in the text of the *Commemoratio Brevis*.

Before commencing a discussion of the mediant melodies in the source, it will be useful to consider for a moment the concept of this inflection put forth in the modern liturgical books. At the present time, as already noted, the mediant cadence is clearly assigned to the first half of the psalm verse. The simplicity or the elaboration of this figure is conditioned by a consideration of the number of syllables in the text and the accentual situation of the final word or words. Thus, when there is one accented word, the preparatory syllables preceding this are fitted to the first or second notes of the cadential melody. When there are two accented words, "the dactylic cadence is anticipated with the accented syllable and precedes the clivis."²

²*Liber usualis*, p. 114.
Example 1  Vatican Edition: MediantCadence with Two
Accented Words, Third Tone

\[\text{Meménto Dómine Dávid, * et ómnis}\]

Special cases (it is not intended to discuss the Vatican
Edition at greater length than is necessary) have been
dealt with in a copious manner by Apel in *Gregorian Chant*.\(^3\)

Those responsible for the content of the modern
edition appear to have selected the melodies most
carefully and to have pruned them and shaped them to
conform to the entire repertoire of psalms. Certainly they
have contrived to conclude the mediant cadence on the tenor
or on a note very near to the tenor pitch, and thus have
removed the necessity for a second intonation. The following
table (Example 2) shows the mediant cadences of the modern
practice.\(^4\) The notes in square brackets at the beginning
and at the end of each cadence in the table indicate the
pitch of the preceding and succeeding *recitatio*. The "white"
notes in these melodies are not sung for most verses but
are intended for special cases. These are when the text
contains extra syllables--more than is normal--or when the

\(^3\)Apel, *Gregorian*, pp. 216-217.

\(^4\)Liber usualis*, pp. 113-117.
accentual situation is especially complicated. The whole question of such variants will be discussed later in this chapter at a more appropriate point. But it is not inappropriate on our part to remark at this point that this last system of providing for special cases was well known to musicians in ancient times. It would be incorrect to assume that the strict and ordered mediant cadences in use today are the exclusive product of modern thinking. This however, is but one of two methods of providing a workable connection between the two members of the psalm verse.

Example 2  Vatican Edition: Mediant Cadences for the Eight Regular Psalm Tones

Tone I

Tone II

Tone III

Tone IV

Tone V
There is a strong undertone of frustration—indeed, perplexed amazement—pervading the text of Ferretti's *Esthétique Grégorienne* at the point at which the eminent musicologist tries to come to terms with the mediant melodies contained in the *Commemoratio Brevis*. In fact, it is soon evident—the tone of his writing changes—that he threw up his hands in desperation seeing only disorder and confusion. He was so thoroughly steeped in the (then) recent reassembling of the chant by the learned Monks of

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5 Ferretti, *Esthétique*, pp. 315-316.
Solesmes that he was unable to relax his point of view to admit the more flexible practice of the ancients. For him, the perfection of the chant was an exhibition of scientific rigidity (albeit coupled with divine grace). Of the mediant melodies in the *Commemoratio Brevis*, he wrote:

> Le procédé que nous révèle la *Commemoratio Brevis* est absolument empirique et arbitraire. Des textes, identiques par le nombre des syllables et la place des accents, sont traités différemment sans qu'on sache pourquoi. Pour assurer l'accord entre les psalmistes, il aurait fallu noter chaque Verset, ce qui était pratiquement impossible. Comment donc les Maîtres de Choeur s'y prenaient-ils pour obtenir l'ensemble indispensable entre les Chanteurs, cet ensemble tant recommandé par l'auteur de la *Commemoratio Brevis* . . . ? Mystère! Dans la Psalmodie ornée de l'Introït, des Traits et des Répons de Matines, la stylisation était et est encore, cela ne fait pas de doute, parfaite. La Psalmodie obéissait à des lois fixes, rigoureuses, inflexibles et logiques. Les Maîtres de Choeur et les Théoriciens du Moyen Âge connaissaient-ils ces lois? Et s'ils les connaissaient pourquoi ne les appliquaient-ils pas à la Psalmodie

---

6Ibid.
It is soon apparent, when we turn to the evidence found in the *Commemoratio Brevis*, that the ancient practice was considerably more flexible with respect to the setting of the mediant melodies than was that of the standard medieval practice. Instead of allotting the entire cadential formula to the conclusion of the first half of the verse and beginning the second half abruptly, *sine intonatio* on the tenor, the ancient practice employed a quite different but logical solution for this central portion of the psalm verse. This was to use the same basic melodic outline for all mediant cadences of the same psalm tone. The vestiges of
this practice are still discernible today. The caesura, however, in the ancient practice was shifted depending upon the number of syllables and on the position of important accents in the texts of different psalm verses. At the same time, care appears to have been taken to ensure that (in most cases) the second half of the psalm verse was begun with an intonation figure and was smoothly connected to the first half of the psalm without an abrupt break in the continuous flow of the psalmodic cycle. For the sake of convenience we will call this technique the "moveable caesura." Although we will demonstrate copiously the evidence of such treatment for all the mediant melodies of the source later in this chapter, we include here—in order to make clear this rather complicated matter—a table of mediants. Example 3a contains a reduction of the basic formula for the mediant melody of the first psalm tone. Appended are two different examples (Examples 3b and 3c) from the treatise of the moveable caesura applied to the same melodic formula.  

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7  Comemoratio Brevis, f 83 v; f 84 v.
Example 3 Commemoratio Brevis: The Moveable Caesura

In addition to the moveable caesura, the author of the Commemoratio Brevis has demonstrated another manner by which the correct placement of the accent may be achieved. This involves the interpolation of an extra note or notes into the basic shape of the melody in order that a correct setting of the word accents be maintained. This procedure is known as a prosthetic variant. While the later standard practice abandoned the use of the moveable caesura, the employment of prosthetic variants was continued. This is indicated today by the "white" notes included in the mediant melodies of the Vatican Edition (See Example 1). The following example, verses 1 and 4 of Psalm 71 set to the third tone, demonstrate this principle quite clearly.8

8Liber usualis, p. 379.
Example 4 The Prosthetic Variant: Vatican Edition

1. Déus, judícum túum régí da: * et justítiam

4. Judicábit . . . filios páuperum: * et humiliábit

The same psalm verses set to the same tone are to be found in the text of the Commemoratio Brevis. It is interesting to note that the same principle of prosthetic variation was employed in ancient times. The elaboration, however, is noticeably more ornate in the case of the fourth verse.9

Example 5 The Prosthetic Variant: Commemoratio Brevis

1. Déus, judícum túum régí da, * et justíciam

4. Judicábit . . . filios páuperum, * et humiliábit

9 Commemoratio Brevis, f 85; f 85 v.
The following series of examples is a compilation of all the mediant melodies found in the text of the source. The first example accompanying each tone is a reduction of the basic outline of the melody to a simple formula. The successive examples have been arranged according to the placement of the caesura, the use of preparatory syllables and the number of accents in the text. The final examples for each tone, as will be indicated, are demonstrations of the use of prosthetic variants.

Tone I
The basic outline of the mediant melody for the first psalm tone is a formula of four notes which ascends one tone above the tenor and descends three tones below the tenor:  

Example 6  The Basic Formula: Tone I

10

This basic formula (and the others for tones 2 to 8 which follow) has been determined through a comparison of all mediant melodies given in the source.
In two examples the caesura is placed after the second tone below the tenor, namely \( g \).

Two preparatory syllables and one accent:\(^{11}\)

Example 7

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vérmis et non hómo, } & \text{ * oppróbium hóminum} \\
\text{précepto quod mandásti, } & \text{ * et synagóga}
\end{align*}
\]

In two examples the caesura is placed between \( g \) and \( f \).

Two Preparatory syllables and one accent:\(^{12}\)

Example 8

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{déus in etérnum, } & \text{ * accíngere}
\end{align*}
\]

---

\(^{11}\) Commemoratio Brevis, f 85.

\(^{12}\) Ibid., f 84 v.
Two accents:\textsuperscript{13}

Example 9

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnotes}
\begin{musicstring}
\textity{méum vérbum bónum, } \ast \textity{dico ego}
\end{musicstring}
\end{musicnotes}
\end{music}

In three examples the caesura is placed after the lowest note below the tenor, namely $f$.

Two preparatory syllables and one accent:\textsuperscript{14}

Example 10

\begin{music}
\begin{musicnotes}
\begin{musicstring}
\textity{mansuetúdinem, } \ast \textity{et justítiam: } \ast \textity{et dedísti}
\end{musicstring}
\end{musicnotes}
\end{music}

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
Two preparatory syllables, the preparation is elaborated, and one accent: 15

Example 11

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{immaculati in via, } & \text{ * qui ambulant } \\
\text{adisti iniquitatem, } & \text{ * propterea } \\
\text{mea calamus scribe, } & \text{ * velociter }
\end{align*}
\]

Three preparatory syllables and one accent: 16

Example 12

Two accents: 17

Example 13

\[
15 \text{Ibid., f 84.} \\
16 \text{Ibid., f 84 v.} \\
17 \text{Ibid.}
\]
In two examples the caesura is placed after f and is followed by the tenor.

Two accents, the penultimate note is elided: 18

Example 14

The employment of prosthetic variants to enhance the correct accent must not be considered a mere substitution for the moveable caesura. The examples which follow all contain the use of prosthesis and, in addition, differ as to the position of the caesura. It is also evident that in these mediant melodies an effort has been made to effect the correct accentual stress near the beginning of the second half of the verse.

In two examples there is a prosthetic variant, the melody shifts up a step to the note a. The caesura is made between the notes f and g:  

Example 15

```
pre filius hominum, * diffusa
in seculum seculi, * virga
```

The prosthesis is similar in the next example but the caesura lies between f and a and continues by the leap of a third:

Example 16

```
in altum regredere, * domine
```

---


In one example the prosthesis is achieved by returning to the highest note of the basic formula, while the caesura is placed between the notes a and g.\textsuperscript{21}

Example 17

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example17.png}
\end{center}

pulchritúdiam túam, * inténđe

The aforementioned use of prosthetic variation in the second half of the psalm verse is demonstrated in the next two examples. In the first, the caesura lies between g and f:\textsuperscript{22} in the second, between a repetition of the note g:\textsuperscript{23}

Example 18

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example18.png}
\end{center}

effodít eíum, * et íncidit

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Ibid.}, f 84 v.

\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid.}, f 85.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ibid.}
Example 19

For the sake of completeness, appended to the discussion of the mediant melody of most tones is the version of the central inflection given in the text of the Commemoratio Brevis for the Solemn Tones. It will be noted that in most cases the mediant melody of the Solemn Tone outlines that of the regular psalm tone.

Example 20  Mediant Melody, Solemn Tone I

Tone II

The basic outline for the mediant melody of the second psalm tone is a formula of three different notes which ascends one tone above the tenor, returns to the tenor, drops a minor third and resumes the reiteration of the recitatio:

---

24  Ibid., f 83.
Example 21 The Basic Formula: Tone II

In three examples the caesura is placed between f and g, the second and third notes of the formula.
Two accents:

Example 22

25

Ibid., f 84; f 85.
In ten examples the caesura is placed between a repetition of the note f, the second note of the formula.\(^{26}\)

One accent:

Example 23

\[\text{laetábitur rex, } \ast \text{ et sémper}\]

Two preparatory syllables and one accent:

\[\text{áltum regrédere, } \ast \text{ dómine}\]

\(^{26}\)Ibid., f 85.
(Example 23 continued)

Two accents:

preciosum multam, * et dulcióra

inmaculátus éro, * et emundábor

eloquia óris méi, * et meditátiō

enárrant glóriam déi, * et ópera

custódiet ea, * custodiéndo

díes éius páuci, * et espiscopátum

salutári túo, * glóriam

inimícis túis, * dextera
Two examples, both of which have a different caesura, contain prosthetic variants in the second half of the verse: 27

Example 24

\[ \text{neque sermones, * quorum non audiéntur} \]

Example 25

\[ \text{iustitiam éius, * et psállam} \]

Example 26  Mediant Melody, Solemn Tone II 28

\[ \text{et nunc et sémper, * et in sécula} \]

27  
\text{Ibid., f 85.}

28  
\text{Ibid., f 83.}
Tone III

It is difficult to decide upon the number of notes which comprise the basic formula of the mediant melody for the third tone. These melodies are extremely florid and span in their diversity the interval of a perfect fourth. Example 27 shows the limits of the formula:

Example 27 The Basic Formula: Tone III

![Musical notation]

The caesura is placed in two different positions within the formula. First between a repetition of the *recitatio b.* One accent: 29

Example 28

![Musical notation]

29 *Ibid.*, f 84; f 85 v.
Two accents: 30

Example 29

\[
túum régi da, \star et justíciam
\]

The next two examples continue with the same position for the caesura but include the interpolation of a new note—that is, the prosthetic variant. It will be noted that in these two cases and the next three similar cases the number of accents and syllables has increased considerably.

Two accents, the caesura is between the repetition of the recitatio b: 31

Example 30

\[
sicút plúvia in véllus, \star et sicut stilícidia
de aúro Arábie, \star et aborábunt
\]

30
\textit{Ibid.}, f 85.

31
\textit{Ibid.}, f 85 v.
Two accents, the caesura is between g and a:\textsuperscript{32}

Example 31

\begin{align*}
\text{illo prócident Ethíopeo, } & \text{* et inimíci} \\
\text{íncule múnera ófferent, } & \text{* régès árabum} \\
párceó páuperi et ínopi, & \text{* et ánimas}
\end{align*}

Finally, the following is the Solemn Tone:

Example 32 \textit{Mediant Melody, Solemn Tone III}\textsuperscript{33}

\begin{align*}
& \text{et nunc et sémper, } \text{* et in sécula}
\end{align*}

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}, f 83.
Tone IV

The basic outline of the mediant melody of the fourth tone comprises three notes: the *recitatio* and the notes a whole step above and below:

Example 33

\[ \text{\includegraphics{example33.png}} \]

In one example the caesura appears between the notes b and a. \(^{34}\)

Two accents:

Example 34

\[ \text{\includegraphics{example34.png}} \]

mandáta túa, * custodíri

\(^{34}\) *Ibid.*, f 84.
In seven examples the caesura is positioned between two appearances of the *recitatio*.

Two accents:

Example 35

\[\text{erúcat vérbum, * et nox nócti}\]

\[\text{pretiosum múltam, * et dulciora}\]

\[\text{enárrant glóriam déi, * et ópera}\]

\[\text{salutare túo, * glóriam}\]

\[\text{inimicis túis,* dextera}\]

\[\text{neque sermónes, * quórum non audiántus}\]

\[\text{benedictióem a dómino, * et misericórdiam}\]

\[\text{Ibid., f 85 v.}\]
In two other examples the caesura is in the same position but a prosthetic variant is interpolated into the second half of the verse. 36

Two accents:

Example 36

\[ \text{immaculátus éro,* et emundábor} \]

\[ \text{tuis custódiet éa,* in custodíendo ílla} \]

In one example the caesura is positioned between \( a \) and \( g \), the lowest notes of the basic formula. 37

Two accents:

Example 37

\[ \text{letificántes córda,* praceptum dómini} \]

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.
Example 38  The Mediant Melody, Solemn Tone IV

\[ \text{et nunc et semper, * et in secula} \]

Tone V
The basic outline of the mediant melody of the fifth tone comprises four notes which span a perfect fourth:

Example 39

This agrees with the melody of the Solemn Tone associated with the Gospel Canticles given at the outset of the treatise and with a closely organized group of examples.

\[ \text{Ibid.}, f 83 v. \]
(to which reference will be made below) given at the end of the treatise.

Example 40  The Mediant Melody, Solemn Tone V

\[
\text{et nunc et semper, } * \text{ et in secula}
\]

It does not, however, agree with the mediant melody given for the fifth regular psalm tone. The main difference lies in the conclusion of the first half of the psalm verse.

Example 41  Mediant Melody of the Fifth Regular Psalm Tone

\[
\text{dirigantum viae mee, } * \text{ ad custodiendas}
\]

This is not a scribal error; the Wolfenbüttel and the St. Paul manuscripts are in complete agreement; the notation is perfectly clear at this point in the treatise. Nor is it likely that the scribe became confused with the

---

39  

40  
symbols of the daseian notation. The signs for $\ell$ ( ), $a$ ( $\sqrt{a}$ ), $f$ ( / ) and $b$ ( $\overline{f}$ ), in this exact order, are so unlike that a careless substitution is almost impossible. The reader, sensitive to the disposition of the intervals in these melodies, will have noted the naked appearance of the diabolus in musica at the caesura of this example. Musicians of a later age, as we have already seen and will see again with respect to this very psalm tone, would have made haste to correct the ancients by inflecting the suspect $b$ or by rearranging the melody to suit their preconceived notions about the tritone. But, as has been pointed out a number of times in this study, there was considerably more variety in the psalmody of the ancient practice than in that of the present practice.

Examples of the fifth psalm tone are not distributed quite as freely throughout the treatise as are those of the first and second tones. There is, however, a rather unique situation connected with the demonstration of the fifth tone in the text. As we have observed with respect to another aspect of the psalm tones (Chapter I, page 49), two complete psalms--numbers 137 and 56--are given with music toward the end of the treatise. All the verses of these psalms are set to the fifth tone. Although the music is not complete for all the examples, it is especially reliable for the

41 Ibid., f 85 v and f 86.
mediant melody and enough is given to afford us more than a glimpse of a careful consideration of the textual accent in the central inflection of the psalm tone. The caesura is positioned in three different places (between b and b, c' and b, and b and a) owing to the differing positions of accents and the number of syllables. We quote the main differences: to have included all the verses would have been to merely reiterate the same formula a number of times.\footnote{Ibid., f 85 v.}

Example 42 Four Versions of the Mediant Melody, Tone V
Verse 1, three accents; Verse 4, one accent.

\begin{verbatim}
1. ... in toto corde meo, * quoniam
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
4. ... te exaudi me, * multiplicabis
\end{verbatim}

Verse 2, two accents; Verse 4, two accents.

\begin{verbatim}
2. ... in circuitu eius, * justiciam
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
4. ... eius ordii terre, * udit
\end{verbatim}
Examples of prosthetic variants do not appear in connection with Tone V in the *Commemoratio Brevis*. The disposition of the mediant melody does allow, however, in some instances, a heightening of the note for the accented syllable in the second half of the verse (Psalm 137, Verse 1; Psalm 95, Verse 2).

**Tone VI**

There are very few examples of the sixth tone in the text of the source. In fact, there is only one which will interest us here—the regular sixth tone. Three others are given, but these are exceptional psalm tones—with ornate melodies quite unlike the regular tones—and will be dealt with in our chapter on special tones.

Nevertheless, the sixth tone is interesting, for the single example of a regular psalm tone displays characteristics which we have not seen before in a mediant cadence derived from the source. In this, the first half of the psalm verse (Psalm 118, Verse 6) is brought to a rather abrupt halt on the tenor without the usual cadential figure, while the melodic portion of the central inflection is employed entirely in the second half of the verse. This is surely the most extreme displacement we have seen.
The reader will note without difficulty that this unusual disposition of the mediant melody was doubtless the result of the different construction of this particular psalm verse—the first member is exceptionally short. This variety in textual balance is not, however, restricted to the version given in the *Commemoratio Brevis*. The caesura in the Vatican Edition (the Vulgate) is clearly placed at the same point.\(^4^4\) Indeed, it must be so if the text is to make any sense at all:

\begin{quote}
Tunc non confundar,* cum perspexero in omnibus mandatis tuis.

Then I shall not be ashamed,* when I have respect unto all thy commandments.\(^4^5\)
\end{quote}

\(^{43}\) *Ibid.*, f 84.

\(^{44}\) *Liber usualis*, p. 226.

\(^{45}\) Psalm 119:6.
It is unfortunate for us that the sole example of the sixth psalm tone in the source should have been set to a difficult psalm verse. The first demonstration of the eight regular psalm tones involves Psalm 118, a choice prompted, no doubt, by the fact that this psalm has eight verses. Thus we must accept it as the regular melody for the sixth psalm tone in the ancient Frankish practice. In the light of what we have already seen with respect to the moveable caesura, it is not difficult to imagine that this melody would adapt most easily to another psalm verse. The fact remains, however, that the caesura in verse 6 of Psalm 118 was so placed as to accord with the logic of the sentence, and to alter it would be foolish. Another scholar, however, did not believe this to be so.

Although he does not make an outright statement about this tone in the text of his commentary, it is quite apparent that Ferretti could not readily accept the version given in the *Commemoratio Brevis*. In his table of psalm tones drawn from the source, the following version of the sixth psalm tone appears:

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Example 44  Ferretti's Version of the Sixth Psalm Tone

It will be noted that Ferretti has arbitrarily shifted the caesura so that, for him, the melody (and the psalm verse) would be more evenly balanced in two equal halves. He has, in addition, chromatically inflected the b. This does not appear in the text of the Commemoratio Brevis—we have already discussed this most difficult problem—but does appear in the mediant cadence for the sixth tone in the Vatican Edition.\(^47\) Ferretti seems to have wholeheartedly adopted the zeal of the Monks of Solesmes in such matters. This is a pity, for it obscures the true state of affairs found in the manuscript and undermines one's confidence in Ferretti's scholarship.

\(^{47}\) Liber usualis, p. 116.
It is particularly interesting to observe in this connection that the "correction" of the *Commemoratio Brevis* is in no way founded on the early sources and is absolutely personal to Ferretti's own concept. The two complete sources are definite and clear as to the disposition of the daseian symbols in this part of the text and agree with one another.

Figure 5  *Wolfenbüttel Manuscript: The Sixth Regular Psalm Tone*

Figure 6  *St. Paul in Carinthia Manuscript: The Sixth Regular Psalm Tone*

\[ \text{Tunc non confundar dum spesio inomnia mandata tua.} \]

\[ \text{Tunc non confundar dum spesio inomnia mandata tua.} \]

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48  *Commemoratio Brevis, Wolfenbüttel Ms., f 84.*

49  *Ibid., St. Paul Ms., f 2 v.*
Nor can any of the blame be attached to Gerbert, the usual scapegoat. He is precise and faithful to both manuscript sources at this point. His text, as well, contains accurate punctuation so as to leave no doubt as to the position of the caesura.  

Figure 7  Gerbert, Scriptores I: The Sixth Regular Psalm Tone

\[ \text{VI. TONUS. Tunc non confundar, dum peripicio in omnia mandata tua.} \]

Since he was limited by his own preconceived notion of a rigid mediant cadence in the modern manner, Ferretti was stopped short at this point. The only solution is to apply the concept of the moveable caesura—this is, in reality, what Ferretti has done—to another more balanced psalm verse. Example 34 is a reconstruction of this type. The melody of the sixth psalm tone is set to the first verse of the same psalm.

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50 Gerbert, Scriptores I, p. 217.
Example 45  The Sixth Regular Psalm Tone in Reconstruction Psalm 118, Verse 1

1. Beati immaculati in via, *
qui ambulant in lege Domini.

Example 46  The Mediant Melody of the Sixth Solemn Tone

et nunc et semper, * et in secula

Tones VII and VIII

It is not possible to undertake a thorough discussion of the mediant melodies for the seventh and the eighth psalm tones. As has been noted with respect to terminations, these tones are only represented twice each in the text of the Commemoratio Brevis. The first of these

51 Commemoratio Brevis, f 83 v.
in each case is the mediant melody for the Solemn Tones associated with the Gospel Canticles. The second is that of the regular psalm tones. Although they do not afford us with much material for comparison, it will be evident that the position of the caesura is different in the case of the two examples of the eighth psalm tone.

Example 47 a) The Mediant Melody of the Seventh Regular Psalm Tone

\[ \text{directione córdis, } * \text{ quod dídici} \]

Example 47 b) The Mediant Melody of the Seventh Solemn Tone

\[ \text{et nunc et sémper, } * \text{ et in séeula} \]

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52 Ibid., f 84.
53 Ibid., f 83 v.
Example 48 a) The Mediant Melody of the Eighth Regular Psalm Tone

It would be mistaken, however, to conclude that the scarcity of examples for these tones in the text of the source implies less flexibility in their mediant melodies. Because the author does not deal with them directly does not mean that there was any less variety in the treatment of these tones. Enough has already been said in the text of the source to equip an attentive musician with the skill

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54 Ibid., f 84.

55 Ibid.
necessary to set a variety of psalm texts. The author himself was sure of this, for at one point he says:

Haec itaque propter tardiores fratres exempli causa congesta sunt, abundantiore fortasse copia quam decuerit.

For the sake of the slower-witted bretheren these illustrative examples have been amassed here more abundantly and at greater length than will be necessary.

There is another aspect of the psalm text which requires special consideration with respect to the placement of the caesura in the psalm melody. In a great number of cases, the texts of individual psalm verses are so long that they would be unwieldy if they were simply divided into two members. The fifteenth verse of Psalm 71 is an excellent example of this:

Et vivet, et dabit ei de auro Arabie, et adorabunt de ipso semper: tota die benedicent ei.

And he shall live, and to him shall be given the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually: and daily shall he be praised.

56 Ibid., f 85 v.

57 Psalm 71: 15, Liber usualis, p. 379.

58 Psalm 72: 15.
It is quite obvious that a verse such as this, containing as it does several related but distinct thoughts, would require more than one internal cadence for the sake of textual clarity. In this respect, it is especially important that it be understood that length alone does not prompt the addition of an extra cadence in the psalm tone. Apel has noted that verses 7 and 8 of Psalm 115 are both exceptionally long. Verse 7, logically divisible, has three inflections. Verse 8, the longer of the two, is not, however, easily divisible into three distinct phrases. As a result, it is not inflected before the usual mediant cadence.59

The solution to the three-member psalm text in the later standard practice is to divide the first half of the verse into two logical parts and to provide a special inflection or a semi-cadence at the point where the text is divisible. In the basic examples of the psalm tones in the liturgical service books in use today, this is indicated by a flex—a pair of notes which are positioned in the centre of the recitatio. In the text proper of the Liber usualis, the flex is also indicated when it is required. Here it is placed after the entire melody of the psalm tone, set to one of the words with which it will be appropriately sung. According to the commentary given in the Liber usualis,

The flex is made by lowering the voice a second or a third, according to the tone, on the last syllable

before the sign † or even on the second last syllable, if this syllable be not accented. In most psalm tones the flex is a whole tone below the tenor. When the notes c' or f are the tenor notes, the flex is a third below in order that the inference of a half tone—not, apparently, a satisfactory interval in a semi-cadence—be avoided.

In addition to the flex, there is another manner by which the effect of a cadence is achieved:

The inflection of the voice may be replaced by a simple prolongation of the dominant (tenor) and a slight pause.

Example 49 is a setting of the aforementioned fifteenth verse of Psalm 71 according to the present practice of the flex.

Example 49  *Vatican Edition: Psalm Tone III*

15. *Et vivet, et dabitur ei de auro Arábie,†

et adorábunt de ipso sémper:

*tóta die benedicént ei.*

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60  *Liber usualis*, p. 113.


The practices just outlined were not, however, in use in ancient times. Although there are a host of examples of psalm tones given in the *Commemoratio Brevis*, there are none which so much as suggest the use of a flex. Instead, the ancients appear to have preferred to use two mediant cadences (or, rather, mediant melodies) when the psalm text called for more than one internal inflection. The author of the *Commemoratio Brevis* does not openly broach the subject of the three member psalm verse. He does, however, include (albeit incidentally) several examples which provide solutions to the performance of long psalm verses. "Incidentally" requires some explanation. By this is meant that the entire psalm tone with two internal inflections is never found clearly set out in one example. Rather, various segments—one-half or two-thirds of a verse—are to be found at different points in the manuscript. They are, fortunately, contiguous or quite close to one another.

The first of these appears at the point in the text at which the author is discussing "differing median cadences (or 'distinctions!'), within the verses, owing to the varying placement of the words (*medientes seu distinctiones in versibus pro diversa positione varborum diverse*) . . . ."\(^{63}\) This part of the treatise has already been commented on at length; this section concerns "manner" ("modus"), that is, the diversity of ways in which psalms are sung (see Chapter I.

\(^{63}\) *Commemoratio Brevis*, f 84 v.
page 36). It is entirely possible that the author is referring to a number of different considerations, including three-member psalm verses, at this point. At any rate, verse 3 of Psalm 44 is employed with other verses of the same psalm for several consecutive examples in the text. All are connected with further demonstrations of the first psalm tone. Example 2 is a reconstruction from two separate examples in the source of the entire three-member third verse of this psalm. The two internal inflections are to be noted.

Example 50 Reconstruction of a Three-Member Psalm Verse from the Commemoratio Brevis

\[ \text{\textit{Speciosus forma pre filius hominum}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis:}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{proptera benedixit te Deus in Aeternum.}} \]

\[ \text{64 Ibid.} \]
\[ \text{65 Ibid.} \]
The next example is a partial reconstruction; only the termination was omitted from the example in the text of the *Commemoratio Brevis*. This inflection has been supplied by simply selecting the standard termination supplied for this tone in the source. The reader will note that this is the same psalm verse that we demonstrated (as Example 49) according to the principles of the Vatican Edition. It is instructive to note the great difference between the musical settings of the two versions. There can be little doubt that the ancient setting has the greater variety—the mediant melodies are quite ornamental—and, in addition, the differing accentual conditions of the two central cadences are more carefully detailed in the older version.

Example 51  Partial Reconstruction of a Three-Member Psalm Verse from the *Commemoratio Brevis*

```
\begin{music}
\example{41}{51}
\begin{music}
\begin{music}
15. Et vivet, et dabitus ei de auro Arabie,
et adorabunt de ipso semper:
* tota die benedicent ei.
\end{music}
\end{music}
\end{music}
\end{music}
```

There are one or two other examples in the text of the source which suggest a three-member text and appropriate treatment. To quote them at length, however, would be pointless. For one thing, their texts are rather confused and often differ greatly from the order given in the Vulgate. Some examples are seen to begin with the second half of the psalm verse, while others conclude with the first half of the same verse or with another verse. To correct them would be useless. Secondly, the music for some examples has been omitted altogether. It would be easy to fit these texts to either of the two clear three-member examples which we have already demonstrated. The results, however, would be entirely without meaning, as they would not reveal to us anything that we do not already know.

It is better to conclude that in ancient times the psalm texts were used rather casually, but there is definite evidence that mediant melodies with differing caesuras were used to articulate the longer psalm verses of three members.
CHAPTER V
SPECIAL TONES

In addition to the eight regular tones of the ancient psalmodic practice, there are a number of other psalm melodies which cannot be easily classified in the system. At least three of these different psalm tones were considered important enough to be included, albeit briefly, in the *Commemoratio Brevis*. Two are especially noteworthy owing to the fact that they employ a different *recitatio* for the two parallel halves of the psalm verse. The author of the source associates these special tones with antiphons of certain modes. Example 1 shows what the author calls "another manner of singing the psalm . . . for antiphons of the sixth mode (*tono sexto hoc quoque modo psalmi ad antiphonas modulantur*)."¹

Example 1  *Commemoratio Brevis*: Special Tone I

\[ \text{Cantate domino canticum novum,} \]

\[ * \text{quia mirabilia fecit dominus.} \]

¹ *Commemoratio Brevis*, f 84 v.
Example 2 shows a special psalm tone "for the last mode (ad tonum novissimum)."\(^2\)

Example 2  *Commemoratio Brevis: Special Tone II*

\[\text{Afferte domino filii dei,} \]

\[\text{* afferte domino filios arietum.} \]

On account of the double tenor, this special tone is known as the *tonus peregrinus*, that is, "strange," "foreign (or wandering) tone." It is interesting to note that a tone like that of our Example 2 has survived for use in the present day. In the service books of the Vatican Edition this tone is appended to the eight regular psalm tones. Example 3 is the *tonus peregrinus* of the standard medieval practice.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) *Liber usualis, p. 117.*
Example 3  Vatican Edition: Tonus Peregrinus

In exitu Israel de Aegypto,

* domus Jacob de populo barbaro.

There is yet another irregular psalm tone included in the Commemoratio Brevis. This one is truly noteworthy, for it is restricted to a very narrow range—an ambitus of only four notes, B, c, d and e—while its recitatio is d, a tenor used in no other tone. Concerning this, the author of the source declares:

Sunt etiam proprie ad quasdam antiphonas modulationes suae, sicut in hac secundi toni antiphona . . . .

There are, as well, intonations peculiar to certain antiphons, as for the following antiphon of the second mode . . . .

Example 4  Commemoratio Brevis: Special Tone III

Ludica domine nocentes me,

* expugna inpugnantes me.

4 Commemoratio Brevis, f 84 v.
One might wonder why one of these, the *tonus peregrinus*, is found in the accommodating and flexible system of the later standard medieval practice. It is by no means more necessary in the psalmody of the *Commemoratio Brevis* which must be described as even more lenient. One might at first suppose that the *tonus peregrinus* and the other irregular tones were associated with certain psalms for use on special occasions in the liturgical year. A perusal of the use of the *tonus peregrinus* in the liturgical service books, however, does not readily support such an explanation. In the Vatican Edition, for instance, the *tonus peregrinus* is associated with Psalms 112 and 113 for use on occasions such as the Vespers of Sunday, the Vespers of the Common of Two or More Martyrs, and the Dedication of the Church of St. Michael. These, however, cannot be considered to be liturgical events which would occasion special musical settings (as would those occasions which are not repeated at any other time during the Church year, for example, special services held during Holy Week.)

A second explanation proves to be much more acceptable. There is evidence that the use of special tones was neces-

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5 *Liber usualis*, p. 254.


situated by the nature of the antiphons connected with certain psalms. The several antiphons sung with the aforementioned Psalms 112 and 113 cannot be easily classified in the standard modal system. It has been pointed out that in a number of treatises the basic melody of these and other related chants (Gevaert's thème 28) was variously assigned to one of four modes, i.e., 1, 2, 4 or 7. This fact certainly demonstrates that such antiphons possessed extreme modal uncertainty. Although they end on g, their range is not characteristic of the tetrardus maneria: they begin and end in different tetrachords. Moreover, they open with a formula very characteristic of mode 2.

Example 5 shows three of five antiphons associated with special tones which are given in the text of the Commemoratio Brevis. All three, closely related as to melodic disposition, are demonstrated in the text of Gevaert's La Mélópe antique as prime examples containing modal ambiguities.

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8 Apel, Gregorian, p. 213.
9 Gevaert, La Mélópe, pp. 320-321.
10 Commemoratio Brevis, f 84 v.
Example 5  
**Commemoratio Brevis: Antiphons for Special Tones**

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{Nos qui vivimus benedicimus dominum} \\
\text{Martyres domini dominum benedicite in aeternum} \\
\text{In templo domini omnes dicent gloriam}
\end{align*} \]

One of the five antiphons associated with the special tones in the *Commemoratio Brevis* does not resemble these three unusual specimens, but exhibits another trait which creates ambiguity as to the mode to which it is to be assigned. It has been noted that the most important characteristic (except, of course, for its final) to be considered in the determining of the mode of a melody is its ambitus. The author of the treatise *Quomodo de Arithmetica Procedit Musica*\(^\text{11}\) instructs accordingly that a melody in which the range is restricted to a fourth cannot be readily

\(^{11}\text{Gerbert, *Scriptores* II, p. 55ff.}\)
classified in a particular mode—authentic or plagal. Although, as has been noted elsewhere (see page 141), the author of the *Commemoratio Brevis* definitely assigns this melody to the sixth mode. But this is doubtless an arbitrary decision, for the melody does not end on the regular *finalis*. This is probably what necessitated its connection with a special tone, or prevented its being assigned in one of the regular tones.

Example 6  

*Commemoratio Brevis*: Antiphon for a Special Tone\(^ {12} \)

![Notum fecit dominus (alleluia)](image)

From evidence such as this it would seem clear to us that these antiphons and special tones must represent the remnants of a layer of the chant much older than the organized system of regular psalm tones given in the *Commemoratio Brevis*. But the relative antiquity of the special tones and the *tonus peregrinus* of the Vatican Edition has been questioned.

\(^ {12} \) *Commemoratio Brevis*, f 84 v.
It is not my intention to enter into a prolonged discussion of the several colourful and (to say the least) exotic interpretations of the origin of the special tones. But the great variety of explanations is interesting in that it reveals an extraordinarily wide divergence of opinion. Hugues Gaissier, for instance, believes that the tonus peregrinus was derived from Byzantine models.\footnote{Hugues Gaissier, "L'Origine du tonus peregrinus," La Tribune de Saint-Gervais, 1901, 129-135.} Célestin Vivell, on the other hand, considers that it was of Hebrew origin.\footnote{Célestin Vivell, "Le tonus peregrinus," Revue du chant grégorienne, XVII, XIX.} This belief is in keeping with the opinions of Idelsohn and Werner which we have mentioned in the introduction to the present study. Apel, too, although he contradicts this opinion elsewhere (as we shall see directly), puts forth the opinion that the tonus peregrinus and other tones are "a heritage from pre-Christian days."\footnote{Apel, Gregorian, p. 509.} While it is not our intention to deny any credence to these theories, it must be admitted that they are supported by very slender evidence. More interesting to this study is the information found in the tonaries contemporary to the Commemoratio Brevis.

In his discussion of the ancient Frankish psalmody, Paolo Ferretti brings to our attention several references
to the tonus peregrinus—he uses the term to refer to any irregular psalm tone—which he has found in a number of sources. A certain Berno, a monk of St. Gall, refers to the "differentia octava (8th termination)" which serves for antiphons associated with the tonus peregrinus. The latter describes this termination—by association the tonus peregrinus itself—as being "quasi rara et barbara in ultimo ponitur extraordinaria (in the last place because it is rather rare, extraordinary, barbarous)." Ferretti is of the opinion that barbarous means "exotique, à la manière des Crecs qui appelaient barbares les Modes provenant des pays limitrophes (exotic, in the manner of the Greeks who called the modes originating in neighbouring countries barbarous)." Ferretti has also noted that Aurelianus of Réome called the tonus peregrinus "new (neophytus)." A rather similar appellation might appear to be found in the text of the Commenoratio Brevis, where the author speaks of a "tonum novissimum." It is clear that Ferretti understood the words "neophytus" and "novissimum" to refer to "recent" or "contemporaneous" additions to the chant at the time of the compilation of the two treatises: "il ressort assez clairment que l'introduction de ce Ton doit se placer entre les VIIIe et

16 Ferretti, Esthétique, p. 324 ff.
17 Ibid.
18 Gerbert, Scriptores I, p. 52.
19 Commenoratio Brevis, f 84 v.
XIIe siècles (it seems clear enough that the introduction of this tone took place between the eighth and the eleventh centuries)."\(^{20}\)

There can be no doubt that Apel seized upon this last opinion, for he has somewhat expanded it as the main topic of his consideration of the tonus peregrinus.\(^{21}\) He notes that Aurelianus grouped the aforementioned unclassified antiphons "under the eighth mode as an 'eleventh division which in all respects stands apart from the normal track (orbita, wheel-rut) of the eighth mode.'\(^{22}\) It is quite apparent that Apel believes that Aurelianus disapproved of the "neophytus tonus" for he translates this as "new-fangled tone"--biased language which strengthens his argument. In addition, Apel gives the "tonus novissimus" of the Commemoratio Brevis as added support for his opinion that the tonus peregrinus types of psalm tones were late additions to the chant repertoire.

Now all this is strong evidence well taken. And it is certainly difficult to refute the conclusions of Ferretti and Apel. There are, however, definite weaknesses in their theories. In the first place, "tonus novissimum" is not so easily translated as these two might have wished. "Novissimus" does indeed mean "newest" but this translation--and interpre-

\(^{20}\) Ferretti, *Esthétique*, p. 324.

\(^{21}\) Apel, *Gregorian*, p. 213.

\(^{22}\) *Ibid.*
pretation--has been somewhat stretched to suit the purpose of the argument. It is clear from the context of the sentences which accompany the examples of special tones in the *Commemoratio Brevis* that the author is not referring directly to a psalm tone by the words "novissimum," but to an antiphon of the last, that is, the eighth mode: 23

Sunt etiam proprie ad quasdam antiphonas modulationes suae, sicut in hac secundi toni antiphona . . . . Item ad tonum novissimum . . . .

There are, as well into-nations peculiar to cer-tain antiphons, as for the following antiphon of the second mode . . . . Similarly for the last mode . . . .

The author has, in fact, introduced the whole question of the special tones and unusual antiphons at a point consider-ably earlier than the words in question. It is doubtful that he would have chosen this late occasion to bring the matter up again.

Secondly, it would be difficult to show that the special tones and their corresponding antiphons exhibit any traces of the new refinement--the growing "modernity" and order--that was being infused into the psalmody during Frankish times. This study has amply demonstrated through-out its course the underlying order that exists in the system of the eight regular psalm tones. The special tones, to the contrary, are anything but refined and ordered, and their antiphons, as we have seen, are arbitrary to a high degree. It would be better to conclude that our evidence,

23 *Commemoratio Brevis*, f 84 v.
a point of view which compares two distinct styles, is surely more revealing than the stretched interpretation of chance remarks made by two medieval theorists. At any rate, although it is probable that we shall never know the truth about the antiquity of the special tones, their own, indeed peculiar and irregular style seems to us the strongest evidence in favour of their ancient origin. The unmistakable trend in the development of Gregorian chant was to simplify—to bring the disparate parts of a vast tradition into the order of a rational system.
AN HISTORICAL CONCLUSION

The Gregorian psalm tones appear at first sight to be sterile ground for historical investigation—almost featureless in their simplicity. Closer inspection reveals, however, a number of discernable strata belonging to quite different epochs.

The earliest portion of the psalm tones is the tenor. There can be little argument that the most primitive usage involved the recitation of liturgical texts on a single pitch (hardly a musical phenomenon, more properly described as a method of public address). The next stage involved—for the purpose of articulating the verses of psalms—the affixing of intonations and terminations. In the earliest epoch, before the Carolingian reforms, it would seem that a psalmody of intonations, tenors and terminations was not yet formed into a coherent system. It is generally believed that the system of the eight modes was itself only introduced into the West at the time of the great Emperor. It would be difficult, therefore, to argue that the practice prior to this introduction had any connection with the eight-mode system. It would seem, rather, that local usages involving many patterns, some of them made venerable by a great antiquity, were in force.

The next stage in the evolution was to provide a correlation between the new system of the octoechos and the
psalmody. At this point most of the older free practice was abandoned. Some remnants, however, have remained—it has been suggested that this is an explanation for the special tones in the *Commemoratio Brevis*—either owing to the force of tradition or the difficulty of making indisputable modal assignments.

The attitude to the text of the psalm did not remain unchanged throughout this long period of evolution. In the earliest period the text accent was treated quite casually, as an examination of the intonations and the terminations shows clearly. At a later stage, however—and here the mediant portions of the psalms with their quite different attitude toward text accent are instructive—the musicians approached the problem quite differently, taking extraordinary care that the correct inflections of the words were projected. It is tempting to associate this new approach, which reminds one so much of the Renaissance, with the well-known Carolingian rebirth of knowledge.

The history of the psalm tones subsequent to the *Commemoratio Brevis* is one of progressive refinement: a reduction to a practice both supple and logical, the last stage of which is represented by the Vatican Edition of 1908.

*ITA SUNT PSALMI AD GLORIAM DEI ET AEDIFICATIONEM HOMINUM*


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