GUIDO MILANESE

Alcuin, the Latin Grammars,
and the Transmission of the Gregorian Repertoire

The most interesting debate going on during the last decades in the field of Gregorian Chant research undoubtedly concerns the 'prehistory' of the chanted liturgical repertoire we normally label 'Gregorian Chant' or 'Frankish-Roman Chant'. What happened in the 150 years between the age of the 'composition' of this repertoire, generated through the cooperation of Empire and papacy, and our earliest written evidence attesting the diffusion of neumatic scripts?[1] A number of answers are obviously possible, and various "scenarios" are offered by Levy in his splendid *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*. Levy's proposal is not a simple return to an interpretative framework common before the great success of the theories focusing on 'aurality' (rather than 'orality', as recently pointed out).[2] While for a certain time these theories were regarded as a possible key to the riddle of the emergence of Gregorian Chant, Levy's interpretation sets the problem of the transmission of the musical component of Roman-Frankish liturgy into the cultural framework of the Carolingian Age. A fascinating picture emerges from Levy' work, and this picture is highly satisfying from a historical point of view, because the amount of necessary conjectures – though great indeed – is proportioned to the explanatory force of the theory. But the value of a theory lies essen-

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[1] I follow the Roman–Frankish the theory to explain the origins of Gregorian Chant, in the most recent formulation, i.e. regarding this repertoire as a basically Roman product, with substantial Frankish and also Hispanic integrations. On the Offertories, see the most recent research by KENNETH LEVY, "A New Look at Old Roman Chant", *Early Music History*, 19, 2000, pp. 81–104, developing Baroffio's and Ruth Steiner's research and Levy's own previous investigations: KENNETH LEVY, "Toledo, Rome, and the Legacy of Gaul", *Early Music History*, 3, 1984, pp. 49–99 (= *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 31 ss.).

[2] PETER JEFFERY, *Re-envisioning past musical cultures: ethnomusicology in the study of Gregorian chant*, Chicago - London, University of Chicago Press, 1992 (Studies in ethnomusicology), p. 48. A bibliographic outlook in KENNETH LEVY, "On Gregorian Orality", *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 43, 1990, pp. 185–227 (= *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, pp. 141 ff.). The seminal works I believe to be LEO TREITLER, "Homer and Gregory. The transmission of epic poetry and plainchant", *Musical Quarterly*, 60, 1974, pp. 333–372; ID., "Reading and singing: on the genesis of Occidental music writing", *Early Music History*, 3, 1984, pp. 135–208 and HELMUT HUCKE, "Toward a New Historical View of Gregorian Chant", *Journal of American Musicological Society*, 33, 1980, pp. 437-467. Against these views see also DAVID G. HUGHES, "Evidence for the Traditional View of the Transmission of Gregorian Chant", *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 40, 1987, pp. 377–404.

tially in its capacity to give an explanation of the new historical data advanced by subsequent researchers.

Levy's "early archetype scenario"[3] implies the existence of an "authoritative noted archetype of the Frankish–Gregorian proper" already at the end of the 8th century; its "authoritative melodic formulation",[4] was imposed on the liturgical and musical usage of the Empire. I believe that the strongest points in Levy's demonstration are the following:[5]

1. The evidence of a "strong unity" of the repertoire, from the very earliest manuscript witnesses. As noticed by Levy, it is difficult to believe in a very long oral transmission. If we assume that the repertoire was "fixed" in the second half of the 8th century, and that our first written witnesses belong to the same age as the first neumatic manuscripts, we should conclude that for about 120 years the repertoire was subject to oral transmission. How can we explain such an unusual stability?[6]
2. This stability concerns both the choral and the solo repertoire: for the former, the "license for improvisatory input was limited;[7] it seems to me that

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[3] LEVY, *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, p. 13.

[4] Ibid., p. 65.

[5] I am here reconsidering some of Levy's arguments and adding some new ones.

[6] Dom Mocquereau and Dom Gajard, in their "classic" booklet, even now a highly interesting piece of scholarship (ANDRÉ MOCQUEREAU and JOSEPH GAJARD, *La tradition rythmique dans les manuscrits*, Paris, Societé de Saint Jean l'Evangeliste, 1924 (Monographies gregoriennes, 4), pp. 10-11; 28-30) wrote: "il exista au moyen âge, l'âge d'or du chant grégorien, une interprétation traditionnelle fixant dans le moindre détail l'expression à donner aux mélodies liturgiques". It was a "tradition *universelle*, qu'on retrouve dans tous les pays d'Occident ; tradition *primitive*, qui, selon toutes vraisemblances, vient de Rome et remonte l'époque même de saint Grégoire". In order to evaluate historically this "Roman hypothesis" we must consider that this booklet was written before the rise of the interest in Old Roman Chant: but from a 'post-Stäblein' point of view even this hypothesis might find a new vitality (see e.g. BONIFACIO BAROFFIO, "Il canto gregoriano nel secolo VIII", in *Lateinische Kultur im VIII. Jahrhundert. Traube-Festschrift*, ed. by Albert Lehner and Walter Berschin, St. Ottilien, Eos Verlag, 1989, pp. 9–23). According to Dom Mocquereau, there must have been an "interprétation traditionnelle" – and actually, thirty years ago, these words were used by Dom Cardine as the title of a well known article: EUGÈNE CARDINE, "L'interprétation traditionnelle du Chant Grégorien", *Revue grégorienne*, 29, 1954, pp. 50–57. Another factual aspect is the independence of the graphical traditions: "ces manuscrits n'ont pas été copiés les uns sur les autres"; there must have been a "SOURCE COMMUNE" (small caps in the original text) that the two Solesmes scholars identify with the Roman tradition. But at this stage another problem was to be taken into account: how can we explain such a long stability. The answer was "romantically" found in the "l'effort de volonté" of the ancient musicians, who considered Church music as "une chose sacre, un bien d'Eglise". But, these pious but unsatisfying explanations apart, the issue of the stability of the repertoire remains the real problem.

[7] LEVY, *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, p. 17; see also p. 207.

the stability of the solo repertoire (simply browse the 2nd and 3rd volumes of the *Paléographie Musicale*) is particularly impressing: while the choral repertoire is somehow more fixed, the solo repertoire would have been more open to transformations through oral transmission;

3. Aurelianus's quotation of liturgical repertoire imply a chant "absolutely fixed and specific [...] with fixed details"; Aurelianus points also to the number of syllables (e.g. "in syllable no. 12") which makes a "visual inspection of noted music" highly probable;[8]

4. The differences among neumatic scripts at the beginning of the 10th century: "A common neumed model ca. 800 would leave time for the notational differences ca. 900 to develop. The relatively moderate pace of notational change during the tenth century suggests that the neumatic differences ca. 900 have a remote, earlier departure point".[9]

5. The division of the Empire took place before 850 ca, and it is therefore reasonable to assume an authoritative source before 840.[10]

These proofs, very prudently regarded by Levy himself as "spotty evidence",[11] may lead us to the following conclusion: the lack of ancient neumatic evidence may not reflect anything more than "accidents of preservation".[12] To Levy's demonstration I would like to add some further remarks – none among them is a final word on the issue, but I hope they are stimulating and provocative enough to be considered interesting.

Notational differences

Levy's remark (see above, no. 4) is important and may probably be integrated by some additional comments. Ancient neumatic scripts were not born

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[8] Ibid., pp. 188, 192. There is also the problem of the date of Aurelianus's work (840-850 or end of the century?). However, according to SUSAN RANKIN, "Carolingian music", in *Carolingian culture: emulation and innovation*, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 274–316: 291 n. 30, Lawrence Gushee, editor of *Musica disciplina* in the *Corpus scriptorum de musica* (vol. 21), believes that the date should be moved to the "first quarter of the ninth century". In this case, Aurelianus's evidence would be even more important for evaluating Levy's hypothesis.

[9] LEVY, *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, p. 243.

[10] Ibid.

[11] "The evidence is spotty, and my results cannot pretend to be more than conjectures" (Ibid., p. 112). The only item in Levy's demonstration which I believe to be not acceptable is what he says about chant schools (p. 214); there were chant and music schools, but this does not contrast with the hypothesis of oral transmission.

[12] Ibid., p. 242.

"perfect", though this may be a seductive perspective, one of its reasons being the objective perfection of our most ancient witnesses, such as the Sankt Gallen *Cantatorium* (359). They are indeed instances of a script that may be called *perfecta*, an example of a graphical project that had reached its end. Nevertheless, a careful look at the history of neumatic scripts identify undoubtedly a development of the various scripts, which took place before the end of 9th century/beginning of 10th. Let me quote a couple of examples:

1. A manuscript from Sankt Gallen (now Naples IV.G.68: BOETHIUS, *Consolatio Philosophiae*, 9th century, maybe 3rd quarter).[13] The musical script of the poems is in the Saint Gall type,[14] with graphical features that are absolutely *imperfecti* if compared to the Sankt Gallen Cantatorium 359. The musical script of 359 must be regarded as the result of an evolution, and probably not a short one.
2. The fragments of the Laon Cantatorium (Laon 266), datable to the 9th century (4th quarter), about half a century before the well known Laon 239 (10th century, beginning of 2nd quarter, ca. 930 A.D.).[15] The script of Laon 266 is basically the same as that of Laon 239, but the ductus is less sharp, less angular, and in particular the shape of the uncinus is smoother – the uncinus must be just a calligraphic transformation of the tractulus. As a consequence, Laon 266 is the witness of a real evolution of the Metz script: an evolution already fairly advanced around the years 875-890.

Both these observations – pointing to facts, not theories – lead to this conclusion: during the 9th century a series of "evolutionary" changes must have taken place, and of this evolution we perceive just the conclusive stage.[16]

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[13] Date: 9th century (FABIO TRONCARELLI, *Boethiana Aetas. Modelli grafici e fortuna manoscritta della "Consolatio Philosophiae" tra IX e XII secolo*, Alessandria, Edizioni Dell'Orso, 1987, p. 235) or second half of 9th century (ibid., p. 277).

[14] On chanting classical texts, see SOLANGE CORBIN, "Notations musicales dans les classiques Latins", *REL*, 32, 1954, pp. 97–99; EAD., "Comment on chantait les classiques Latins au Moyen âge", in *Mélanges* [...] *offerts à Paul-Marie Masson*, Paris, 1955, I, p. 107 ff.; see also Susan Rankin's remarks (RANKIN, "Carolingian music", p. 300). I will be studying the musical script of the Naples manuscript in a forthcoming paper.

[15] Jeffery's date (PETER JEFFERY, "An Early Cantatorium Fragment Related to Ms Laon 239", *Scriptorium*, 36, 1982, pp. 245–252: 248) relies on Gamber's and Bischoff's judgment. A "semiological use" of the Laon 239 – Laon 266 comparison [GUIDO MILANESE, "Osservazioni sull'oriscus culminante", *Studi gregoriani*, 2, 1986, pp. 57–103: 78, ex. 26 (see also table 2)] was proposed years ago.

[16] From a personal point of view I am always quite surprised to notice *how fast* the process of graphical differentiation happened (even if this implies, as we are going to see, an archetype with some fixed characteristics. But it will be sufficient to rethink the old and always vital

The spread of Gregorian Chant and the Carolingian Court

Levy's hypothesis of an "authoritative noted archetype of the Frankish-Gregorian proper"[17] is highly compatible with the picture of the culture at the Carolingian court, as drawn by Bischoff.[18] The activity of the Carolingian court as a centre of 'standardization' of textual transmission seems to have been very important. The most characteristic example is undoubtedly the typology of the sacramentary in France in the 8th–9th century;[19] but probably also an authenticus of the *Canonum collectio Dionysio–Hadriana* (arrived at the Carolingian court in 774) was kept by the court, along with other texts of religious–theological interest.[20] The *Libri carolini* were kept at the court library still in Hincmar's age[21] – evidence, I believe, of an active function of "reference books" performed at least by some texts owned by the court library.

Levy's picture – an authoritative text established at court – makes sense within the general textual situation of other liturgical texts, compiled by order of Pippin and later Charlemagne, with Alcuin's decisive contribution, both for the sacramentary and for the lectionary, and particularly for the edition of the Bible, a task which occupied the learned Briton for years.[22] Under this perspective, the "Gregorian archetype" of Levy's hypothesis would find itself in great and authoritative company.

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problem of the origins of Carolingian minuscule to understand that the age had such a high degree of graphical creativity, and such a *concentration of intellectual energy* in matters concerning scripts, that they were able to produce, in a short time, real masterworks of writing imagination and efficacy.

[17] LEVY, *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians*, p. 2.

[18] I refer to the useful collection of papers translated and edited by Michael Gorman [BERNHARD BISCHOFF, *Manuscripts and libraries in the age of Charlemagne*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994 (Cambridge studies in palaeography and codicology, 1)].

[19] It is not relevant for this research to elucidate the exact meaning of the phrase *ex codice authentico libro bibliothecae cubiculi scriptum* . See BISCHOFF, *Manuscripts and libraries in the age of Charlemagne*, p. 58 n. 15, for more on this topic.

[20] Ibid., p. 58 ff.

[21] Ibid., pp. 57 n. 7, 74.

[22] About the typology of the Sacramentary, Cyrille Vogel's reports are still interesting, even if a bit repetitive: see e.g. CYRILLE VOGEL, "La reforme cultuelle sous Pepin le Bréf et sous Charlemagne", in *Die karolingische Renaissance*, ed. by Erna Patzelt, Graz, Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1965, pp. 173–242; ID., "Saint Chrodegang et les débuts de la romanisation du culte en pays franc", in *Saint Chrodegang. Communications présentées au colloque tenu a Metz à l'occasion du douzième centenaire de sa mort*, Metz, Le Lorrain, 1967, pp. 91–109.

As already noticed, Levy's prudence over his own demonstration is particularly commendable.[23] After introducing some observations complementary to Levy's ones, let us try to take a further step. Can we identify any unequivocal factual aspect that may be understood using Levy's "scenario"? The following pages of this article are devoted to such an attempt. Starting from evidence apparently of little moment, we shall try to understand this evidence within a general historic framework likely to make this evidence understandable. And I hope to show that Levy's model is the best at making this evidence easily meaningful, less demanding as far as working hypotheses are concerned, and more satisfying from a historical point of view.

Let us now see the evidence we are talking about. Any scholar interested in the issue of liquescence[24] may have noticed a very peculiar behavior of liquescence in the syllable *before* an instance of the consonant *g*: for example, in the words *legi* or *legem* the syllables *LEgi* or *LEgem* are often marked through a liquescence; in the word *legat* the first syllable (*LEgat*) is never liquescent. An investigation using the *Graduale Triplex*, with the addition of the Offertory verses and with the pieces of chant unfortunately omitted in the 1974 edition of the Graduale Romanum led to the following results:[25]

Syllable	Number of instances	Liquescent	Percentage
ga	98	0	0
ge	272	16	5.88
gi	148	25	16.99
go	116	0	0
gu	67	0	0

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[23] Compare this statement by the greatest 20th-century specialist of Carolingian culture: "An examination like this, in which I have proceeded from hypothesis to another, is risky. Only some of steps in my argument can be proved, and even this is often difficult. Nevertheless, most details in the argument I have put forth here are very probable, and they provide us with further perspectives on Charlemagne's library": BISCHOFF, *Manuscripts and libraries in the age of Charlemagne*, p. 75.

[24] Bibliography on liquescence is quite large: see, for a comprehensive and still reliable presentation, JOHANNES BERCHMANS GÖSCHL, "Il fenomeno semiologico ed estetico delle note liquescenti", in *Il canto gregoriano oggi*, ed. by Domenico Cieri, Roma, 1984, pp. 97–152.

[25] *Graduale Triplex: seu, Graduale Romanum Pauli PP. VI cura recognitum & rhythmicis signis a Solesmensibus monachis ornatum, neumis Laudunensibus (cod. 239) et Sangallensibus (Codicum Sangallensis 359 et Einsidlensis 121) nunc auctum.* Solesmis, Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1979. The *Graduale Triplex* is used as a very reliable sample texts as in GUIDO MILANESE, *Concordantia et instrumenta lexicographica ad Graduale Romanum pertinentia*, Savona – Genova, Editrice Liguria, 1996 (Bibliotheca Gregoriana, I).

No instance of liquescence on syllables before *ga*, *go*, *gu*; a substantial figure on syllables before *g* + palatal vocal (*e-i*), particularly before *i*. An explanation of this behavior was proposed, many years ago, by Heinrich Freistedt, in his Freiburg dissertation on liquescence.[26] He pointed to different pronunciation as the reason for this difference: *g* was pronounced velar in *ga*, *go*, *gu*, and as "semivokalischer Zischlaut" if *g* was before a palatal vowel. Certainly, Freistedt's phonologic explanation is not possible – it is not a hiss, but a voiced affricate;[27] but the basic point – that is, explaining the difference as a different phonetic situation – is correct, and, what is more, the only explanation likely to be true.

There is no liquescence (never, if I checked correctly the *Graduale Triplex*) with *ce/ci*, because liquescence implies voiced phonemes, according to the teachings of the late antique grammarians studied by Freistedt and by Kramer;[28] but this tradition should be studied afresh, using up-to-date criteria, as I plan to do in a forthcoming study.

From the perspective of the history of language, the identification of such a proof of the affricate pronunciation of *g* in several European areas is noteworthy: the pronunciation of g was already weakened quite soon – evidence of the 6th century show *g* written as *i*, if followed by palatale vowels.[29] This

[26] HEINRICH FREISTEDT, *Die liqueszierenden Noten des gregorianischen Chorals: ein Beitrag zur Notationskunde*, Freiburg (Schweiz), St. Paulusdruckerei, 1929 (Veröffentlichungen der Gregorianischen Akademie zu Freiburg; Heft 14), pp. 58-59.

[27] BERTIL MALMBERG, *Manuale di fonetica generale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1992 (Strumenti. Linguistica e critica letteraria), p. 195.

[28] JOHANNES KRAMER, *Literarische Quellen zur Aussprache des Vulgärlateins*, Meisenheim am Glam, 1976.

[29] For example: *iesta = gesta; eieris = egeris; nonienti = nongenti; septinientis = septingentis:* ANTONIO DE PRISCO, *Il Latino tardoantico e altomedievale*, Roma, Jouvence, 1993 (Guide, 23), pp. 50-51; many examples in De Prisco, with a bibliography of primary and secondary literature. Substantial information can be derived from standard works on late-antique Latin linguistics: on romance transformations (VEIKKO VÄÄNÄNEN, *Introduzione al latino volgare*, ed. by Alberto Limentani, Bologna, 1982³ (orig. Paris 1967), p. 114), on palatalization (JÓZSEF HERMAN, *Vulgar Latin*, transl. by Roger Wright, University Park, Pa., The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000 (= Paris 1967), p. 114), on late-antique texts featuring these phenomena (J. SVENNUNG, *Untersuchungen zu Palladius und zur lateinischen Fach- und Volkssprache*, Uppsala, 1935, p. 102). Sardinian is highly resistant to change (BRUNO LUISELLI, "Aspetti della situazione linguistica latina nel passaggio dall'antichità al medioevo", *Romanobarbarica*, 2, 1977, pp. 59–89: 68); about Italy see in particular pp. 159-160 of the long chapter on orthography by B. LÖFSTEDT, *Studien über die Sprache der langobardischen Gesetze*, Stockholm, 1961, pp. 10-213. Standard reference works on Latin pronunciation are MARIA BONIOLI, *La pronuncia del latino nelle scuole dall'antichità al Rinascimento*. I, Torino, 1962, pp. 79-82, ALFONSO TRAINA, *L'alfabeto e la pronunzia del latino*, Bologna, Pàtron, 1973⁴ (Testi e manuali per l'insegnamento universitario del latino, 1), pp. 58-59, and W. SIDNEY ALLEN, *Vox latina: a guide to the pronunciation of classical*

pronunciation, certainly not velar, probably already affricate, was spreading all over continental Europe, while in the British Isles the velar pronunciation was presumably preserved, along with the velar pronunciation of *c*.[30] Roger Wright's research succeeded in elucidating the very peculiar situation of Latin from Late Antiquity to the Carolingian age. There was a "gap" between *written* and *spoken* Latin – people used to write Latin and to pronounce a quasi–Romance language,[31] therefore generating a situation of confusion and unintelligibility that may be regarded as the basic need faced by Alcuin and Charlemagne's texts on the reform of Latin. According to Roger Wright's model, Alcuin's initiative can be understood within the framework of an insular, Anglo Saxon linguistic education:[32] in the British Isles Latin was a foreign language, with a "frozen" pronunciation, cut off from the Romance area events: in the British Isles the double correspondence between phonematic and graphematic levels never disappeared. If in Merovingian Latin "se poteva stare al posto di *si*, di *sed* o di *sit*",[33] in Anglo Saxon Latin the graphical sequence corresponded to well-differentiated phonetic sequences:

> In presenza di una profonda divaricazione fra scrittura e pronunzia, la rivoluzione carolina intervenne per fissare regole di grafia e fonetica della lingua ufficiale, che segnarono il definitivo distacco fra quest'ultima e il romanzo, con il passaggio da una situazione di diglossia al vero e proprio bilinguismo. Al latino scritto fu attribuita una lettura artificiale modellata

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Latin, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989. Very useful are Polara's articles, to be read not only for their very lucid approach to the problem, but also for the abundant bibliographic information offered: see GIOVANNI POLARA, "Problemi di grafia del latino fra tardo antico e alto medioevo", in *La cultura in Italia fra tardo antico e alto medioevo*. Atti del Convegno tenuto a Roma, CNR, 12 - 16 Novembre 1979, Roma, Herder, 1981, I, pp. 475–189, and ID., "Problemi di ortografia e di interpunzione nei testi latini di età carolingia", in *Grafia e interpunzione del latino nel Medioevo*, ed. by Alfonso Maierù, Ateneo, 1987 (Lessico intellettuale europeo, 41), pp. 31–51.

[30] *Patrick* implies a Latin pronunciation as *Patrikiu(m)*: TRAINA, *L'alfabeto e la pronunzia del latino*, p. 31. The most often quoted source is Abbo Floriacensis, PL 193, 528-529; ELENA ZAFFAGNO, "La dottrina ortografica di Beda", *Romanobarbarica*, 1, 1976, pp. 325–339: 335-336: his remarks are indisputable as far as the velar sound of *c* is concerned, but also usable about *g*: BONIOLI, *La pronuncia del latino nelle scuole*, pp. 77 and 81.

[31] A useful analogy, often used about Wright's theory, is with contemporary English (even taking this analogy literally one would lessen Wright's case): the *sound* of Oxford English and that of Asian English is of course very different, and this may also give some problems of mutual understanding, but the written version is normally the same.

[32] See above all ROGER WRIGHT, *Late Latin and early romance in Spain and Carolingian France*, Liverpool, F. Caims, 1982 (ARCA. Classical and Medieval texts, papers and monographs, 8).

[33] POLARA, *Problemi di grafia del latino*, p. 31.

sulla pronunzia insulare che tendeva a istituire una corrispondenza biuni-
voca fra segno e suono; una pronunzia che non aveva più niente a che fare
con le parlate romanze correnti, e queste, non riconoscendo più come pro-
pria trascrizione il latino, si diedero presto un nuovo sistema scritto; il lati-
no – o almeno quello che si è comunemente inteso dire nell'ultimo mil-
lennio usando questo termine – è in realtà un'invenzione dell'età carolina,
che può essere attribuita in gran parte ad Alcuino.[34]

The discovery of liquescent neumes with *g* only before palatal vowels (i.e.
voiced affricate) is evidence of the kind of pronunciation required by Alcuin:
he did not require a transformation of *ge/gi* back to their original velar sound,
which by then had not been used on the Continent for several centuries.
Whether Alcuin's 'original' insular pronunciation required a velar sound in
any position[35] is not relevant in our case.[36] Much more important is that
Alcuin wrote an *Orthographia* that "was crucial for the production of writ-
ten, not only spoken Latin (it was probably a text designed to assist scribes
in the scriptoria when copying Latin texts from defective exemplars)".[37]

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[34] POLARA, *Problemi di ortografia*, p. 33. Wynfreth's (Bonifatius) visits Gregory II, before
leaving as a missionary to Northern Europe (years 719 and 722), are very instructive on the
linguistic situation not only in France but also in Italy. The Pope wished to examine Wynfreth's
knowledge of theology, and Wynfreth preferred a "written exam" because, he said, the
familiaritas of the Pope (i.e. his spoken language) was difficult to understand, while there were
no problems in the written text: "la latinità di Wynfreth [...] era essenzialmente scritta e
testuale, non era stata appresa da parlanti nativi". Wynfreth's grammar was rich with
morphological details he was aware of, but "si udivano di rado nella normale parlata attiva del
mondo romanzo": ROGER WRIGHT, "Latino e Romanzo: Bonifazio e il Papa Gregorio II", in
La preistoria dell'italiano. Atti della Tavola Rotonda di Linguistica Storica (Venezia,
Università Ca' Foscari, 11-13 giugno 1998), ed. by Jószef Herman and Anna Marinetti,
Tübingen, Niemeyer, 2000, pp. 219–229: 220 and 223.

[35] See above, note no. 31.

[36] It is worth adding that the whole problem is a complex one, and that some scholars deny the
importance of Carolingian activity in this field: "La réforme carolingienne et ses effects tels
qu'ils ont été décrits sont une légende" (PAUL TOMBEUR, "De polygraphia", in *Grafia e
interpunzione del latino,* pp. 69–101: 96). A theoretical model different from Wright's, but
again at high levels of scholarly imagination and historical force, is that proposed by Michel
Banniard: see e.g. MICHEL BANNIARD, *La genesi culturale dell'Europa: V-VIII secolo*,
Roma–Bari, Laterza, 1994 (= Paris 1989), pp. 167-201.

[37] ROSAMUND MCKITTERICK, "Latin and Romance: an historian's perspective", in *Latin and the
Romance Languages in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Roger Wright, London, Routledge,
1991, pp. 130–145: 132, repr. in *The Frankish Kings and Culture in the Early Middle Ages*,
Aldershot, Variorum, 1995.

And what has the *codex authenticus*, Levy's archetype, to do with all of this? The issue of pronunciation leads us back to a question of seminal importance in Carolingian culture – but apparently it does not inform us on anything that may be connected with the original dissemination of Gregorian Chant. However, a sample check on manuscripts, limited to well known sources, led to quite unexpected results.[38] The investigation has to be widened in order to cover all the possible instances, but I do not expect any structural change in comparison with the results that I am going to propose in the following pages.

In some instances Laon 239 and Saint Gall show a perfect agreement:

Intr. *Exspecta dominum*	GT 126	Eins. 121, 169	Laon 79	viriliter **a**-ge

In other much more numerous instances the two graphical traditions do not agree: for example:

Comm. *Dominus regit*	GT 365	–	Laon 76	**re**-git

where Laon is liquescent and S. Gall is not; or in this other instance, the opposite to the previous one:

Intr. *Dicit dominus ego cogito*	GT 366	Eins. 121, 163	Laon –	**co**-gito

In a few instances there is a wider agreement, covering many other graphical traditions. For the most impressing instance, see Plate 1.

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[38] Manuscripts used (library locations in short form, because they are all well-known documents), with printed or photographic reproductions used for this research: St. Gallen 359 (*Paléographie Musicale* II 1; *Monumenta Palæographica Gregoriana* 3); Einsiedeln 121 (*Paléographie Musicale* I 4); Bamberg, Staats-bibliothek lit. 6 (photographic reproduction); St. Gallen 376 (phot. repr.); St. Gallen 381 (phot. repr.); Laon 239 (*Paléographie Musicale* I 10); Chartres 47 (*Paléographie Musicale* I 11); Paris B.N. 776 (phot. repr.); Paris B.N. 903 (*Paléographie Musicale* I 13); Benevento 33 (*Monumenta Palæographica Gregoriana* 1); Benevento 40 (*Codices Gregoriani* 1); Benevento 34 (*Paléographie Musicale* I 15). Working strategy used: the *Graduale Triplex* (= GT), along with *Offertoriale* and *Neumé* were checked thoroughly. Whenever I found a liquescent neume in the Saint Gall source used by the GT, I also checked the above-mentioned St. Gallen sources. Chartres 47 was checked whenever a Laon 239 reading was used in the GT and additionally in the Alleluia *Dulce lignum* (Laon 2nd hand, not reproduced in the GT); the same as far as the Aquitans are concerned. For the Beneventan tradition, I used as a main source Benevento 40, and if there was liquescence I also checked Benevento 33 and 34.

Another interesting case has to do with a composition that may be called "marginal", of possible Aquitanian origin, the Alleluia *Dulce lignum* (GT 598, not in Saint Gall and in the first hand of Laon 239). Here the syllable *re* in the word *regem* shows liquescence in the second hand of Laon, in the two Aquitanian and three Beneventan sources studied (i.e. in all of the manuscripts containing the piece), and also in the Vatican edition.[39]

What are the conclusions that may be drawn from the study of this manuscript evidence? We may infer – and this before a complete investigation – that all the manuscript traditions are aware of liquescences in situations where it was apparently commendable to signal the affricate *g*. Now let us consider some aspects of the problem before setting forth some general ideas on this issue.

The behavior of Saint Gall manuscripts

There is not even a single instance, among the Saint Gall manuscripts I have taken into consideration. The instances where a comparison is possible are 13 (8 where the comparison involves Sankt Gallen 359, Einsiedeln 121, Bamberg 6 and Sankt Gallen 376; 5 where the comparison involves Einsiedeln 121 with the Sankt Gallen *versicolarium* no. 381).[40]

Such a particular kind of *loci variantes* is not likely to have originated independently in different manuscripts: the conclusion is that *there must have been an exemplar from which the Saint Gall transmission was derived, and probably also of the areas nearby*. The investigation is to be extended to a great number of manuscripts, from Germany and other areas somehow related to Sankt Gallen. But at the moment the conclusion – to refer again to Levy's reconstruction – is that there must have been something like a Sankt Gallen subarchetype in the transmission of the chant repertoire of the Roman–Frankish Mass.

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[39] A Northern Italian witness, in Saint Gall script, features this Alleluia: Torino, B.N. G.V.20, Gradual-Tropary-Sequentiar from Bobbio, 11th century, f. 138. Again this manuscripts has a liquescence above *RE(gem)*.

[40] In one instance I am doubtful about the Bamberg reading, but it may be a detail non clear in the photograph I used: Alleluia *Domine refugium* (GT 321), on the syllable *fu* (Bamberg lit. 6, c. 69*v*). Also the comparison with the Bobbio gradual was successful – the group looks very consistent.

Beneventans and Aquitanians

I identified only two instances of the particular kind of liquescence we are dealing with: the offertory verse studied at Table 1 and the Alleluia *Dulce lignum*, see p. 9). In both these instances Beneventan manuscripts agree among themselves and with the Aquitanian ones. It is hardly a hazardous coincidence, even if in this case the force of the demonstration is less powerful than in the case of the St. Gall manuscripts, where in 13 instances (all of the instances studied) the manuscripts agree. It is highly probable that also in the case of the Beneventans we have to assume one subarchetype, and that the antigraph of this subarchetype, which arrived from France, contained the same version found also in the Aquitanians. Otherwise, the high degree of textual intercourse between Beneventans and Aquitanians is well known; but what I am here setting forth is that this coincidence is not due to the typical conservative features of "lateral areas", but to a true dependence on the same *written exemplar*.[41] I think this is the only possible explanation, because *Dulce lignum* is a most typical post-classical composition, very peculiar also from a textual point of view (it is a non-psalmic, devotional and metrical text), not listed also in the ancient neumeless manuscripts.[42]

Possible light on the features of the early neumatic script

Without taking a position on the issue of the "two stages" in the early transmission – at archetype-subarchetype level – of Gregorian chant,[43] it is anyhow difficult to assume that the instance of Table I can be explained otherwise than as the heritage of an "authoritative noted archetype". But it is also easy to ask: why would the original situation be preserved only in this instance? And why would the (hypothetical) St. Gall subarchetype contain more liquescent neumes, as shown by the impressive cumulative evidence? I think we could try to combine the evidence gained in this research with a well-known piece of scholarly information, in order to compose the following picture.

The archetype of the Mass chants had particular neumes for liquescent situations. Liquescence is a general feature of all the neumatic scripts, and will be lost in a massive way only in the printed edition. Liquescence is present even in small neumatic insertions, such as the paleo-Frankish neumes in

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[41] The seminal work is still JOSEPH GAJARD, "Les récitations modales des 3e et 4e modes et les manuscrits bénéventains et aquitains", *Études grégoriennes*, 1, 1954, pp. 9–45.

[42] RENÉ-JEAN HESBERT, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, Rome, Herder, 1935.

[43] LEVY, *Gregorian chant and the Carolingians*, p. 115.

the Sacramentary Paris B.N. lat. 2291 (St. Amand, ca. 870;[44] in this case the neumes are used to distinguish the two Introits *Exaudi domine* (GT 241 and 291). In the second instance the liquescence on the syllable *au* is clearly drawn, as done, about 60 years later, by Laon 239, f. 151, and, almost 120 years later, by Einsiedeln 121, p. 317.

Liquescence must have been a feature of the very early stages of Gregorian neumatic script. The need of this graphic tool must be understood within the linguistic and cultural framework outlined above, concerning Alcuin and the reform of the pronunciation of Latin: the need to distinguish between phonetic features was originated by the same impulse that was leading the Carolingian world to a passionate interest in Latin grammars, and to restore a standardized pronunciation of Latin. It was a highly unified cultural movement, from the low level (phonetic control) to the highest (the critical edition of the Bible), that reshaped the Latin linguistic and conceptual tradition.

It is hardly hazardous that the example of a complete traditional agreement concerns the word *rex* (*dico ego opera mea regi*), as well as in the Aquitanian (?) Alleluia *Dulce lignum* (*sola fuisti digna sustinere regem cælorum*).

The instance of a complete traditional agreement we noticed before is a liquescence over the word *rex* (dico ego opera mea regi) as well as in the other instance, the Aquitanian (?) *Alleluia Dulce lignum* (*sola fuisti digna sustinere regem cælorum*). Dom Cardine noticed that the two monosyllables *rex* and *cor* are emphasized, in the Saint Gall *versicolarium*, by an episema; in these instances the aim is to make sure of the correct pronunciation of such an important word as *rex*.[45]

If there was really a Carolingian archetype, this was the work of copyists and intellectuals tied to an Anglo-Saxon culture, like Alcuin and his friends. For them, it was reasonable to distinguish between the sound of *ge*/*gi* from the sound of *ga*/*go*/*gu*.[46] But to an Italian or a French ear, the situation was different and the needs were different. If there really was editing work aimed

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[44] RANKIN, *Carolingian Music*, p. 299, ex. 15 and tab. 21.

[45] See EUGÈNE CARDINE, "De l'importance donnée aux monosyllabes *cor* et *rex* et de l'attention portée à la copie des neumes dans le ms. 381 de S. Gall", *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra*, 1, 1980, pp. 16–17. I cannot understand why in the Alleluia *Dulce lignum*, a very peripheral piece of chant, such a refined device as the liquescence we are studying is used. The reason might simply be the need to emphasize the important word *regem*. A fascinating hypothesis (but almost certainly hypercriticism) could identify some influence of Irish graphical traditions: at the beginning of the 9th century, the system of phonemic distinction of the Irish scribes used to add "points over nasals", and the point over the neume is one of the systems used to show a liquescence: M.B. PARKES, "The contribution of insular scribes of the seventh and eighth centuries to the 'grammar of legibility'", in *Grafia e interpunzione del latino nel Medioevo*, ed. by Alfonso Maierù, pp. 15–30: 19.

[46] See note 31.

at preparing local subarchetypes, this activity, in the romance areas, led (two or three generations after Alcuin) to the disappearance of useless liquescences, or, perhaps, simply to an avoidance of their multiplication.

In the Saint Gall subarchetype, there were many liquescences of the kind we are interested in; for chanters of the German area the correct pronunciation of these phonetic elements may have been far from obvious. It is difficult to say whether this situation was due to a multiplication of the possibilities already suggested by a "nuance-poor" archetype[47] or if this subarchetype was simply maintaining a textual situation already presented by the archetype. A working hypothesis to be tested is the relationship between these phenomena, to be understood at subarchetype level, and the *divisio imperii*.

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The editorial work performed in the 2nd half of the 8th century in Latin liturgical chant must be understood as a particularly fascinating and still highly enigmatical of the extraordinary effort towards intellectual, artistic, cultural effort – a spitirual one, in the end – that distinguished Carolingian civilization and particularly Charlemagne's Court. And also in the field of liturgical chant, quite unsurprisingly, as in the history of the Bible text, of the linguistic interrelations between Latin and Romance, it is again to Magister Alcuinus' influence that we may safely credit decisive impulses, destined to characterize European civilization.

(Engl. trans. Guido Milanese and Hung Ward-Perkins)

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[47] Levy, *Gregorian chant and the Carolingians*, p. 135.