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The Central Problem of Gregorian Chant*

BY WILLI APEL

FOR MORE THAN a thousand years the liturgical chant of the Roman Church has been called "Gregorian Chant," with reference to Pope Gregory I, also known as "the Great," who ruled the Church from 590 to 604 and who is thus honored and revered as the man to whom the Church owes this distinctive and significant part of its ceremonial. Venerable though this tradition is, it has repeatedly been questioned or refuted, and arguments pro and con have been exchanged in articles, books, and discussions for more than a hundred years. To the present day the designation "Gregorian" constitutes what may well be called the central problem of the chant, because it bears directly on the question of its origin, both in time and locale. If the designation can be proved to be historically correct, it follows that the traditional music of the Church goes back to the period *ca.* 600 and that it emanated from its spiritual center, *i.e.*, Rome.

This view is backed up by a very old tradition according to which Gregory was the author of a *liber antiphonarius*, *i.e.*, a book contain-

ing the liturgical chants, probably both for the Mass and the Office.¹ The earliest known testimony to this effect dates from *ca.* 750, when Egbert, Bishop of York, tells us in his *De institutione catholica* that certain English customs concerning Lent and Ember Weeks were ordered by Gregory "in suo antiphonario et missali" (in his book of chants and in his book of prayers) and were brought to England by his missionary, St. Augustine. From the end of the 8th century we have evidence which, although not very conclusive, may be mentioned here because of its rather unusual character. It consists of a poem which is found at the beginning of several Antiphonaries of the 9th and 10th centuries and which, according to the 9th-century Pope Hadrian II, was written by Hadrian I, who ruled from 772 to 795. It says that *hic libellus musicae artis* (this book of musical art) was composed by Gregory, who is described as follows:²

Gregorius praesul meritis et nomine dignus
Unde genus ducit, summum conscendit
honorem.

Some liturgists have maintained that the Gregorius of this poem was not Gregory the Great, but Gregory II who held the Papal See from 715 to 731, or even his successor Gregory

¹ For more details, full quotations, etc., see, for instance, Dom Germain Morin, *Les Véritables Origines du chant grégorien* (1912), pp. 11 ff.

² Free translation: "Gregory, through deeds and name a worthy leader, has ascended to the highest honor at the place where his ancestors lived."

* This article was read at the Annual Meeting of the Mediaeval Academy of America, held in Cambridge, Mass., on April 27 and 28, 1956. It is taken (with some changes) from a book on Gregorian Chant to be published in the fall of 1957 by the Indiana University Press and is reproduced here by permission of the publishers. Its main thesis, although formulated independently about two years ago, has been "in the air" for some time. See, *e.g.*, H. Hucke, "Gregorianischer Gesang in alt-römischer und fränkischer Überlieferung," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* XII (1955), p. 74.

III, who died in 741. Others, however, have pointed out that both Gregory II and III were of Greek lineage, while Gregory I came from an old Roman family. He is therefore the only one who could "have ascended to the highest honor at the place where his ancestors lived."

The next, and more significant, witness is the well-known historiographer Walafrid Strabo, who lived in the first half of the 9th century and was Abbot of Reichenau. He says that there is a tradition according to which Gregory regulated not only the order of the Masses and the Consecrations but also to a large extent the arrangement of the chants in that manner in which it is now observed. Passing over some other testimonies of a more or less certain character, we finally come to the crown-witness, *i.e.*, Gregory's biographer, Johannes Diaconus, whose *Vita Sancti Gregorii*, written about 872, contains a chapter inscribed: *Antiphonarium centonizans, cantorum constituit scholam*. The chapter begins with the sentence: "In the house of the Lord, like another wise Solomon, he compiled in the most diligent manner a collection called Antiphonary, which is of the greatest usefulness."

With John the Deacon's biography the tradition implied in the term "Gregorian Chant" became so firmly established that it would be pointless to pursue it any further. It found an expression not only in such terms as *cantus Gregorianus* or *Antiphonarius S. Gregorii*, but also in pictorial representations showing Gregory sitting on the papal throne and dictating to a scribe the melodies that a heavenly dove, perched on his shoulder, is whispering into his ears.

It was not until the 17th and 18th centuries that the Gregorian tradition was questioned, first by Pierre

Gussanville who, in 1675, published the complete works of Gregory, and about fifty years later by Georg von Eckhart, a friend of Leibnitz who had been converted to Catholicism, in his *De rebus Francia orientalis*, published in 1729. However, these early attempts to deprive Gregory of his lofty position found practically no response. The tradition remained unchallenged until 1890, when the Belgian musicologist Gevaert published a pamphlet, *Les Origines du chant liturgique de l'église latine*, in which he severely attacked what he called "the Gregorian legend," maintaining that its chief witness, John the Deacon, was entirely untrustworthy, and that the role commonly assigned to Gregory the Great was actually performed by a number of Greek and Syrian popes—Agathon, Leo II, Sergius I, Gregory II, and Gregory III—who reigned considerably later, from 678 till 741. Gevaert's ideas, however, were almost unanimously refuted by other liturgists, with the result that the old tradition was once more accepted as basically correct. It is only in the past five or six years that the problem has once more been scrutinized, with entirely novel results. To present these recent developments is the main purpose of this paper.

We may begin with an attempt at an objective and critical evaluation of the evidence adduced in support of the tradition, as I have just sketched it. How much is it worth? How well does it stand up under close scrutiny? Frankly, it depends. If you are the scholar who admits nothing but unquestionably authentic and contemporary documentation, it is of no value, since the earliest witness, Bishop Egbert, lived 150 years later than the period we are concerned with. I wonder, however, what would become of Medieval—and not only

Medieval—research if such a rigid and somewhat pedantic yardstick were used. I am willing to admit that we have sufficient documentation to warrant the assumption that a *liber antiphonarius* of Gregory did exist. The main difficulty, it seems to me, is one, not of documentation, but of interpretation. What was this book like, and in which relationship does it stand to the earliest antiphonals that are preserved? Was it written by Gregory personally or written by others under his direction and supervision, or was it only a compilation of material that existed before his time, as the report of John the Deacon would seem to imply? Other questions are of even greater importance and consequence. Did it have music in some primitive sort of notation, or did it contain only the texts for the musical items—the Introit and Gradual of the Mass, the Responses of Matins, etc.—as is still the case in the earliest antiphonals that have come down to us, e.g., the famous Codex of Monza, written in the 8th century with gold and silver letters on black parchment?³ And finally, what reason do we have to assume that the melodies used at the time of Gregory, regardless of whether they were notated or orally transmitted, were the same as those known today as “Gregorian melodies”?

That Gregory was not the only pope to be active on behalf of liturgical music is suggested by a short account from the 8th century, according to which a considerable number of popes had contributed to the formation of the ecclesiastical chant.⁴

³ These Antiphonals without musical notation are published in R. J. Hesbert, *Antiphonale missarum sextuplex* (1935).

⁴ The account appears at the end of the earliest *Ordo Romanus* (usually called *Ordo Romanus Gerbert*, because it was first published by Gerbert in his *Monumenta veteris*

The list opens with Damasus I, who reigned from 366 to 384 and who, we are told, “instituted and decreed the ecclesiastical order with the help of the priest St. Jerome who, with the permission of the pope himself, had transmitted it from Jerusalem.” While the report makes no mention of music in connection with Damasus, it does so in connection with a number of popes of the 5th to the 7th centuries: Leo I, Gelasius, Symmachus, Johannes, Bonifacius, Gregory, and Martinus, each of whom is said to have edited an *annalis cantus omnis*, a cycle of chants for the entire year. Thus it would appear that Gregory was by no means the first and not even the last of the popes who contributed to the development and consolidation of the ecclesiastical chant. Exactly what role Gregory played in this long evolutionary process is, of course, the crucial question.

Let us now approach the problem from a different angle, i.e., on the basis, not of short and vague remarks, but of actual documents. In doing so, it is important to realize that the formation of the liturgical chant involves at least three different processes or layers. One is the formation of the cycle of feasts throughout the year, in other words, of the liturgical calendar with its *Temporale* and *Sanctorale*, the feasts of the Lord and the feasts of Saints; the second concerns the texts of the musical items for the Masses and Offices of these feasts; the third, the melodies for these texts. To distinguish clearly between these fields is necessary for the simple reason that for each of them we have documentation of

liturgiae alemannicae, Vol. II [1779], pp. 168ff.) and also at the end of a report, *De prandio monachorum*, of a Frankish monk who, about 800, visited monasteries in Rome and tells us mostly about the rituals at the meals of the Roman monks (*Patr. lat.* 138, col. 1346).

widely different antiquity. The development of the liturgical calendar is known to us through such early liturgical sources as the Sacramentaries and Lectionaries, which include the non-musical items of the Masses, such as prayers and readings from Scripture. Through careful examination and comparison of these sources, liturgists have been able to establish which feasts were celebrated at the time of Gregory. The *Temporale* was almost as complete as it is today, except for certain well-known additions of a later date, such as the Thursdays of Lent, the Sundays following the four Ember Weeks, and such special feasts as the Holy Trinity, the Holy Name of Jesus, and the Holy Family. The *Sanctorale* included about sixty feasts, to which, of course, many others were added later.

As for the musical items used for the Masses of these old feasts, e.g., the First Sunday of Advent or the Nativity, our earliest information comes from certain Antiphonaries, such as the previously mentioned Codex of Monza, that contain the texts of the Introits, Graduals, etc., but no musical notation. These manuscripts permit us to trace the texts back to the 8th century, although it is, of course, possible that many of them existed long before this time. Thus, we can say that the feast of the First Sunday of Advent existed about 600, and that its traditional Introit, *Ad te levamus*, existed about 750. What can we say about the age of its melody?

The earliest manuscripts showing the liturgical melodies in a clearly readable notation—the so-called diastematic neumes, written on a staff—are from the mid-11th century, a very late date in comparison with that of the aforementioned sources for the calendar and for the texts.

Fortunately, we can improve upon this dating by means of earlier manuscripts notated in staffless neumes. Although this notation cannot be read as such, extended comparative studies have shown beyond any doubt that their neumatic symbols fully agree with the diastematic signs of the later sources as to type (whether ascending or descending), number of notes, grouping in extended melismas, etc. Clearly, the melodies are the same, although the possibility of minor changes will have to be admitted.

On the whole, therefore, we are justified in assuming that the majority of the melodies existed about 900 or 850 in nearly the same form as they do in the later Medieval sources and in the present-day publications. We might well be satisfied with this state of affairs, were it not for the fact that we have considerably earlier documentation for the existence of the texts and even earlier evidence for the feasts. We have seen that the former can be traced back to the middle of the 8th century, the latter at least to the time of Gregory. It has always been the aim of musical scholars to match this record and to show or, more properly speaking, to maintain that the melodies are equally old, except for those that are connected with post-Gregorian feasts.

Obviously, this argument proceeds from the premise that the developments of the liturgical calendar, of the liturgical texts, and of the liturgical music are strictly synchronous phenomena, in other words, that the permanent institution of a certain feast entails and insures equal permanence of the texts and the melodies that were originally used. This, however, is a highly uncertain and, in fact, entirely unwarranted premise. By its very nature a liturgical calendar has a much higher degree of fixity

than a collection of prayers or other texts for the Masses and Offices, and this, in turn, has an incomparably higher degree of fixity than a collection of melodies, at least in a period in which, to the best of our knowledge, the preservation of music was exclusively a matter of oral tradition. It is entirely unthinkable that a collection of melodies even approximating the size and elaborateness of the "Gregorian" repertory could have been transmitted—to say nothing of "preserved"—orally over two or three centuries. The truly Gregorian and, even more, any pre-Gregorian repertory must have been of a much more elementary character. Possibly the melodies even for a Gradual were of a very simple type; possibly only one or a few melodies served for all Graduals; possibly the melodies were not fixed at all or only in their main outlines, much being left to improvisation; possibly only the Psalms and other basic scriptural texts had a musical delivery regulated to some extent by tradition. It is idle to speculate about these matters. If we rely on evidence rather than on wishful thinking or fantasy we cannot but admit that we know nothing about the liturgical melodies until we approach the period from which we have the earliest musical manuscripts, *i.e.*, the end of the 9th century. Naturally, we cannot assume that the earliest musical manuscript that has come down to us from these remote times was actually the earliest ever written. On the contrary, the highly complex and intricate notation of a manuscript such as St. Gall 359, written about 900, marks it beyond any doubt as one that was preceded by others, now lost. All in all, it is safe to say that paleographic evidence permits us to trace the "Gregorian" melodies back to the period of about 800, and

to think of them as having received their final form during the century from *ca.* 800 to 875.

To sum up: it is a matter of scientific caution and prudence to assign to the liturgical melodies, as we have them, a considerably later date than has generally been done before. True enough, caution and prudence are negative rather than positive virtues, preventing us from committing mistakes rather than helping us to establish the truth. In the present case, however, they seem to have the latter property as well, as I shall now try to demonstrate.

About five years ago, Professor Bruno Stäblein of Regensburg presented a theory proceeding from two facts, both known for about fifty years but now for the first time brought into close relationship.⁵ The first of these is that the aforementioned list of men who "edited an *annalis cantus*" does not close with Gregory. There follow not only Pope Martinus (649-53) but also, after him, three abbots of St. Peter's in Rome, Catolenus, Maurianus, and Virbonus, whose activity in the field of the *cantus annalis* is mentioned with especially distinctive words of praise—"diligentissime," "nobile," and "magnifice." The second fact is that there exist, in addition to the numerous manuscripts of "Gregorian Chant," four (or possibly more) manuscripts of the 11th to 13th centuries that contain essentially the same liturgical repertory with entirely different melodies. These form a striking contrast to all the other sources in which the melodies, ex-

⁵ See "Zur Entstehung der gregorianischen Melodien," *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* XXXV (1951), p. 5; "Zur Frühgeschichte des römischen Choralis," *Atti del Congresso internazionale di musica sacra* (1952), p. 271. See also his article "Choral" in *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Band II, cols. 1272ff.

cept for occasional minor variants, are absolutely identical. Dom Mocquereau of Solesmes, who was the first to call attention to this special group of manuscripts,⁶ considered and dismissed them as variants from a decadent epoch. This assumption, however, is contradicted by the fact that their liturgical repertory is that of the oldest sources, excluding, as it does, the feasts that were added in the 9th, 10th, and later centuries. Dom Andoyer was the first to maintain that these special manuscripts contain a musical repertory that, far from being "decadent," is actually older than the repertory commonly referred to as Gregorian. He therefore designated it as "pre-Gregorian."⁷ For the purpose of noncommittal reference we shall distinguish the two repertories as the "standard" and the "special."

Stäblein (in common with nearly all modern scholars) agrees with Andoyer's conclusion that the special repertory is older than the standard repertory but changes their relative historical positions from "pre-Gregorian" and "Gregorian" to "Gregorian" and "post-Gregorian." According to him, the standard repertory is the work of the above-named abbots Catolenus, Maurianus, and Virbonus, whom he believes to have been active between 653 and 680. This period coincides with the rule of Pope Vitalian (657-72), and Stäblein adduces some additional evidence for musical activity under this pope. He concludes that the special repertory represents the chant that was used in Rome shortly before and at the time of Gregory, and that half a century later, under Pope Vitalian, the melodies were considerably revised in the direction of greater sim-

plicity, plasticity, balance, and tonal definition, receiving that form in which we find them in the standard repertory. He distinguishes the two repertories as Old-Roman and New-Roman and associates the former with the service in the Basilica of the Lateran, the later with that in the papal palace.

Stäblein's provocative theory is a most important contribution, because it once more brings the Gregorian problem into the open. I do not, however, believe that it represents the final answer. A weak spot is the *terminus ad quem* for the activity of the three Roman abbots, the year 680. This date is based on the theory, proposed some thirty years ago by Silva-Tarouca, that the list of musical popes and abbots was the work of John the Archicantor who is known to have been sent from Rome to England at that time.⁸ This theory has been completely refuted by recent investigations. Some scholars even maintain that this list, which has played such a prominent role in the discussion of our problem, is a completely worthless and manufactured report of the 9th century.⁹ However, even if we admit Stäblein's dates as approximately correct, the main difficulty is not removed: we are still faced with a gap of 200 years between origin and written fixation, in other words, we still have no way of knowing what relationship the "Vitalian" melodies had to those that

⁸ "Giovanni archicantor di S. Pietro a Roma e l'Ordo Romanus da lui composta," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia di Archaeologia*, Serie III: *Memorie*, Vol. I, Parte 1 (1923), p. 159. Silva-Tarouca's theory was adopted by Stäblein, who considered the list as the "bedeutsamste und grundlegendste Dokument zur Frühgeschichte des liturgischen Gesanges in Rom" (*Atti del Congresso* [see n. 5], p. 273).

⁹ See M. Andrieu, "Les Ordines Romani" (*Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense*, Fasc. 24 [1951]). I have been indirectly informed that Professor Stäblein himself no longer considers his theory as tenable.

⁶ *Paléographie musicale*, Vol. II, p. 4, n. 1.

⁷ "Le Chant romain antégrégorien," *Revue du Chant Grégorien* XX, pp. 69, 107.

have been transmitted. Even greater difficulties exist with the Old-Roman repertory, if this is supposed to represent the true "Gregorian" Chant. Here the gap amounts to almost 500 years.¹⁰

Let us for the moment leave aside all questions of time and dates and look at the source material from a different point of view, *i.e.*, of locale and provenance. It is highly significant that the manuscripts containing the special repertory are all of Roman origin, having been written for local churches such as St. Cecilia and the Lateran. Thus there can be no doubt that we are in the presence of a chant that originated and was mainly employed in Rome and therefore is properly called Roman Chant.

As for the early sources of the standard repertory (*i.e.*, of "Gregorian" Chant), it has often been noticed, though only grudgingly admitted, that none of them was written in Rome. They all come from such places in Western Europe as St. Gall, Metz, Einsiedeln, Chartres, Laon, and Montpellier, in other words, from the Franco-German empire. Surely this fact is also of the highest significance, particularly in connection with—or in contrast to—the exclusively Roman origin of the special sources. It leads to the conclusion that the standard repertory is of Frankish origin or, at least, that it received its final form—the only one known to us—in places of the West.

There is, indeed, a great deal of historical evidence in support of the

view that what we call "Gregorian Chant" represents an 8th-to-9th-century fusion of Roman and Frankish elements. This fusion is of particular interest because of its political implication and motivation: it was one of the chief means by which the Frankish rulers tried to strengthen their relationship with the Church of Rome. It probably began in 752, when Pope Stephen II visited Gaul, accompanied by Roman clergy who celebrated Mass according to the Roman usage. We have numerous records—too many to be mentioned here—showing Pepin's and Charlemagne's efforts to establish the Roman liturgy in their realm.¹¹ However, we have also records showing no less clearly that their efforts met with the stubborn resistance of the Frankish clergy, who tried to preserve their traditional manner of worship, the Gallican rites.¹² Finally, we have evidence showing that, although the Roman rite emerged from this struggle victorious, it did not emerge unscathed or intact. Liturgical scholars have long been fully aware of this fact. Thus, J. A. Jungmann, in his standard work, *The Mass of the Roman Rite (Missarum Solemnia)*, discussing the Roman Mass in France, says (p. 76):

Unconsciously, of course, but nonetheless surely, profound alterations were made from the very outset in the Roman liturgy, especially in the Roman Mass—in fact, fundamental transformations. The exotic seedling, when planted in a new soil and in a new climate, was still pliant enough to be reshaped and modified by these influences.

¹⁰ The earliest of the special manuscripts is dated 1071. In an article, "Le Chant 'vieux-romain,'" *Sacris erudiri* VI, p. 120, Dom Huglo has shown that the special repertory can be traced back by means of non-musical documents to the 8th century. Important though this result is, it affects primarily matters of liturgical and textual significance, not necessarily the melodies.

¹¹ See, *e.g.*, R. Van Doren, *Étude sur l'influence musicale de l'abbaye de Saint-Gall* (1925), pp. 34ff.

¹² See H. Hucke, "Die Einführung des Gregorianischen Gesanges im Frankenreich," *Römische Quartalschrift für Christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* XLIX (1954), pp. 172ff.

And later (p. 95):

Thus we come to that episode which proved to be of such incalculable importance for the entire subsequent history of the Roman liturgy. About the middle of the tenth century the Roman liturgy began to return in force from Franco-Germanic lands to Italy and to Rome, but it was a liturgy which meanwhile had undergone radical changes and a great development. This importation entailed supplanting the local form of the Roman liturgy by its Gallicized version, even at the very center of Christendom.

It would be more than wishful thinking to assume that during this process of profound alterations in the liturgy the melodies remained unchanged. Yet it is to the West that we owe the written fixation and preservation of what is now called "Gregorian Chant." The conclusion is almost inescapable that this chant, as found in the manuscripts of St. Gall, Einsiedeln, Metz, Chartres, etc., received its final form in France in the period about 800, a form that differed considerably from its Roman model. A very interesting confirmation of this state of affairs exists in the report of an anonymous monk of St. Gall who, about 885, speaks of the "exceedingly large difference between our chant and that of Rome" and tells us that, through the endeavors of a singer whom Charlemagne had sent to Rome for instruction and later assigned to the cathedral of Metz, the chant spread over all France, "so that it is even now called *ecclesiastica cantilena Metensis*."¹³

¹³ Monachus Sangalliensis (Notker Balbulus?), *De vita Caroli magni*; see P. Jaffé, *Bibliotheca rerum Germanicarum*, Vol. IV (1867), pp. 639, 641. Monachus's book is largely a collection of legends about Charlemagne and therefore of little historical value. However, this is no reason to doubt the accuracy of information about his own time. The importance of Metz, rather than St. Gall, had been emphasized by Van Doren, long before the recent re-examination of the Gregorian problem, in his *Étude sur l'influence* . . . (see n. 11).

We may then assume that what we call Gregorian Chant is the result of a development that took place in the Franco-German empire under Pepin, Charlemagne, and his successors. This does not mean to say that all the many thousands of melodies of the present-day repertory were composed during this time, in the same way as the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven were composed during the 50 years from 1770 to 1820. It means that they represent the final stage, and the only one known to us, of an evolution, the beginnings of which may go back to the earliest Christian period and even to the chant of the Synagogue. What changes took place during the numerous pre-formative stages we cannot say. Some chants may have changed relatively little, others so much that their original form was greatly obscured or completely lost. On grounds of probability and plausibility we may assume that the simpler chants were much less affected by the vicissitudes of a purely oral tradition than those of a highly ornate character. Certain very rudimentary types of chant, such as lesson tones, psalmodic recitations, or the archaic Gloria of the Mass XV, may well be a heritage from pre-Christian days, an assumption that has been raised to the level of scientific certainty by Idelsohn's studies of the chants of Jewish tribes in Yemen and Babylonia.¹⁴ Simple antiphons may have been preserved in an almost unchanged form since the time of Gregory, as has recently been suggested in an article by Lipphardt. As for the highly melismatic chants, the Graduals, Tracts, Alleluias, etc., we can only say that in their present-day form they are Franco-Roman prod-

¹⁴ See Eric Werner, "The Common Ground in the Chant of Church and Synagogue," *Atti del Congresso* (see n. 5), p. 134.

ucts of the 8th or 9th centuries.

The above theory concerning the origin of the Gregorian melodies proceeds from considerations of a rather general character. It certainly would be desirable to have it confirmed or supported by evidence of a more special and more intrinsically musical character. I believe that one such support can be found. It comes from one relatively little known area of the Gregorian repertory, *viz.*, the verses of the Offertories, which are no longer sung today but were still in general use in the 11th and 12th centuries. These are now accessible in a most interesting publication by Karl Ott.¹⁵ They represent one of the most fascinating phenomena of Gregorian Chant. Ott did not hesitate to declare that they surpass even the Graduals. Indeed, they show a boldness of melodic line, a wealth of unusual formations (particularly many outlining a seventh), and numerous other details (*e.g.*, the lowest and highest tones of the entire repertory) that bestow upon them a very special stamp, so much so that one is tempted to speak of a "Beethoven style" in Gregorian Chant. There can be no doubt that they belong to a later phase of the development than the Graduals, Tracts, or Responsories.

What interests us here is the fact that these verses can be assigned to a definite period. The basis for this assignment is the second-oldest book containing information about the singing of the Psalms and the Psalm verses, *i.e.*, the *Musica disciplina* by Aurelianus of Réomé, which was written about 850. This book includes a special chapter, *Cap. XVIII: Deuterologium tonorum*, dealing with the question "quot varietates unusquisque contineat tonus" (how many varieties each church mode contains).

From the context it becomes perfectly clear that the *varietates* are the various recitation formulae to be used for the Psalms (including the *differentiae*, *i.e.*, the different endings) or the Psalm verses of the Introits, Communions, etc. Thus, Aurelianus says, "De authentis proto: Sane authenticus protus septemdecim continet varietates, videlicet introitum tres, offertorium unum, communionum duas, responsorium sex, antiphonarum quinque, quae simul junctae septemdecim faciunt."¹⁶ Similar information is given about each of the other church modes. The surprising and important fact is that the Offertories are mentioned here together with the Introits, Communions, Responsories, and Antiphons. This shows that at the time of Aurelianus the verses of the Offertories were sung to a recitation formula similar to those that were used for the verses of the other chants. Since, however, the traditional melodies for the Offertory verses have an entirely different character, they must have been composed after the time of Aurelianus, *i.e.*, after 850. Actually they must have been written shortly thereafter, since indications of the above-mentioned nature are not to be found in any of the later documents. Thus the *Tonarius* of Regino, written about 900, includes Antiphons, Introits, Communions, and Responsories, but no Offertories.¹⁷ Thus we come to the conclusion that the melodies for the verses of the Offertories were composed in the second half of the 9th century. This result fits very well into the general picture of the evolution as we have traced it. The main development of the chant took place in the latter part of the 8th and in the first half of the 9th century (a statement sub-

¹⁵ *Offertoriale sive versus offertorium* (Tournai, etc., 1935).

¹⁶ *GS*, Vol. I, p. 53.

¹⁷ *CS*, Vol. I, pp. 1ff; see, *e.g.*, pp. 66, 68.

ject to all the reservations previously made) and was followed immediately by another creative period during which the Offertory verses received those extremely bold and highly individual melodies that are known to us. Many of the Alleluia melodies probably belong to the same or even a slightly later period. There emerges before our eyes a picture of a relatively rapid and spontaneous evolution spanning only three or four generations. The decisive impetus for this sudden outburst of creative activity may well have come from the invention of a sufficiently developed neumatic notation.

In connection with this outline of evolution I should like to comment briefly upon the relationship between the Roman (or Franco-Roman) Chant and that of the Cathedral of Milan, usually called Ambrosian Chant after St. Ambrose who was bishop of Milan about 400. Probably because Ambrose lived 200 years before Gregory, one often finds statements to the effect that Ambrosian Chant is even older than Gregorian Chant. Since many of the Ambrosian melodies are extremely ornate and melismatic, there has arisen the notion that the chant of the earliest Middle Ages was of highly embellished character and that the Gregorian Chant represents a sort of reform in the direction of greater simplicity and structural balance. Needless to say, the assumption that the Ambrosian melodies go back to the period of *ca.* 400 is even more fallacious than the notion that the

Gregorian melodies go back to 600. We do not mean to deny the possibility that highly ornate melodies may have existed at the time of St. Ambrose, *e.g.*, those seemingly endless Alleluia jublations that are mentioned by Augustine. We only profess our complete ignorance as to what these melodies were like and whether they had any relationship to the melodies as we find them in the Ambrosian or the Gregorian repertory. Probably they were forgotten 50 years later. Or are we seriously to believe that during two centuries of the most cruel devastation that Italy ever suffered—under the Huns, Goths, and Vandals—music, the most intangible and evasive medium of artistic expression, remained miraculously unaffected? The true relationship between Gregorian and Ambrosian chant can be established only on the basis of stylistic criteria. Following this line of thought I have come to the opinion that the Ambrosian repertory is, on the whole, of an even later date than the Gregorian, perhaps of the 10th or 11th century.¹⁸ Recently I received a letter from Msgr. Anglés, Director of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music, in which he informed me that liturgical scholars in Rome have reached exactly the same conclusion.

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¹⁸ The possibility of a late date for the Ambrosian Chant has been suggested by R. H. Jesson in a chapter on "Ambrosian Chant" that he contributed to my forthcoming book on Gregorian Chant.