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***GREGORIAN CHANT : A history of the  
controversy concerning its rhythm***

:: John Rayburn ::

# GREGORIAN CHANT

## A HISTORY OF THE CONTROVERSY CONCERNING ITS RHYTHM

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*To E.E.R. and J.A.R., with love and deepest gratitude.*

## FOREWORD

The Chant of the Roman Church, one of the greatest treasures civilization possesses, is a treasure not limited to members of the Roman faith. This unique repertory, incomparably melodic and superbly devotional, towers in the development of western culture and provides evidence for study in the history of that civilization and in the evolution of the history of musical art.

In the past hundred years a notable Gregorian revival has given the chant more importance in liturgy (and in musicology) than it had possessed in the previous thousand years. In our time, we possess the Gregorian melodies in similar or identical form to those of the chant's "golden age," thanks to musicological and paleographic research of enormous complexity; since the chant is sung in unison and (ideally) unaccompanied, there is no harmonic problem. Still, even today, the problem of the chant rhythm constitutes a basis for widespread and bitter controversy.

It is the purpose of this study to make available to scholars and teachers a summary of the theories and solutions regarding the problematic rhythmic elements of Gregorian chant. Many of the materials assembled from a study of about two hundred works on the subject are available only in the larger libraries of a few major cities; many are not available at all outside New York; several are not available in the English language.

The subject of chant rhythm is not a closed one, as Pius XII noted in his encouragement of further research. The Second Vatican Council, in its epochal CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY (promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963), has ordered further study in the chant; the "typical edition" is to be completed and a more critical edition of the books already published (since the restoration by Pius X) is to be prepared. It is heartening to note that studies are consistently in progress; perhaps conclusive evidence will be forthcoming in our time. Certainly the chant is a vital force in twentieth-century liturgy (" . . . it should be given pride of place in liturgical services" according to the CONSTITUTION) and in twentieth-century scholarship.

New York  
February 1, 1964

John Rayburn

*The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant  
as specially suited to the Roman liturgy;  
therefore, other things being equal,  
it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.*

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy  
Second Vatican Council  
December 4, 1963

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The staff of the New York Public Library Music Reference Room and that of Columbia University Music Library were wonderfully helpful in locating and making available quantities of materials. To Mr. Ernst C. Krohn, musicologist of the St. Louis University Library, go thanks for valuable suggestions concerning source materials and for making available microfilms of the Vatican Library chant collections. I am indebted to Dr. Walter Rubsamen of the University of California for his comments and corrections of the early projection of this study.

Many friends have been generous with time and with helpful suggestions during the numerous revisions and re-writings of this work. To them, too, I am deeply grateful.

John Rayburn

New York  
February 1, 1964



## Chapter I

## INTRODUCTION

Gregorian Chant, named for Pope Gregory I (590-604), who is supposed to have arranged and codified it, is the traditional official music of the Catholic Church. Pope Pius X re-affirmed the position of the Church with regard to the chant in a historic decree of November 22, 1903:

These qualities (i.e. holiness, goodness of form, true artistic worth, universality) are to be found, in the highest degree, in Gregorian Chant, which is, consequently, the Chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own, which she prescribes exclusively for some parts of the liturgy, and which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and purity.

On these grounds, Gregorian Chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music. . . The ancient traditional Gregorian Chant must therefore, in a large measure, be restored to the functions of public worship. . . Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by more people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times. . .<sup>1</sup>

In the early days of the Church, and into the early Middle Ages, the Gregorian song of the Mass and the Office was a part of the living heritage of the people.<sup>2</sup> The Roman chant travelled with the missionaries, was imported by such rulers as Charlemagne, was sung everywhere in churches and chapels and monasteries, was the subject of treatises on music in worship and in music theory. But with the development and spread of polyphony, this chant, this "body of music unequalled in purity and style, and eloquent of everything for which

<sup>1</sup> Pope Pius X, *Motu Proprio on Sacred Music* (Vatican, Nov. 22, 1903. Reprinted in *The White List of the Society of St. Gregory in America*, fourth edition, New York, 1954), pp. 7-10.

<sup>2</sup> Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1940), pp. 115-120.

the Roman faith stands. . ."<sup>3</sup> began to decline, to wither. By the end of the thirteenth century, the true chant was lost.

About a hundred years ago, the first attempts at restoring the traditional Gregorian chant were made, attempts which culminated in the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X (1903), calling for a general return to the ancient melodies of the Church. The following year, the Pope authorized an official Vatican version of the plainsong. Heroic labors, undertaken by religious and lay musicologists, and paleographic studies of enormous difficulty and expense, have restored the melodic contours of the chant, and have provided practical editions which are now widely used in churches, monasteries, and schools.

Of course there were conflicts of opinion and interest; so many men, working independently, inevitably developed varying theories as to how the chant was sung in the days of its composition. Since most of the extant relevant manuscripts date from the ninth and following centuries, and since staff notation was not in vogue until about 1050 A.D.,<sup>4</sup> there are clear grounds for disagreement regarding both melody and rhythm. There is general agreement that the melodic problem has been solved, in large measure through the "magnificent example of scholarship" of the Solesmes Benedictines,<sup>5</sup> and especially of Dom Joseph Pothier. There is, however, continuing and widespread disagreement about the rhythm. Three principal divisions of opinion have evolved: the accentualist, Solesmes, and the mensuralist (proportional).

### 1. THE ACCENTUALISTS

The accentualists, headed by Dom Joseph Pothier, point out that, until the fifth century, Latin syllables were measured quantitatively; after that, they became equal in time value, and an accent or stress given to a particular syllable became the rhythmical element. Ferguson wrote that "this change from quantitative to accentual verse . . . gave a more natural and a more intense rhythmic ictus. . ." and that this was the most important development in early music.<sup>6</sup> The accentualists believe that the chant adopted the equal time values of the words, and that the word accent became the principal rhythmic determinant in the music; they place the stress on the tonic accent of the word in syllabic and neumatic chant, and on the first note of each neum in melismatic chant. The result is a free, non-metered rhythm, based on notes of equal value.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Archibald Davison, *Protestant Church Music in America* (Boston: E. C. Schirmer, 1933), p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1941), p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Ferguson, *A History of Musical Thought* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, second edition, 1948), p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> Summarized from Reese, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-148, and from Pierre Aubry, *Le Rythme tonique* (Paris: Wetter, 1903).

### 2. SOLESMES

The Solesmes school of Dom Mocquereau retained Pothier's theory that all the notes in chant are of equal length or duration, and also his ideas of free rhythm. But his doctrine that the verbal accent is the predominating rhythmic element was disputed. Mocquereau worked out in great detail an elaborate system of rhythmic interpretation for the chant, based on an intensive study of the manuscripts. Although his theories are so intricate and complex that a chapter is devoted to them later in this work, the major concepts may be summarized thus: a single, indivisible pulse is the basic time unit; it is rendered as a *punctum* or a *virga*. The pulses are grouped into twos and threes, and the groups are freely mixed into larger rhythmic divisions. The rhythmic flow alternates between *arsis*, a rising phrase, and *thesis*, a falling phrase. The first note of each group of notes has an ictus, which divides the pulses into sections. The ictus may be arsic or thetic, but in any case, it is independent of the Latin tonic accent, *i.e.*, it may or may not coincide with it. Solesmes uses four rhythmic signs: the horizontal episema (—), a line placed over the notes and having the effect of a ritard; the dot (.), which doubles the value of the note it follows; the vertical episema (|), which marks the ictus; and the comma (,), which is a breath mark.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. THE MENSURALISTS

The mensuralists (proportionalists) are the chief challengers of Solesmes theory. Generally, they deny that all the notes in chant are of equal duration, claiming that the evidence points to two kinds of notes, longs and shorts. Most mensuralists believe in a proportionalism of 2:1 in note lengths. These notes are ordinarily arranged, in various mensural systems, in groups of two to eight "beats" with each "beat" considered as a "measure." The mensuralists, insisting that the various theoretical treatises dating from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries are of equal importance with the manuscripts in determining the true Gregorian rhythm, are opposed to the Solesmes binary and ternary groupings and to the theory of the ictus. Dom Gregory Murray has written:

Although this exclusively binary and ternary grouping is an essential element in the Solesmes theory, it is unsupported by literary evidence from the past. Similarly, the Solesmes writers can adduce no ancient description or definition of the ictus in their special sense of the word, as a down-beat essentially without impulse, actual or implied. . . Furthermore, there is not a

<sup>8</sup> Summarized from Dom Mocquereau, *Le nombre musical grégorien* (Belgium: Desclée, 1908 and 1927), and from Andrew Klarmann, *Gregorian Chant Textbook* (Toledo: Gregorian Institute, 1945).

single ictus mark as such in any ancient manuscript; all the authentic rhythmic signs concern the lengths of the notes.<sup>9</sup>

It is with the conflict and controversy among these three opposing theories of the interpretation of Gregorian Chant rhythm that this book is concerned.

<sup>9</sup> Dom Gregóry Murray, "Plainsong Rhythm: The Editorial Methods of Solesmes," *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, (February, 1957), p. 11, fn. 4.

## Chapter II

### THE DECLINE OF THE CHANT: A SURVEY (1000-1840)

#### 1. DISINTEGRATION OF THE RHYTHMIC TRADITION

During the centuries of the chant's "golden age", the Roman repertory was diffused throughout western Christendom, and new compositions were written as needed, in the style and spirit of the old.

As early as the eleventh century, however, a rhythmic disintegration had begun, and theoretical writers of the period noted this decline of proportionalism with dismay. Guido (b. circa 990) stressed the traditional values of proportionalism and its musical importance<sup>1</sup>; Berno of Reichenau (d. 1048) gave evidence that the traditional proportionalism was no longer universally accepted<sup>2</sup>; and Aribio (b. circa 1000) lamented that proportionalism in the performance of the chant "... perished some time ago, and is now entirely buried."<sup>3</sup>

The chant continued to be sung, of course, during the succeeding two centuries, and even after the thirteenth century expansion of polyphony; theorists, however, are silent regarding the manner in which it was performed. Probably, as Reese suggests<sup>4</sup>, and as the evidence of the eleventh century theoretical writers indicates, this was the period of equalist performance: that is, all the notes were probably given the same value, the same duration.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guido, *Micrologus*, ed. J. Smits van Waesberghe, *Corpus Scriptorum de Musica* of American Institute of Musicology, p. 162, ff.

<sup>2</sup> Berno, *Prologus in Tonarium*; quoted in Gerbert, *Scriptores*, II, 77-78.

<sup>3</sup> Aribio, *De Musica*, ed. J. Smits van Waesberghe (1951), p. 49; quoted in Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, p. 132.

<sup>4</sup> Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1940), pp. 147-148.

<sup>5</sup> The equalist rhythmic theories of such scholars as Pothier and Mocquereau are evidently based on the chant of this period.

Dom Johnner (*A New School of Gregorian Chant*, New York: Pustet, 1925, pp. 188-193) noted that the rhythmic decline was hastened because some theorists treated *musica plana* and *musica mensurabilis* in the same way.

Dom Gatard (*Plainchant*, London: The Faith Press, 1921, p. 46) and Pierre Aubry (*Tribune de Saint-Gervais*) theorized that the custom of using Gregorian phrases as tenors in the polyphonic motets of the thirteenth and following centuries had a fatal effect on the chant rhythm, and that its decay

## 2. ALTERATION OF THE MELODIES

In spite of numerous careless mistakes by copyists throughout the centuries, the Gregorian melodies themselves had been preserved intact to the end of the sixteenth century<sup>6</sup>, but then even they were altered and abbreviated in a so-called reform. According to Dom Johner,

... the Renaissance objected to the singing of several notes on unimportant syllables, and either entirely removed such "barbarisms" or placed the notes in question quite arbitrarily upon the accented syllables.<sup>7</sup>

Cimello, a musician, wrote to Cardinal Sirleto in 1579:

It is necessary in reforming plainchant to have a knowledge of metre, and especially to know how the accents can be kept, and also the short syllables in rising passages as well as the long syllables in descending passages; also to understand the connection of words and phrases, to place the neums well. . . the reformer must understand how chants may be shortened, how the words may be clearly heard, how the syllables should be joined, not separated or divided, and where it is advisable to add grace-notes, ornaments, etc.<sup>8</sup>

A few years before Cimello's letter, Pope Gregory XIII had been persuaded to have the chant "corrected according to the laws of music." He commissioned Palestrina and Zoilo to perform the revisions, which were to alter some passages, cut melismas, and replace non-accented with accented syllables at points of melodic embellishment. Don Fernando de la Ynfantas, a Spanish musician, did not agree that such a "correction" was desirable, and he wrote simultaneously to the Pope and to King Philip II that

... the mistakes that certain musicians honestly thought they found in the plainchant were not mistakes, but rather confirmations of all that is most beautiful in musical art.<sup>9</sup>

Palestrina and Zoilo agreed, and it was determined that the chant would not be further altered.

Pope Gregory had founded the Polyglot Press earlier, however, and the directors there insisted on making their profit. Therefore, on

was hastened because musicians indicated time-values in their measured music by using the different forms of plainsong notes. It is clear from the writers of the eleventh century, however, that the rhythmic decline was well underway two centuries prior to the period considered by Gatard & Aubry.

For fuller discussion of this problem, see Sachs, *Rhythm and Tempo* (New York, W. W. Norton Company, 1953); Vollaerts, *Rhythmic Proportions in Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Chant* (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1958); and Waite, *The Rhythm of Twelfth-Century Polyphony* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954).

6 Rev. Gregory Molitor, *Choralwiegendrucke* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1904). Cited by Johner.

7 Dom Dominic Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant* (New York: Pustet, 1925), p. 189.

8 Quoted in Gatard, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

9 Letter of Don Fernando de la Ynfantas to Philip II of Spain, 1577. Quoted in Gatard, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

the basis of the former Papal Brief, they continued to make their changes and corrections. A *Graduale* was ready for publication in 1578, but Don Fernando persuaded Philip II to intervene, and the work was not printed. However, Clement VIII became Pope in 1591, and on September 15, 1593, he gave the Medicean Press in Rome a fifteen-year monopoly in the printing of the chant books; the "reform" was then resumed.

Fulgentius Valesius, who had invented a new manuscript type with Leonard Parasoli, heard that Palestrina still possessed some of his earlier *Graduale* revisions. Palestrina stated that he had "corrected" only the Sunday Masses, that Zoilo had done the Proper and Common of the Saints, but that since Zoilo had died, his papers were probably lost. Palestrina agreed to "correct" the *Sanctorale* himself, but he died less than a month after making the agreement. His son, Hyginus, tried to complete the work, but it was rejected by the Sacred Congregation of Rites as full of errors.<sup>10</sup>

## 3. THE MEDICEAN EDITION

Raimondi, the director of the Medicean Press, obtained from Pope Paul V a fifteen-year monopoly in the printing of choir books on May 31, 1608, and in August the Pope decided to revise the chant books before Raimondi printed them. He appointed a commission of Cardinals, who then assigned the work to Anerio and five other musicians. The musicians failed to agree, however, and a Brief of March 6, 1611, authorized Cardinal del Monte to choose two musicians out of the six and have them complete the "reform." Anerio and Soriano were selected, and they finished their work in 1612. The Pope refused Raimondi's importunings that the whole Church be compelled to adopt the new books, which appeared in 1614-15 in the Stamperia Orientale of Cardinal Medici in Rome.<sup>11</sup>

It is impossible, wrote Gatard, to discover the principles which these "correctors" used in their *Medicean Graduale*:

... the predominating idea seems to have been that of shortening the long melismata. . . they added short ornaments where frequently there had been but one note; they altered melodies. . . they composed new passages in many places; they set about lightening all the short penultimates, and loading notes onto the accented syllables; they introduced a new and arbitrary rhythm, based on the idea of differing values for tailed, square, and diamond notes.<sup>12</sup>

Besides abbreviating the melodies, Dom Johner wrote, they

10 Summarized from Gatard, *op. cit.*

11 Summarized from Gatard, *op. cit.*, and from Molitor, *Nachtridentinische Choraltreform* (Leipzig: Leuckart, 2 volumes, 1901, 1902).

12 Gatard, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

... cut out the rich melismas altogether or combined them into unnatural groups and awkward rhythms, and treated the melodic repetitions with incredible inconsistency.<sup>13</sup>

One of the strangest things, for example, was that wherever the Latin text bore any similarity to the musical solfege (sol-fa) syllables, the music was changed to those syllables. For example, if the Latin word "sola" occurred, then "sol-la" was given as the melody; if the text read "quare faciem," then there "re-fa" was to be sung.

Muller, one of the first to attack the Medicean book, wrote: "in this edition, the Choral melody bleeds at a thousand places."<sup>14</sup>

In spite of the efforts of the publishers, however, the new edition had limited circulation and was little-used outside Italy; in time, it was almost forgotten. But in 1848 it reappeared as the *Mechlin Gradual*, with numerous alterations. This edition, published by Cardinal Sterk, claimed that the manuscripts were of little value in chant restoration: those written before the eleventh century were illegible, while those written after the eleventh century were full of defects! The editors had therefore developed their own method of chant restoration. After comparison of several antiphons with similar modal and melodic characteristics, the "corrector" retained the notes common to each antiphon as being true and correct; all the others were rejected as false additions!

Once more, pressures were renewed to have this edition made "official" for the Church, and after still further revisions and alterations, Pope Pius IX did declare it official.<sup>15</sup> Pustet, in Ratisbon, published the edition, and it was widely distributed in Germany and elsewhere, chiefly through the Society of St. Caecilia.<sup>16</sup>

The need for an authentic restoration of the Gregorian repertory was gradually being felt, however, and the time, the facilities, and the interest in such a restoration now seemed ripe.

<sup>13</sup> Johner, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

<sup>14</sup> Muller, *Archiv. fur Musikwissenschaft* (Leipzig: Buckeburg, 1918), p. 127.

<sup>15</sup> Ahle, *Die Choralausgabe der Ritenkongregation* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1895) and Gmelch, *Aktenstücke der Regensburger Medicae* (Eichstatt, 1912), both cited by Johner.

<sup>16</sup> This Society had been founded by Dr. Witt (d.1888) and approved by Rome in 1870. Dr. Witt and Dr. Haberl (d.1910) are generally credited with replacing the unchurchlike music then popular in Germany with more liturgically-suitable music, and with stimulating a renewed interest in the chant, although, of course, this Mechlin edition was completely unsatisfactory.

### Chapter III

## EARLY ATTEMPTS AT RESTORATION (1840-1900)

### 1. THE STIMULUS OF GUÉRANGER

To the Abbot of Solesmes in the mid-nineteenth century, Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875) goes credit for the impetus toward the restoration of the true chant tradition.<sup>1</sup> As a result of his *Institutions liturgiques*, the first two volumes of which appeared in 1840 and 1841, the French bishops gradually decided to restore the Roman liturgy to their dioceses. Guéranger published his important *Lettre sur la droit liturgique* in 1848; in the same year, Archbishop Gousset of Rheims re-established the Roman liturgy; he and Cardinal Giraud, Archbishop of Cambrai, appointed a commission to prepare chant books according to the authentic tradition.

The commission, headed by M. Tesson, director of the Seminary for Foreign Missions, set about comparing a number of manuscripts from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries, and a *Graduale* and *Antiphoner* were published by Lecoffre in 1851. Because of the limited number of manuscripts available, this was not really a critical edition, but it was considered good for its time, although the old prejudices regarding chant were retained: melodic repetitions were eliminated, penultimates shortened, different time values given to the notes; the addition of pauses for breathing cut up the neums in "disastrous fashion."<sup>2</sup>

In the *Institutions liturgiques*, Guéranger had written: "When a large number of manuscripts of different age and provenance agree on one reading, we may be sure we have found the Gregorian phrase."<sup>3</sup> The earliest follower of this principle was the canon of Le Mans, M. Gontier, who published, with Guéranger, a *Méthode raisonnée de plain chant*, in 1859. Here a definition of Gregorian rhythm was formulated:

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Blanc, *L'enseignement musical de Solesmes et la prière chrétienne* (Toledo: Gregorian Institute of America, 1952); Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York, Norton, 1940).

<sup>2</sup> Dom August Gatard, *Plainchant* (London: Faith Press, 1921), p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Gatard, *op. cit.*, p. 56.



Plainchant is an inflected recitation in which the notes have an unfixed value, the rhythm of which, essentially free, is that of ordinary speech.<sup>4</sup>

At Solesmes, Guéranger selected Dom Jausions, a young monk who had been professed in 1856, to undertake the work of the Gregorian revival. Jausions studied in the libraries of Paris, Le Mans and Angers, examining manuscripts, copying them, and arranging to have many of them loaned to Solesmes. As early as 1866 he and his co-worker Dom Pothier had prepared a *Graduale* and an *Antiphoner*, but Guéranger preferred to delay publication so that Solesmes might devote further study to the manuscripts.<sup>5</sup> When Jausions died in 1870, the work was carried on by Pothier, whose *Graduale* was eventually published in 1883, and *Antiphoner* in 1891.

## 2. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MANUSCRIPT SIGNS

The first attempt at deciphering the manuscript signs of the Gregorian notation had been made by Féty (1784-1871). In 1844, Danjou, organist at Notre Dame de Paris, published a pamphlet entitled *De l'état et de l'avenir du chant ecclésiastique*. In 1847 Danjou discovered a large number of important musical manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages, and he published the results of his studies in the *Revue de la musique religieuse, populaire et classique* during 1845-49.<sup>6</sup>

In the meantime, Th. Nisard had attempted the publication of an edited chant, based on his interpretation of the manuscript signs; his first work was a reproduction of the distorted Nivers chant at Rennes in 1848; then he reproduced the same chant at Digne in 1858.

The true solution to the manuscript signs was found by Edouard de Coussemaker, who determined that the neums had their origin in the accents, the acute accent being the arsis; the grave, the thesis; and the circumflex formed by the conjunction of arsis and thesis. The punctum, he declared, was the fundamental neumatic element.<sup>7</sup>

## 3. LOUIS LAMBILOTTE

A Belgian Jesuit, Father Louis Lambilotte (1796-1855) undertook extensive journeys to study chant manuscripts, and was successful in copying a manuscript of the library of the Monastery of St. Gall, the St. Gall Codex 359, which he then edited and reproduced. Unfortunately however, his *Graduale* and *Antiphoner* (1856) are full of abbreviated neums and altered rhythms.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Cited by Dom Joseph Gajard in "Le chant grégorien et la méthode de Solesmes," *Revue grégorienne*, XXIX, 22.

<sup>5</sup> M. Gontier, quoted by Gatard, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Gatard, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>7</sup> Edouard de Coussemaker, *Histoire de l'harmonie au moyen âge* (Paris: V. Didron, 1852).

<sup>8</sup> Louis Lambilotte, *Clef des mélodies grégoriennes dans les anciens systèmes de notation, et de l'unité dans les chants liturgiques* (Brussels: C. J. A. Gruese, 1851); *Esthétique, théorie, et pratique du chant grégorien* (Paris: A. LeClere, 1855); *Mémoire sur les chants liturgiques* (Paris: V. Didron, 1857); *Quelques mots sur la restauration du chant liturgique* (Paris: J. LeCoffre, 1855).

## 4. THE MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

Father Michael Hermesdorff, the organist at the Cathedral of Treves (Trier) also attempted a study and comparison of manuscripts. He published, in 1863, a *Graduale for the Diocese of Treves*, based on his work in German libraries. This *Gradual* was, according to one author, "remarkable, if scanty in its sources."<sup>9</sup> A second edition appeared in 1876, but a projected, revised third edition was not completed.

Other developments in Germany included the appearance in print of an article dealing with chromaticism in Gregorian Chant in 1874, by Raymond Schlecht (1811-1891); this was, apparently, the earliest study of the matter, for it pre-dated by twenty-four years the standard work on Gregorian chromaticism by Jacobsthal.<sup>10</sup> Schlecht also translated into German the medieval theoretical treatise, the *Musica Enchiriadis*<sup>11</sup> and the *Micrologus* of Guido d' Arezzo.<sup>12</sup> And Dom Anselm Schubiger (1816-1888) was responsible for one of the earliest works in the field of music history, a book containing the melodies for about fifty German sequences.<sup>13</sup>

## 5. THE FOUNDING OF THE MENSURAL SCHOOL

Father Antoine Dechevrens, S.J. (1840-1912) founded a mensural system of chant about 1861, with definite measured (rather than free) rhythm.<sup>14</sup> From his study of the manuscripts, he determined that the chant had three different note lengths. Dechevrens explained his theory in *Etude de science musicale* (1898) and then proposed, in *Les Vraies Mélodies grégoriennes* (1902) that the Vesper antiphons be rendered in regular 4-4 or 2-4 metre, basing his theory on his interpretation of the neums of the *Codex Harther* as being variable, their length depending on the neighboring neums. A virga with episema was given as a half-note if followed by a virga (quarter-note), but as a dotted quarter-note if followed by a punctum (eighth-note); and such ornaments as the quillisma and liquescent podatus were used. Dechevrens revised his theories again in *Composition littéraire et composition musicale* (1910).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Dom Johnner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant* (New York: Pustet, 1925), p. 192.

<sup>10</sup> Raymond Schlecht, "Chromaticism in Gregorian Chant," *Caecilia*, ed. Hermesdorff, Trier, 1874. Cited by Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, p. 161. The work by Jacobsthal is *Die Chromatische Alteration im Liturgische Gesang der Abendländischen Kirche*, 1897.

<sup>11</sup> Raymond Schlecht, *Musica Enchiriadis von Hucbald* (*Monatshefte für Musikgeschichte*, VI, 1874; VII, 1875; VIII, 1876).

<sup>12</sup> Raymond Schlecht, *Micrologus-Guidonis de Disciplina artis musicae* (*Monatshefte für Musikgeschichte*, V, 1873). See also Schlecht, *Geschichte der Kirchenmusik* (Regensburg: Coppenrath, 1871).

<sup>13</sup> Anselm Schubiger, *Die Sängerschule St. Gallens* (Einsiedeln: K. u. N. Benziger, 1858). See also *Musikalische Spicilegen über das liturgische drama*, etc. (Berlin: Liepmannsohn, 1876). Reese (*Music in the Middle Ages*, New York: Norton, 1940, p. 122) claimed that Schubiger placed too much credence upon the reliability of the chronicler Ekkehard IV and his account of the great importance of the monastery of St. Gall.

<sup>14</sup> See *Kirchensänger*, Freiburg, 1910; *Revue grégorienne*, Tournai, Nos. 4, 6, 8; *Tribune de Saint-Gervais*, Paris, 1912, p. 221 et seq. All cited by Johnner.

<sup>15</sup> Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 127.



Father Ludwig Bonvin, S.J. (1850-1939) was a mensuralist follower of Dechevrens, who attempted to modify the earlier Jesuit's system, but without the use of bar lines. His theories were published in both German and English,<sup>16</sup> and several chant Masses, realized according to the mensural system of Dom Jules Jeannin, were issued by Associated Music Publishers of New York.<sup>17</sup>

Another Dechevrens pupil was Father Gerhard Gietmann, whose adaptation of his teacher's system, using three basic note values, was published in the *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch*.<sup>18</sup>

#### 6. OSKAR FLEISCHER

Oskar Fleischer (1856-1933), an early mensuralist, was greatly interested in the chant neums. He contributed one major principle to chant scholarship: that no manuscripts bearing particular characteristics should be considered authentic unless some of the same characteristics could be found in a general manuscript collection.<sup>19</sup> Fleischer's *Neumen-Studien* was published in Leipzig in two volumes, dated 1895 and 1897. Volume one, *Über Ursprung und Entzifferung der Neumen*, was chiefly a history of neums and of the development of chant. Fleischer favored the theory of the cheironomic basis of medieval neum notation. The book also discussed the "recitations" in chant from the points of view of music and speech. The position of the acute, grave, and circumflex accents in the history of neum development was stressed, as was their influence on the psalm-tones or recited-tones. Volume two, *Das alt-Christliche Recitative und die Entzifferung der Neumen*, analyzed various works from the point of view of neum notation and accents. The discussion of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, for example, was practically exhaustive. In these transcriptions, Fleischer achieved three different note values: eighth-notes, quarter-notes; and dotted quarter-notes. One of Fleischer's most interesting observations was that many of the great chorales of the Protestant Lutheran church are almost identical with a mensural (metrical) rendering of certain Gregorian chants. The volume also contained a chapter on psalm tones and cadences, and there were transcriptions of several Kyrie tropes.<sup>20</sup>

Fleischer's other major work was *Die Germanischen Neumen*. This discussion of his further studies, especially of the St. Gall manu-

16 Ludwig Bonvin, "Rhythm as Taught by the Gregorian Masters up to the Twelfth Century, and in Accordance with the Oriental Usage," (*The Messenger*, XLVI, 1906), p. 465; "Liturgical Music from the Rhythmic Standpoint up to the Twelfth Century," (Proceedings of the *Music Teachers National Association*, X, 1915), p. 215; "The Measure in Gregorian Music," (*The Musical Quarterly*, XI, 1929), p. 16.

17 Francis Schmitt, *Coecilia*, Editorial, Vol. 86, No. 2, p. 6.

18 Gerhard Gietmann, *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* (Ratisbon: Pustet, XIX, 1905, p. 53; XX, 1906, p. 1).

19 Marie Pierik, *The Song of the Church* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1947), pp. 206-209.

20 Oskar Fleischer, *Neumen-Studien* (Leipzig: Friedrich Fleischer, vols., 1895, 1897).

scripts, contained elaborate reconstructions of many chant melodies; The second section of the book consists of one-hundred and fifteen pages of musical examples according to mensural principles.<sup>21</sup>

Liturgists such as Peter Wagner have claimed that Fleischer failed in his archaeological explorations because he did not know the history of the Latin liturgy.<sup>22</sup>

#### 7. OTHER EARLY MENSURALISTS

Edouard Bernouilli's major work<sup>23</sup> was a history of the attempts at chant restoration up to his time; and an explanation of various theories of rhythm. Bernouilli, a pupil of Fleischer, provided examples of various mensural renderings of neums and chant pieces, samples of variants in the melodies, and medieval folksongs, hymns, and sequences.

Georges Louis Houdard (1860-1913), after study of the St. Gall Codex 359, the *Codex Hartker*, and such theorists as Guido, determined that each *neum* in chant has the same value in time as a quarter-note in modern music. He transcribed the punctum and virga (single-note neums) as quarter notes; the podatus and clivis (two-note neums) as eighth notes; the climacus and other three-note neums as triplets; the four-note neums as sixteenth notes; and so forth. These theories were set forth in *Le rythme du chant dit grégorien*.<sup>24</sup>

In a report to the influential Plainsong and Medieval Music Society of London in 1898, H. B. Briggs denounced Houdard's theories. The Frenchman had been unsuccessful, Briggs claimed, in attempting to fit his vast array of facts into his preconceived theory, and he also misunderstood the teaching of Solesmes. His musical examples were all but impossible to sing, and they were much inferior to the same melodies sung according to the Solesmes system.<sup>25</sup>

Willi Apel, however, does not believe that Houdard's theories should be so easily discounted:

In the neumatic and melismatic chants particularly, I would admit subtle nuances of rhythm on the basis of Houdard's theory, the merits of which, it seems to me, have been slighted or overlooked altogether. I would not go so far as to maintain that a five-note neum should be sung in exactly the same time as one of two or three notes, but the idea of subtly varying the speed

21 Oskar Fleischer, *Die Germanischen Neumen* (Frankfurt: Verlags-Anstalt AG, 1923).

22 Pierik, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-209.

23 Edouard Bernouilli, *Die Choralnotenschrift Bei Hymnen und Sequenzen im späteren mittelalter* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1897).

24 Georges Houdard, *Le rythme du chant dit grégorien* (Paris: Fischbacher, etc., 1898).

Houdard also theorized about the *oriscus*, a strange rhythmic sign found in some manuscripts; it is usually a sign for a note added to the end of a neum, either on the same pitch or a step above it. Solesmes transcribes it as a punctum. Apel (*op. cit.*, p. 112) is uncertain as to its meaning, but suggests it might or might not be a quarter-tone. Houdard considered it a short ornament involving both upper and lower neighboring tones.

25 H. B. Briggs, *Recent Research in Plainsong*, paper read to members of the Plainsong and Medieval Music Society, London. Published by the Society, London, Messrs. Vincent, 1898.

according to the number of notes found in a neum appeals to me, because it is as simple and natural as the principles advocated by Pothier.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps the most significant fact about the attempts at chant restoration during the period under consideration is that, for the first time, the chant manuscripts themselves and the medieval theoretical treatises became the basis for the attempts at melodic and rhythmic reconstruction. No longer were new editions prepared on the shaky foundations of earlier incorrect or mutilated versions. Even though there were many failures, the ideal of a return to the authentic chant on the basis of manuscript evidence was maintained as a goal to be achieved. To Guéranger, of course, goes most of the credit for getting the movement started; no one would deny the importance and influence of this great Benedictine on the liturgy of the Church.

<sup>26</sup> Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

#### Chapter IV

### DOM JOSEPH POTHIER

In 1903, the monopoly held by Pustet in Ratisbon in the publishing of liturgical books expired,<sup>1</sup> and the new Pope, Pius X, lost no time in issuing his famed *Motu Proprio* of November 22, 1903. In this major work of legislation, the Pope called for the restoration of the ancient traditional Gregorian Chant and the use by the people of this "supreme model of sacred music."<sup>2</sup> Having divested the Medicean edition of its official status, Pius was able to cite the "recent studies" at Solesmes and elsewhere which were restoring the chant to its "integrity and purity."<sup>3</sup> As early as May 17, 1901, Pope Leo XIII had officially recognized the labors of the Solesmes Benedictines in his Brief to the Abbot Delatte, *Nos Quidem*.<sup>4</sup> Now, the authority of the Church in demanding the restoration of the authentic chant to worship was sounded in a Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, dated January 8, 1904.

Then, in a second *Motu Proprio*, April 25, 1904, the Pope established a Pontifical Commission and assigned its task:

The Gregorian melodies are to be restored in their integrity and identity, after the authority of the earliest manuscripts, taking account of the legitimate tradition of past ages, as well as of the actual use of the Liturgy of today.<sup>5</sup>

Several monks from the Abbey of Solesmes were placed on the Pontifical Commission, along with Dr. Peter Wagner and other distinguished musicologists. Because of his international reputation in the area of chant studies, the Solesmes Benedictine, Dom Joseph

<sup>1</sup> August Gatard, *Plainchant* (London: Faith Press, 1921), p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Pius X, *Motu Proprio*, Nov. 22, 1903, paragraph 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Dom Dominic Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant* (New York: Pustet, 1925), p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> Pope Pius X, *Motu Proprio*, April 25, 1904.

Pothier, was named by the Pope to be chairman of the Commission.

Pothier had worked with Dom Jausions at Solesmes, and after Jausion's death in 1870 had continued his paleographic and archaeological studies. After twenty-four years of work, he brought out his *Graduale* in 1883, and other volumes of the restored chant followed regularly, before his appointment to the Papal Commission.<sup>6</sup>

As early as 1880, Pothier had explained his theories of chant rhythm in *Les mélodies grégoriennes*, in which he advanced his equalist-accentualist ideas, teaching that all the notes in chant are of equal duration, the rhythm being free, that is, non-metrical; the basic rhythmic impulse of the music is determined by the accent of the Latin word. Taking the word *Roma*, for example, he noted that the two syllables must be pronounced in a single movement, the accented syllable being at the élan of the rhythm, and the final syllable at the coming to rest; the accent, therefore, represents the arsis, and the final syllable the thesis of the word.<sup>7</sup> "By arsis," he wrote, "I mean the moment when one raises the foot, and by thesis, the moment when one replaces it on the ground."<sup>8</sup> Also, Pothier taught:

When several neums correspond with several syllables, and the syllables are separately articulated, the neums are thereby divided. Then the neum adapted to each syllable changes its quality and strength by receiving a stronger accent if the syllable to which it belongs is strongly accented, but it is weaker if the nature of the corresponding syllable needs less emphasis. . . In all texts, whether of lessons, Psalmody, or chants, the accent and rhythm of the word are to be observed as far as possible, for thus it is that the meaning of the text is best brought out.<sup>9</sup>

To Pothier, the correct pronunciation and perfect articulation and observance of the accent of the Latin words were of vital importance. Mocquereau quoted his teacher: "Each word must form a whole. The rule in the performance of syllabic chant is that the word must be rendered in one movement."<sup>10</sup>

Dom Suibertus Birkle explained Pothier's description of the chant as a "recitative-like music of an oratorical nature." Birkle discussed the melodic, rhythmic, and dynamic elements of the musical form, and the accents and the pause. Pothier taught that the chant notes are

6 Gastoué (*L'art grégorien*, Paris: Librairie F. Alean, 1920) listed Pothier's publications: *Les mélodies grégoriennes* (1880); *Liber Gradualis* (1883); *Directorum Chori* (1884); *Liber Gradualis*, second edition (1885); *Hymnal* (1885); *Office, Feast of the Nativity* (1885); *Office for Holy Week* (1886); *Office for the Dead* (1887); *Monastic Processional* (1888); *Variae Preces* (1888); *Antiphonary* (1891) *Variae Preces*, second edition (1892); *Major Feasts* (1895); *Common of the Saints* (1895); *Variae Preces*, third edition (1895).

7 Dom Pothier, *Les mélodies grégoriennes* (Tournai: Desclée, 1880). (German translation by Dom Kienle, 1881, same publisher).

8 Pothier, quoted in Gatard, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

9 Pothier, *Preface to the Vatican Edition of the Gradual* (reprinted in the *Liber Usualis*, p. xiv.).

10 Dom André Mocquereau, *Le nombre musical grégorien* (Tournai: Desclée, 1927), II, p. 619, quoting Pothier's *Principles pour la bonne exécution du Chant grégorien*, 1891.

equal in duration because they do not have absolute values in their relation to each other; this is because chant is chiefly declamatory, more a matter of accent than of note lengths, and because it originated in a time when length and brevity of syllables were completely subordinated to accent. Accent was, therefore, a melodic element in the chant, and along with the pause, was a form-building element. Birkle noted three kinds of accents in Pothier doctrine: the Latin *tonic* accent, the *logic* accent (functioning to the sentence as the tonic accent does to the word), and the *pathetic* (mood-giving or dynamic) accent. There are also three kinds of pauses: the *word* pause, the *sentence* pause, and the *period* pause.<sup>11</sup>

The laws of chant form were three, taught Pothier: (1) the chant is composed of groups or motifs of two or three notes, and every second or third note following an accent must receive a new accent; (2) the union of two-and-three part motifs is free and does not occur according to rules or schedules; and (3) the single parts of a motif must be arranged in due proportion. Correct chanting, therefore, is produced by a proper treatment of accents, pauses, and note durations.<sup>12</sup> This idea of proper treatment, of proportion, ran through all of Pothier's writings, even to his basic definition of rhythm as "balance between sections."<sup>13</sup>

The equalist doctrine of Pothier was given official status on August 7, 1907, when the *Vatican Edition* of the chant was adopted for the universal Church. In his Preface to the *Vaticana*, Pothier explained how the Papal Commission had worked, how selections between various versions of a chant melody had had to be made; since the

. . . restoration of the ecclesiastical chant had to depend not only upon paleographical considerations, but also was to draw upon history, musical and Gregorian art, and even upon experience and upon the rules of the sacred liturgy. . .<sup>14</sup>

the most ancient version of a melody was not always retained. He also explained the rules for the treatment of the Latin accent.

To Pothier goes most of the credit for the restored melodic outlines of the chant;<sup>15</sup> his rhythmic theories are still the ones given official status in the Vatican books. Since it is "Pothier-chant" which is sung today in Catholic schools and churches, at least by those who reject the Mocquereau-Solesmes editions, the importance of this Benedictine musician and scholar cannot be minimized.

11 Suibertus Birkle, *A Complete and Practical Method of the Solesmes Plain Chant* (tr. Le Maistre), New York: J. F. Wagner, 1904), pp. 33-35.

12 *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

13 Pothier, quoted by Gatard, *op. cit.*, p. 27 *et seq.*

14 Pothier, *Preface to the Vatican Gradual* (Reprinted in the *Liber Usualis*).

15 Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1940), p. 116.

## MOCQUEREAU AND THE SCHOOL OF SOLESMES

### 1. SOLESMES AND NEO-SOLESMES

The historian Amadée Gastoué, in *L'art grégorien*, drew a distinction between the "school of Solesmes," the Pothier school, and the "new school" of Dom Mocquereau.<sup>1</sup> Certainly when contemporary writers refer to Solesmes, it is the Mocquereau-Neo-Solesmes that is meant. Dom André Mocquereau (1849-1930), a pupil of Pothier, was responsible for the rhythmic principles that are now synonymous with the name of the French Abbey.

The "new school" was founded in 1889 when Mocquereau, who had been ordained in 1879, was encouraged by Dom Couturier, Guéranger's successor as abbot, to found a *schola* at Solesmes.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. LE NOMBRE MUSICAL GRÉGORIEN

Mocquereau's major theoretical work in chant was *Le nombre musical grégorien*.<sup>3</sup> In these volumes, he asserted that Solesmes had accomplished the task of determining what Gregorian rhythm was in the chant's "golden age"; the basic premise is that of free, un-metered rhythm, as taught by Dom Pothier.

Defending the theory of binary and ternary groupings, Mocquereau quoted Prof. Robert Macdougall's studies concerning experiments with rhythm at Harvard University, and reproduced in the *Harvard Psychological Studies*, Vol. I. Only two rhythmical units exist, those of two and three beats respectively, wrote MacDougall; all longer groupings can actually be resolved into one of these types.<sup>4</sup>

1 Amadée Gastoué, *L'art grégorien* (Paris: Librairie F. Alean, 1920), p. 130.

2 Dom Gatard, *Plainchant* (London: Faith Press, 1921), p. 61.

3 Dom André Mocquereau, *Le nombre musical grégorien* (Tournai: Desclée), Volume I, 1908; Volume II, 1927.

4 Mocquereau, *Le nombre*, I, pp. 8-9.

Mocquereau wrote that his restoration of the chant was based on the natural laws of rhythm, the natural rhythm and accent of the word, neumatic notation, the melodic form and modality of the chant, and the additions, Romanian letters, and signs in the St. Gall manuscripts, as well as on other rhythmic signs found in various manuscripts.<sup>5</sup>

Part one of *Le nombre* considered the origin of rhythm, repose and movement, sonority, the form and matter of rhythm, binary and ternary groupings, quantitative rhythm, the rhythmic ictus, and the principle of the independence of intensity from both measure and rhythm. The rhythm of chant, Mocquereau wrote, is produced by the fusion of equal or unequal simple rhythms. The pauses are also vitally important: even though not indicated in the neumatic notation, they have the same value as notes or syllables which are expressed.<sup>6</sup> Mocquereau also discussed chironomy, as cited by Hucbald (c.840-930), and he provided numerous examples. All movement, he wrote, is the cessation of repose; all movement supposes a repose immediately preceding it.<sup>7</sup>

Part two concerned the application of rhythmic principles to the Gregorian melody. Mocquereau traced the development of the acute, grave, and circumflex accents into neums, discussed the kinds of neums, their rhythmic origins, and the episema principle.<sup>8</sup>

His discussion of the Romanus letters, found in some St. Gall manuscripts, is important. There are two main types of rhythmic signs in the manuscripts: short lines (episemas) added to the neums, and letters written above the neums. Episemas are found, according to Reese, in the manuscripts of St. Gall, Metz, Chartres, Nonantola, Benevento, and Aquitaine, and are believed to indicate the lengthening of the value of the neum.<sup>9</sup> The letters written above the neums are said to have been first used by the legendary Roman singer, Romanus, who is supposed to have introduced Gregorian Chant at the monastery of St. Gall, near the end of the eighth century. Gatard insisted that these letters were not peculiar to St. Gall, but were set down in the manuscripts there as an indication of how the chant was generally performed. This theory has been supported by the discovery of manuscripts in the Chartres library, published in the 1914 volume of the *Paléographie musicale*.<sup>10</sup>

The Romanian letters are of three types: those dealing with the melodies; those indicating rhythm; and those modifying a preceding letter. Reese has noted that generally the letter affects the neum,<sup>11</sup> but Mocquereau stated that it sometimes affects only the single note over

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 12-17.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 107.

8 "L'episeme romanien est presque toujours le signe d'une prolongation. . ." I, p. 161.

9 Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (N.Y.: Norton, 1940), p. 140.

10 Gatard, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

11 Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 140.



which it appears, although the letter *c* or *t* is often followed by a line extending over a whole group, or even series of groups.<sup>12</sup>

#### THE ROMANIAN LETTERS OF THE MANUSCRIPTS<sup>13</sup>

Letters concerning the melodies:

Raising the notes	Lowering the notes
a - ut altius elevatur admonet	d - ut deprimatur
l - levare neumam	i - iusum vel inferius insinuat
s - sursum scandere	
g - ut in gutture garruletur gradatim	Same pitches
	e - ut equaliter sonetur (e.g. unison)

Letters concerning the rhythm:

Ritard	Regarding intensity <sup>14</sup>
t - trahere vel tenere	p - pressionem vel perfectionem
x - expectare (ritard)	f - ut cum fragore feriat
m - mediocriter moderari melodiam	k - clange

Accelerate

c - ut cito vel celeriter dicatur

Modifications of the preceding letters:

b - ut bene (well) extollatur, vel gravitur, vel teneatur

v - valde (extremely, very); rarely used. Is a synonym for "b"

m - mediocriter; often used with other letters: e.g., am - altius mediocriter;

cm - celeriter mediocriter; im - inferius mediocriter; tm - tenete mediocriter.

bl - bene levare; tb - bene teneatur; iv - inferius valde

Part two of *Le nombre* also discussed the notes and intervals, the clefs, the modes, Gregorian recitations, rules for the performance of note groups, and the pressus, oriscus, strophicus, salicus, and quillisma.<sup>15</sup>

The second volume of *Le nombre*, which appeared in 1927, defended Solesmes free rhythm, claiming that it was based on the rhythmic evolution from Greek and Latin poetry.<sup>16</sup> Part three treated the application of the liturgical texts to melody and rhythm. Mocquereau, insisting on the unity of the Latin word, wrote: "The accent is the soul of the word." He considered, in order, the section,<sup>17</sup> the period, the phrase, and the pause. The final part of the book was devoted to a "Confirmation and development" of such principles as the weakness of the final Latin syllable, the independence of the rhythmic ictus and the word accent, the arsis and the thesis, and the nature of the ictus. The various Solesmes doctrines were reviewed, and several chant com-

<sup>12</sup> Mocquereau, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-169.

<sup>13</sup> Adapted from Mocquereau, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 164-168.

<sup>14</sup> Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 140, considered these three letters (p, f, k) as calling for energetic emphasis. He also noted that some letters are found in the Metz and Chartres manuscripts; Metz, in addition to *d* and *c*, uses *a* - augete (broaden), and *n* naturaliter, (restore normal value).

<sup>15</sup> See *Liber Usualis*, xxiv, 12.

<sup>16</sup> "Pour nous, il demeure établi fermement que, bien avant le chant grégorien, le mélange des pieds, ternaires, quaternaires, quinaires, était d'un usage fréquent, en poésie et en musique." (II, 25).

<sup>17</sup> Dom Aldhelm Dean offers this word as the best English equivalent of the French *incise*.

positions presented in chironomy. Throughout Mocquereau stressed rhythm as the "order of movement."

Of interest was Mocquereau's description of the work at Solesmes:

Our younger monks undertook the transcription on synoptic tables of a whole library of MSS. Each passage of the subject-matter has its own synoptic table, drawn up by placing each version in parallel alignment—the versions arranged in perpendicular rows, grouped in schools or in countries of origin; the whole arranged neum by neum, in parallel columns, so that the history of a neum can be followed in its formation, its variations, and its corruptions. . . .<sup>18</sup>

### 3. THE PALÉOGRAPHIE MUSICALE

One of Mocquereau's finest contributions to scholarship was the *Paléographie musicale*. Begun as a refutation of the then-popular Ratisbon (Pustet) chant books (the Medicean edition), this photographic reproduction of chant manuscripts proved the Ratisbon books to be full of errors. Volume One of the *Paléographie musicale* appeared in 1889, and the seventeenth (final) volume was published in 1925.

### 4. THE GOSPEL OF SOLESMES, ACCORDING TO GAJARD

Dom Joseph Gajard (1885- —), pupil of Mocquereau and the present choirmaster at Solesmes, provided a superb explanation of his teacher's complex rhythmic theories in a series of lectures which was eventually published.<sup>19</sup>

Translator Dom Aldhelm Dean, in his introduction, noted that chant, when sung according to the true (sic) rhythmic tradition, is not dull or mechanical. "The much criticized rhythmic signs of Solesmes," he wrote, "are nothing but a modern way of reproducing the corresponding rhythmic signs found in the best manuscripts."<sup>20</sup>

Gajard agreed with Pothier that the Latin tonic accent is the rhythmic factor in syllabic chant, but denied that the question was really so simple, because Gregorian rhythm (which is not indicated by the notation, of course) is a question of movement as well as of intensity; it is the grouping of sounds into a synthesis, achieved by a series of comprehensively larger units. Notes make up simple rhythms, which make up sections (*incises*), then members, phrases, and periods.

Rhythm, according to Solesmes, is based on little steps, each made up of a "departure" and an "arrival". Since the ends of Latin words are weak, the ends of sections, members, and phrases which coincide

<sup>18</sup> Mocquereau, quoted in Gatard, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>19</sup> Dom Joseph Gajard, *The Rhythm of Plainsong According to the Solesmes School* (tr. Dom Aldhelm Dean) (New York: J. Fischer, 1943).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4. The following material is summarized from Gajard's explanation of Solesmes theory.

with them are also weak. The "arrival" is this weak ending, this repose. Rhythm is, therefore, a "unity", a "fusion" of the elements of "rise" and "fall" into a single movement.<sup>21</sup>

Solesmes teaches, therefore, that the melody and the text in chant have their own rhythms, and that the tonic accent of the words may or may not coincide with the melodic rhythm.

Solesmes distinguishes between elementary rhythm, compound time, and composite rhythm in the Gregorian "section." Elementary rhythm is the spring (*élan*) and the repose, the complete movement from a departure to an arrival. The feeling of repose, not dependent upon either intensity or length, is characterized by

... a tendency towards something, and the arrival is characterized by the end of that tendency. Thus the little vertical sign which we place on the note of repose or downbeat, is no indication whatever of intensity, but solely of the repose after a previous *élan*, and the end of an elementary rhythm.<sup>22</sup>

Intensity, while important in the rhythmic synthesis, is not essential to the formation of elementary rhythm; its role is that of providing "a colorful warmth of expression which binds together even more closely the members and the phrases, and shows better than anything else the ultimate unity of the period."<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, Mocquereau placed the ictus on all notes marked with the vertical episema, on all lengthened notes, and on the first note of each neum unless that neum were immediately preceded or followed by another ictic note; according to his rules, two ictic notes could not follow one another. The ictus, therefore, in Solesmes editions, comes after every two or three simple beats.

As a ball bounces, striking the floor and springing up again, so does a musical line progress, according to the Solesmes theory of *compound time*. When the ball touches the floor, it "rests" and yet at the same time derives the impetus for its next bounce. In chant, each ictus is thus an end and a beginning; a thesis and also an arsis. It is the "point where rhythms are welded together."<sup>24</sup> The first beat of a measure is not a strong beat, but really a momentary repose after movement; it is the end of a preceding movement, rather than the start of a new movement. This essential element of Solesmes theory was stressed by Gajard:

I do not hesitate to say that most of the controversy on Gregorian rhythm, the nature of the Gregorian neum, and the part played by the Latin tonic ac-

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>22</sup> Gajard, *op. cit.*, p. 22. This is the vertical episema or "ictus".

<sup>23</sup> Mocquereau, quoted by Gajard, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Gajard, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

cent, would disappear, if one would consent to make the necessary distinction between elementary rhythm and compound time.<sup>25</sup>

*Composite rhythm* is formed, according to Solesmes, by the arsic or thetic function played by each ictus in the phrase. Gajard explained: a horse, in winning a race, leaps harder and harder as the finish line is approached; therefore, unable to stop once the line is crossed, it keeps on moving. Before reaching the winning post, each pace on the ground maintains and increases the movement; after the post is passed, each bound tends to slow the forward movement and eventually to stop it. Compound time notes that each contact of the horse's feet with the ground is both thetic and arsic; each is the end of one *élan* and the start of another. But in terms of their function, composite rhythm states that each ictus of the horse prior to passing the winning line is arsic and each ictus after passing the post is thetic. To enable the chant director to assign to each ictus in the composition its arsic or thetic nature, Mocquereau developed his method of *chironomy*, a projection in space of the musical rhythm, showing both the place of each ictus and its arsic or thetic nature.

Some writers have suggested that the Gregorian composers wrote their neums so that the first note was always what Solesmes terms "ictic". Gajard rejects this theory, stating that the neum is primarily a melodic, not a rhythmic, indication, and that, anyway, the first note of a neum is ictic only if not immediately preceded or followed by an ictic note. The only Solesmes sign found in the manuscripts, the horizontal episema, does not involve the rhythmic ictus, according to Gajard; it allows shades of expression, is like an indication of a slight insistence on the note.

Solesmes denies the theoretical assertion that the Latin word resembles a "compound beat" with its accent on the downbeat or ictus; instead, the Latin word is really an "elementary rhythm", with its arsic accent and thetic ending, which is the ictus. The modern theory of tonic accent on the downbeat, Mocquereau taught, presupposes an intensity of Latin accent or gravity of ictus which simply does not exist, because the ictus deals only with movement and not intensity. Since it is not actually stronger than the up-beat, it cannot attract the accent to itself. Therefore, Solesmes normally places the rhythmic ictus on the final syllable of the word, because, in their teaching, the Latin words have their own rhythm, corresponding to the musical "elementary rhythm." Since the final syllable is unaccented in Latin, it normally carries the ictus. In the classical period, the Latin tonic accent was a matter of melodic rise, not of intensity; if there was any intensity, Gajard wrote,

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.



. . . it must have been very light, for no grammarian of the period makes the least allusion to it. . . it is not until the sixth century that we find a grammarian using an expression that might lend itself to the theory of the intensive accent. . .<sup>26</sup>

Pothier considered the final syllable of a word thetic and thus most suitable for neumatic ornamentation, and Mocquereau wrote:

There is no need to strike the accents in order to emphasize them; on the contrary, they should shine down on the whole phrase and light it up from above. If they are struck sharply, all their charm disappears, they become material, heavy, grovelling.<sup>27</sup>

To Solesmes, therefore, the Latin word is a true rhythm formed by the union and fusion of all the syllables drawn to itself by the tonic accent; the rhythmic ictus is a repose following an élan; the Latin tonic accent is essentially an élan requiring a repose to follow it. Therefore, the Latin accent and the ictus do not necessarily coincide; Gajard wrote, in fact, "the less they coincide, the better."<sup>28</sup> The accent, in Solesmes theory, can be on the up-beat as well as on the down-beat, and Gajard felt it better if it *does* occur on the up-beat. He summarized Solesmes method in these two theses:

- (a) complete mutual independence of rhythm and intensity;
- (b) complete mutual independence of the rhythmic ictus and the Latin tonic accent.<sup>29</sup>

A more recent word from Solesmes has come from Dom Jean Hébert Desroquettes. Criticizing the present-day attacks on Solesmes editorializing, Desroquettes warned the world against

. . . leaving a system which has given us unity of method and artistic style (sic) . . . until we are satisfied that another system is perfect and is actually better than Solesmes.<sup>30</sup>

This explanation of basic Solesmes theory, although brief and somewhat simplified, has, it is hoped, given the reader the essential tools with which to consider the Solesmes position in the gradually developing rhythmic controversy.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51. This argument ignores the fact that most chant was not composed in the period of classical Latin poetry, but rather in the sixth and following centuries, when Gajard's grammarian was writing. See Ferguson, *A History of Musical Thought*, p. 41.

<sup>27</sup> Mocquereau, quoted by Gajard, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>28</sup> Gajard, *op. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> Gajard, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65. It is obvious that in spite of Gajard's claims that Mocquereau and his pupils carried on the teachings of Pothier, this theory of the independence of verbal and musical accent is some distance from Pothier's insistence that "the accent and rhythm of the word are to be observed as far as possible. . . ." Further, Gajard's teachings that the melody takes preference over the words (p. 57 and p. 66) contradicts Pothier.

<sup>30</sup> Dom Desroquettes, Lecture: "Gregorian Chant as Prayer and Art", NCMEA National Convention, Buffalo, New York, April 27, 1960; quoted in *Musart*, June, 1960, p. 8.

## Chapter VI

### SOLESMES VS. THE VATICANA

The complete story of the bitter controversy which developed between the supporters of the Vatican edition of the chant and the Benedictines of Solesmes during the first decade of this century is not a matter of public record. From the following summary, however, it is obvious that the challenges and the strife were of the most acrimonious kind, with personalities as well as principles involved.

#### 1. THE PONTIFICAL COMMISSION

Pope Pius X, in his *Motu Proprio* dated November 22, 1903, called for the restoration of the ancient traditional chant. In a second *Motu Proprio*, April 25, 1904, the Pope established a Pontifical Commission, with Dom Pothier as chairman, and assigned to it the task of restoring the traditional melodies in their integrity and purity.

. . . after the authority of the earliest manuscripts, taking account of the legitimate tradition of past ages, as well as of the actual use of the liturgy of today.<sup>1</sup>

But the members of the Papal Commission, which assembled on the Isle of Wight in September, 1904, could not even agree on the meaning of those words. The wrangling and fighting started almost immediately, and it was bitter; Dr. Peter Wagner, a member of the Commission, has written: ". . . it is nothing less than a misleading of public opinion, if people are told that the differences . . . were limited to the quarrel of a few monks."<sup>2</sup>

The crux of the quarrel was this: the Solesmes Benedictines, representing the archaeological point of view, stressed the part of the Papal

<sup>1</sup> Pope Pius X, *Motu Proprio*, April 25, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Wagner, "The Attack on the Vatican Edition: A Rejoinder." First published in the Styria Press (Graz and Vienna), 1907. Reprinted in *Caecilia*, Vol. 87, No. 1, (Spring, 1960), p. 15.

directive that referred to the "authority of the earliest manuscripts," and insisted that the Vatican edition must present only the *oldest* version of any chant melody that could be found in existing or available manuscripts. The rest of the Commission, favoring the "legitimate tradition" approach, insisted that, in some cases, the oldest available version of a melody was not always the best one, and that various changes in a melody, made over the centuries, were often improvements. "Oldest" was not synonymous with "best," they claimed, and, furthermore, the chant could never be finally settled in its melodic contours if "oldest" were the only criterion for the selection of a melodic version; there was always the possibility of the discovery of still older manuscripts; in this case, chaos in the printed books would result. Dr. Wagner put it:

The champions of the archaeological cause (i.e. Solesmes) wanted a book produced according to exclusively philological-critical rules; a book that would enjoin upon the future of church music only that which is to be found in the most ancient documents. Contrariwise, it was emphasized that under the circumstances a more recent version could merit priority over one that was older; that among the later variants many real improvements were present which one simply could not push aside because they were more modern or were handed down only in more recent manuscripts.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Wagner had presented a paper to the Strassbourg Chant Congress on April 3, 1905, appealing for moderation in the chant quarrel.<sup>4</sup> He called on the Pope for an authentic interpretation of his *Motu Proprio*. But the Benedictines, in no mood for moderation, insisted on their point of view, and the rift in the Commission grew wider every day.

A member of the Commission, to whom the Holy Father had made known his will with full firmness and clarity in a private audience, awoke the next day to see the partisans of the extreme archaeology defending their biased views as the will of the liturgical lawgiver, and with a violence which bordered on fanaticism.<sup>5</sup>

The dissension among members of the Commission had reached such a state by March and April, 1905, that some decision had to be made in Rome. A public attack by Solesmes partisans on the work of the Papal Commission had appeared in an article in the *People's Paper* of Cologne, April 5, 1905. An order was sent to the President of the Commission that it was not to be assembled again.

The long-awaited decision of Pope Pius X regarding the Commission and its work was handed down in a letter of Cardinal Merry

<sup>3</sup> Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> This paper was published in the *Strassbourg Caecilia*, February, 1906.

<sup>5</sup> Wagner, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

del Val on June 24. The Pope, citing his second *Motu Proprio*, decided in favor of the "traditionalist" members of the Commission, and took the editorship of the *Vaticana* away from Solesmes. Having been forced to choose between two completely different approaches to the chant restoration, the Holy Father decided that it was the "traditionalists" who would best carry out the Papal intentions.

The Solesmes account of this controversy is interesting, because it makes no mention of any controversy whatsoever! After recounting that Pius X had given charge of editing the new chant books to Solesmes, Gatard stated that the Benedictines had placed at Rome's disposal the results of all their chant research, as well as the literary rights to their books. At the same time,

. . . the Pope appointed a Commission, charged with revising the melodies prepared at Solesmes, and giving them official approbation, and presided over by Dom Pothier. THIS IS NOT THE PLACE TO RECORD HOW IT WAS HE CAME TO BE BOTH EDITOR AND JUDGE IN THE LAST RESORT: it is enough to notice that the majority of the variant readings. . . introduced by Dom Mocquereau. . . have been admitted into the Vatican Gradual, and that by this means, the work of the Director of the Solesmes School has received an official commendation.<sup>6</sup>

The re-organized Commission, with Dom Pothier presiding, began the preparation of the Vatican *Kyriale*. A statement opposing the Papal principles, and re-affirming the Solesmes position, was published in the *Rassegna Gregoriana* in July-August. Cagin's attack did nothing, however, to halt the publication of the *Kyriale Vaticanum* on August 14, 1905, accompanied by a Papal decree urging its prompt distribution throughout the world.

## 2. BEWERUNGE'S ATTACK ON THE VATICAN EDITION

The Irish Jesuit, H. Beverunge, a professor at Maynooth College, led the attack of the Solesmes supporters on the new *Kyriale* in an essay in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* for January, 1906.<sup>7</sup> Armed by Solesmes, Father Beverunge violently criticized the many "errors" of the Vatican edition, blaming them all on Pothier, who alone, he said, had the power of selecting one version of a given melody over several alternate versions that appear in the manuscripts. The major part of the essay was devoted to a counting of short alternative melodic passages which occur in various manuscripts, and then pointing out that "Pothier" frequently selected a version which appears in fewer

<sup>6</sup> Dom Gatard, *Plainchant* (London: The Faith Press, 1921), p. 63. Capitals NOT in the original. Note on what flimsy grounds the much-desired "official commendation" is projected.

<sup>7</sup> H. Beverunge, "The Vatican Edition of Plain Chant," *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, XIX (January to June, 1906). Reprinted in *Caecilia*, Vol. 86, No. 4, Winter, 1959.

manuscripts than some other versions. Beverunge claimed to be vigorously opposed to such selection on the basis of the aesthetic taste of an "individual."<sup>8</sup>

Defending the Solesmes Benedictines against the charge of "archaism," Beverunge understood that modern musicians might object to Gregorian music altogether because it is archaic, but found it difficult to understand why those who accepted the music of thirteen centuries earlier should worry about a phrase here or there being more or less "archaic" than another.

The essay, with its enumeration of passages from various manuscripts of several countries, attacked Pothier again and again. Beverunge wrote:

It would be difficult to see any definite principle in all the cases where Dom Pothier has defied the evidence of the MSS. In some cases, as we have seen, he followed a special current of tradition against the general tradition; in others, a morbid fear of the tritone made him introduce changes. . . . But for most cases the only actuating principle that could be assigned is his "aesthetic taste," or, shall we say, his whim?<sup>9</sup>

But, warned Beverunge, the *Vaticana* could and would not last, in spite of all the decrees and pronouncements from Rome that Pothier managed to wrangle in support of "his" edition!

### 3. BURGE'S DEFENSE OF THE VATICANA

Beverunge's attack on the Vatican edition was answered in the pages of *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record* by the Benedictine, T. A. Burge.<sup>10</sup> Father Burge noted that, of all the attacks on the *Vaticana*, the one by Beverunge was the most detailed and searching; but it contained numerous errors of fact! The most serious of these was the repeated charge that Pothier was the sole judge of the new version of the chant, that he alone was responsible for all the variants and corrections.

There is not a single passage, as far as I can see, in which the Pontifical Commission is mentioned; the whole brunt of the attack falls upon Dom Pothier and on him alone.<sup>11</sup>

Actually, every single correction and selection included in the *Vaticana* was discussed and approved by the members of the Commission.

Burge noted that such distinguished musicologists as Dr. Wagner,

<sup>8</sup> Both Wagner and T. A. Burge, who answered Beverunge, were quick to point out that the Papal Commission as a whole made these decisions; they were not determined by Dom Pothier alone.

<sup>9</sup> Beverunge, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>10</sup> T. A. Burge, OSB, "The Vatican Edition of the *Kyriale* and its Critics," *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, XIX (January to June, 1906), Reprinted in *Caecilia*, Vol. 86, No. 4, Winter, 1959.

<sup>11</sup> Burge, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

Dom Janssens (members of the Commission), and Moisenet, CrosPELLIER, and Gastoué (consultants) defended the *Vaticana*; thus, they aligned themselves with Pothier, accepting responsibility for the edition.

Against such a weight of authority and learning, we have but one opponent. . . from whom all the attacks, directly or indirectly, emanate.<sup>12</sup>

The truth concerning the work of the Papal Commission was well-known to Solesmes, Burge wrote, and it was most unpleasant to consider the bitter personal attack on Dom Pothier who, himself, was a member of the Solesmes community.

Father Burge attacked Beverunge's claim that, simply because the *Vaticana* does not follow in every detail the reading of the oldest manuscripts, it is less-worthy than the Solesmes versions. This principle is not only unscientific and inartistic, but also at variance with the Papal decisions. Anyone, artist or not, could reconstruct old music along Mocquereau's principles, which may have been difficult and even valuable, but which were not artistic or scientific!<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, it is an assumption to state that authentic chant is found only in the oldest manuscripts, for even they are separated by more than two centuries from the time of Gregory. Problems would also arise if "the oldest existing version" were agreed upon as the authentic chant, and then, in some future time, some European library should yield a copy of a still earlier manuscript:

. . . then what would happen? The whole of the statistical tables, the whole of the conclusions hitherto come to, would have to be revised and brought into conformity with each new discovery. Is this a scientific basis to rest a claim so proud that archaeology puts forth? And must the music of the Church be dependent upon every fresh discovery of archaeology?<sup>14</sup>

As Wagner pointed out<sup>15</sup>, there were attempts to make the chant resemble classic prosody in the centuries after St. Gregory; ornaments were also introduced at that time, and because chant singers fought against such innovations as the Greek semi-tones and quarter-tones, chant eventually became "Latinized."

After all, Burge continued, the Church considers the chant to be a collection of compositions of all times and countries and of all degrees of art, as a living music of uniform style. The archaeological position, contrariwise, considered it to be a fixed, unchanging thing,

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Mocquereau, in "L'ecole grégorienne de Solesmes," *Rassegna Gregoriana*, April, 1904, had noted that at Solesmes each neum and neum-group is numbered; the "restorer" writes in horizontal columns all the versions of each group. The agreements and the differences are counted and subdivided according to the age of the manuscript, and then tabulated. The "votes" of the earliest manuscripts always determine the version used, unless the "votes" are equal; in that case, lots may be cast for the decision.

<sup>14</sup> Burge, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Wagner, *Neumenkunde* (1905 edition).

regardless of the demands of art or liturgy. Solesmes' system of "counting neums" can produce a certain number of "votes," but certainly not true Gregorian art!

Burge, citing the "unscientific" and "inartistic" work of Solesmes, dwelt at length on the Benedictine disobedience to the commands of the Holy See. Pius X's call for a chant restoration based on "the most ancient books, but also with attention paid to the legitimate tradition of later manuscripts and the practical use of the present-day liturgy" practically placed the archaeological point of view out of bounds, without further argument; but Solesmes would not give up, causing the deadlock in the Commission in the hope of Papal surrender. But the Pope could not yield, of course, and when he took the editorship of the Vatican books away from Solesmes, the Benedictines took their opposition to the public press. The Solesmes scholars had the right to hold their own view on chant theory, of course, Burge wrote, but they had no right to attempt to discredit before the whole Church the Papal principles in the matter.

The very Solesmes writers who sneered at Pothier's attempts to make the chant easier for modern choirs to sing were the ones who insisted on the practical value of their "rhythmic" editions, wrote Burge.

The amusing part is that these rhythmic signs have absolutely no claim whatever to antiquity. No author of medieval times can be quoted in support of their theories of binary and ternary rhythms. And yet these sticklers for antiquity do not hesitate to introduce into their notation all sorts of hybrid modern signs in order to make the Chant easier to be sung.<sup>16</sup>

Substantiating his claim that the changes in the *Vaticana* were such obvious practical and artistic improvements that only impaired critical faculties or blind prejudice could fail to recognize them, Burge demonstrated that, despite Solesmes criticism, there was no melodic selection in the *Vaticana* which was not justified by one or more manuscripts. The *Vaticana* was scientifically and artistically sound! And certainly Rome had the right to insist on the circulation of its official edition:

If the direction of the Chant of the Church is not to be determined by official decrees of the Holy See, by what is it then to be determined? By archaeology? God forbid! . . . It is surely a startling proposition to put before the faithful, that the settlement of the Plain Chant must be dependent upon the studies and decisions of a school of archaeologists, and not upon Rome.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4. PETER WAGNER DEFENDS THE VATICANA

Dr. Peter Wagner, replying to Bewerunge, noted that the Jesuit

<sup>16</sup> Burge, *op. cit.*, p. 334, fn. 1.  
<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 344-345.

was obviously a Solesmes spokesman, because, although he had never before written works on the science of chant, his "liturgical discoveries" were full of the same words, phrases, and arguments that the Benedictines had been regularly using.

Wagner admitted Solesmes' paleographic contributions, and understood its desire to be the authoritative center for Gregorian art; but he indicted the Benedictines severely for their anonymous, and then open war against the Vatican books:

Having projected their own notions, in spite of innumerable requests. . . they have refused to collaborate even to the present hour. Unlike obedient children of the Church, who would deem it as an honor to join in the realization of a noble Papal initiative, they somehow consider it as honorable to stab this initiative in the back; they arouse and maintain opposition to an adequate and standard praxis of the whole Church, one which, moreover, comes into the world with the seal of the Holy Father. They have the boldness to warn against its acceptance, and wish even to substitute for it a chant-book of their own. . . Has a religious society the right to show contempt for the will of the head of the Church before the whole world? Has it the right to assume the position of true ecclesiastical authority and . . . give to the Catholic world its teachings and counsels about these matters?<sup>18</sup>

Wagner attacked the Solesmes editorial methods. Bewerunge, he wrote, had no competence as historian because of his unhistorical idea that every alteration is a deterioration. Such a short-sighted view of art refuses to take advantage of the "glimpses into the intimate process of the history of art"<sup>19</sup> offered by a study of medieval changes in liturgical hymnology, for example. One cannot superficially reject various versions of the chant melodies without investigating the reasons which brought them into existence, for "choral music was life and art to the medieval man, and not a collection of petrified rows of notes."<sup>20</sup>

Wagner could not understand the imposition of a new rhythmic theory over Solesmes "oldest, most ancient melody":

Herein lies one of the ironies that are so often the consequence of extreme views; on the one hand, a slavish adherence to the oldest manuscripts is demanded—on the other, an untraditional garment is draped over the melodies thus obtained.<sup>21</sup>

The musicologist's answers to direct charges of Bewerunge, based on his fifteen-year study of historical and manuscript evidence, are detailed and fascinating.

Wagner suggested that possibly, early in the development of the chant, intervals smaller than our diatonic ones occurred in certain

<sup>18</sup> Wagner, "The Attack on the Vatican Edition: A Rejoinder," *The Styria Press* (Graz and Vienna), 1907. Reprinted in *Caecilia*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (Spring, 1960), pp. 19 and 41.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.



melodies, and that chant was made diatonic with the invention of staff notation, when these semi-tones were accordingly raised or lowered. The manuscripts must be treated with critical prudence and a consideration of the milieu which produced them, he insisted, and, because Solesmes fails to do this, their work has no claim to historical accuracy. Those who clamor for the "oldest" place themselves in an unscientific position, for there is no possibility of a philological-critical restoration of the oldest chant forms; there are too many things—the ornaments, for example, about which no human being knows.

Solesmes' "critical method" of examining each single note or group of notes according to its manuscript tradition testifies to labor, diligence, and high endeavor, wrote Wagner; the problem is that it results in a mode of singing which has nowhere and never existed! Solesmes examines individual notes and groups, "scraps of melody,"<sup>22</sup> each of which is "oldest" and "purest". Brought together, however, they produce melodies which have never existed in that form. The statistical method is, thus, a denial of *any* melodic tradition. This fact, along with the Solesmes dogmatism, the "feeling of infallibility which none of the other chant scholars claims for himself"<sup>23</sup> argues against the Solesmes, as opposed to historical, method!

#### 5. THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF RITES AND THE VATICANA

The Vatican edition of the *Kyriale*, published August 15, 1905, was enjoined upon the entire Church on August 7, 1907. In a Decree of February 14, 1906, however, the addition of certain rhythmic signs to the official Vatican edition had been "tolerated" under special restrictions. Shortly after the February 14 decree, three French editors, Messrs. Biaise, Lecoffre, and Lethielleux, members of the Societe d'editions du Chant grégorienne, requested a ruling on the Solesmes rhythmic signs from the Sacred Congregation of Rites.<sup>24</sup> The reply, signed by the Cardinal Secretary of the Congregation, was dated May 2, 1906:

The Typical Vatican Edition, with its most purely traditional notation, giving all the traditional rhythm, comprises, without a doubt, all necessary indications and sufficient for practical purposes. Nevertheless, the Holy Father believed it opportune to tolerate, under certain guarantees and special restrictions, the addition of certain supplementary signs, with the permission of the Ordinaries, permittende Ordinario, and also with great circumspection. Thus the Decree of February 14 does not in an absolute manner condemn all editions containing signs of this kind; but, on the other hand, it cannot be regarded as an approbation. The conclusion to be drawn from the very terms

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>24</sup> Marie Pierik: *The Song of the Church* (New York: Longmans-Green and Company, 1947), pp. 235-237.

of the Decree is that the latter requires that the integrity of the typical notation should always be respected. . . .<sup>25</sup>

The three editors, in their new chant publications, did not use the rhythmic signs; a letter written to them by Cardinal Merry del Val, acknowledging receipt of the first copies of the new edition, expressed Papal satisfaction. The letter, dated June 9, 1906, reads in part:

His Holiness was pleased to receive this gracious gift and had, furthermore, words of praise for publications of this character which, in not presenting any sort of additions, are in true conformity with the aforementioned Vatican Edition.<sup>26</sup>

Solesmes, meanwhile, had printed 100,000 copies of its *Kyriale*, with the added rhythmic signs. The editorial additions so interfered with the official musical text, however, that Cardinal Merry del Val was forced to announce:

The official commendation attached to the Desclée books through a misunderstanding has been immediately withdrawn. In the circumstances the copies already in print need not be recalled, but the official stamp will not be affixed to any succeeding printings.<sup>27</sup>

The musicologist Amadée Gastoué objected to the imposition of the Solesmes signs on the Vatican melodies. In a bitter attack on Mocquereau, Gastoué wrote:

The tolerance which Dom Mocquereau obtained from Rome for his rhythmic signs allows him, by a peculiar abuse, to go to the very end of his design, which is to impose on the whole world his personal interpretation of the medieval rhythms. It is time to protest against this pretention, so little justified. The practitioners of Plain-Chant must not let themselves be dominated by a scholar who defends his own glory with such undue partiality!<sup>28</sup>

On February 18, 1910, in the first of two documents dealing with the authentic rhythmic interpretation of the chant as binding on the entire Church,<sup>29</sup> the Sacred Congregation of Rites decreed:

. . . (in the) Vatican edition, the melodies are evidently arranged according to the system of the so-called free rhythm, for which the principal rules of execution are laid down and inculcated in the preface of the Roman Gradual in order that all may abide by them and that the chant of the Church be

<sup>25</sup> *Revue du chant grégorien* (May-June, 1906), p. 169. Reprinted in Pierik, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> *Revue du chant grégorien* (May-June, 1906), p. 169. Reprinted in Pierik, *op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> Quoted by Francis Schmitt, *Caecilia* Editorial, Vol. 84, No. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Gastoué, Review of Mocquereau's *Le nombre musical grégorien*, *Tribune de St. Gervais*, Paris, Vol. XIV, p. 259.

<sup>29</sup> The second is the Instruction of 1958; see chapter VIII.

executed uniformly in every respect. Moreover, it is well known that the Pontifical Commission, charged with compiling the liturgical books, had expressly intended from the beginning and with the open approval of the Holy See to mark the single melodies of the Vatican edition in that particular rhythm. Finally, the approbation which the Sacred Congregation of Rites bestowed upon the Roman Gradual by order of the Holy Father extends not only to all the particular rules by which the Vatican edition has been made up, but includes also the rhythmical form of the melodies, which, consequently, is inseparable from the edition itself. Therefore, in the present Gregorian reform, it has always been and still is absolutely foreign to the mind of the Holy Father and of the Sacred Congregation of Rites to leave to the discretion of the individuals such an important and essential element as the rhythm of the melodies of the Church.<sup>30</sup>

This teaching, that the *Vaticana* is the official version of the chant, to be used in all Roman churches, but that certain private rhythmic signs may be allowed (tolerated), was reaffirmed in a Declaration by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, dated April 11, 1911. In answer to a question as to whether Bishops might approve Gregorian Chant books which contained the melodies, accurately reproduced, but with the privately added rhythmic signs, the Sacred Congregation of Rites, reinforcing its previous declaration of January 25, 1911, replied:

Ordinaries in their own Dioceses may give the Imprimatur to editions of these books made for scholae cantorum, and furnished with rhythmical signs, as they are called; provided it is understood that the other regulations of the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites regarding the restoration of Gregorian Chant have been observed. His Holiness Pope Pius X ratified and approved this resolution when it was submitted to him by the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.<sup>31</sup>

The quarrel at first, as is clear, was regarding melody, not rhythm. The Solesmes attack was first aimed at the *Vaticana* selection of melodic variants in manuscripts of various dates. But the discussion of melody inevitably involved the rhythm, for it is impossible to consider melodic contours apart from their rhythmic elements, and when the Solesmes rhythmic theories were imposed upon the traditional Gregorian melodies, the controversy assumed more definite shape. Meanwhile, the principle that the Vatican edition was official for the entire Church, and that the added Solesmes rhythmic signs were "tolerated," if not approved, was ever-more firmly established, due to the decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites and the ever-increasing development of a standard of chant practice throughout the universal Church.

<sup>30</sup> "Authentic Interpretation Regarding the Rhythm of the Liturgical Chant According to the Vatican Edition," Letter of Cardinal Martinelli, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, to Monsignor Francis Xavier Haberl, Domestic Prelate and President of the Association of St. Caecilia in Germany, Ratisbon, Bavaria. Dated Rome, February 18, 1910. Reprinted in *The White List of the Society of St. Gregory of America* (New York: Society of St. Gregory, 1954, fourth edition), p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> "Declaration on the Vatican Edition of the Gregorian Liturgical Books and Its Reproduction," Sacred Congregation of Rites, April 11, 1911. Reprinted in *The White List of the Society of St. Gregory of America* (New York: Society of St. Gregory, fourth edition, 1954), p. 12.

## Chapter VII

# THE RISE OF MENSURALISM AND GROWING OPPOSITION TO SOLESMES

(1900-1950)

Musicological and paleographic studies in the first half of this century uncovered a great deal of information about the golden age of the chant, if no positive indication of how it was actually performed. New theories were offered by almost every student of the problem, and it seemed that no two mensuralists could agree on anything, except that the chant was not made up of notes of equal time value.

### 1. THE THEORIES OF GASTOUÉ

Amadée Gastoué, the noted musicologist (1873-1943), became editor of the *Tribune de St. Gervais* in Paris after the death of Charles Bordes,<sup>1</sup> and over the years, published a number of books on Gregorian art and history.<sup>2</sup> Apel has named him as one of the most outspoken critics of Dom Mocquereau.<sup>3</sup> In *Les origines*, Gastoué wrote that Mocquereau's examples of chant practice in the manuscripts carry no weight at all, because for every example he cites, an even larger example indicating the opposite practice or indifference in the matter, exists. The Gregorian composers, said Gastoué, followed whatever procedure seemed best to them under given circumstances, without regard to "rules". In *Les anciens*, the author transcribed all the neums as puncta, somewhat in the manner of Pothier.

*L'art grégorien* is one of the most fascinating of all histories of plain chant. The chapter on Gregory and the spread of the Roman chant is of especial importance because of the author's attempts to

<sup>1</sup> Dom Dominic Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant* (New York: F. Pustet, third edition, 1925), p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Les anciens chants liturgiques* (Grenoble: Brotel, 1902); *L'art grégorien* (Paris: Librairie Felix Alean, 1920); *Cours théorique et pratique de plain-chant romain grégorien* (Paris: Bureau de la Schola Cantorum, 1904); *L'église et la musique* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1936); *Les origines du chant romain* (Paris: Piccard et Fils, 1907); *Musique et liturgie* (Lyon: Janin frères, 1913); *La vie musicale de l'église* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1929).

<sup>3</sup> Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), p. 128, fn. 3.



date many of the chant melodies. His comments on the zenith of the chant, its decline and the eventual restoration are also valuable. Gastoué was evidently the first to distinguish between the Solesmes doctrines of Pothier and the "new school" or neo-Solesmes of Mocquereau, and he aligned himself with Pothier. Gastoué believed that it is not possible to determine for certain whether the chant should be measured or free in rhythm, for some chants (such as hymns) are, by their nature, quite metrical, while others (such as some introits, offertories, communions, and responsories) although having free phrases, seem to have metrical cadences.

## 2. FLEURY AND THE EPISEMA

Father Alexandre Fleury, S.J., (d. 1913), emphasized the importance of the episema in the chant manuscripts. In his theory, the horizontal episema (considered a sign of lengthening in the St. Gall manuscripts), and the Romanus letters were indications of exactly doubled note values, and the letter "c" (for *celeriter*) was a sign for a halved note value. In other words, all the notes in chant, according to this mensuralist, were quarter-notes, except for the prolonged notes (indicated by episemas and Romanian letters, i.e. half-notes), and for the shortened notes (eighth-notes) indicated by the sign "celeriter."<sup>4</sup> According to Apel, the three note values are combined according to the principles of metrical feet.<sup>5</sup>

## 3. HUGO RIEMANN AND FOUR-SQUARE RHYTHM

The studies of Hugo Riemann (1849-1919) convinced him that all chant should be transcribed into a strict 4-4 metre, with phrases of four measures, on the basis of the text, arbitrarily forced into Ambrosian hymn metre.<sup>6</sup> He also believed that Gregorian chant contains a great deal of pentatonicism,<sup>7</sup> and that the normal order of chant phrases is arsis-thesis, and not thesis-arsis.<sup>8</sup>

## 4. A MANUAL BY JOHNER

The writings of Dom Dominic Johner, O.S.B. (1874-1954), indicate an equalist-accentualist position according to the tenets of Dom

4 Fleury, *Über Choralrhythmus* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1907); "The Old Manuscripts of Two Gregorian Schools," *The Messenger*, XLVI, 1906, p. 344. Fleury did not concern himself with the vertical episema (the Solesmes "ictus"), since this sign is not found in the manuscripts.

5 Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

6 *Geschichte der Musiktheorie im IX-XIX Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Max Hesses Verlag, 1920); *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1920-23), I, ii.

7 Cited by Yasser, "Medieval Quartal Harmony," *The Musical Quarterly*, XXIII, 1937, pp. 170, 333; XXIV, 1938, p. 351.

8 Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1940), p. 142, fn. 9. Reese cited Riemann's articles on Greek music and its possible influence on Western music, but cautioned the reader against the mensuralist's opinions on Byzantine rhythm and such other theories as those dealing with troubador-trouvere rhythm. (Reese, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42; p. 429; p. 85, fn. 25; p. 209, fn. 41). He considered Riemann's *Geschichte der Musiktheorie im IX-XIX Jahrhundert* as important chiefly as a comprehensive work on the writing of the medieval theorists.

Pothier.<sup>9</sup> In *A New School of Gregorian Chant*, Johner made no positive statement of a position, since he accepted the Vatican edition as a rhythmic edition and supported its rationale.

The book is especially noteworthy as a manual of chant, perhaps one of the finest ever written. Johner discussed such elements as notation, the neums, rhythm, the modes, the liturgical services, psalmody, the antiphons, hymns, ordinary and variable Mass chants, and special liturgical feasts. The second part of the book discussed the history of the chant, neum notation, modal theory, liturgy & the plainsong, the structure of Gregorian melody, emotional implications of the intervals in Gregorian melody, the accompaniment of chant, and the methods of rendering chant.

## 5. PETER WAGNER

Dr. Peter Wagner was at first a proponent of the Pothier-style of free rhythm. Later, the distinguished musicologist favored measured note values without metre, ascribing a fixed metrical system to each neum.<sup>10</sup> Wagner's monumental study, *Die Gregorianische Melodien*<sup>11</sup> was an incomparable contribution to the literature about plainsong. Volume one dealt with the origin and development of the forms of liturgical chant to the end of the Middle Ages; volume two considered the manuscripts of liturgical music, their contents, and a study of Gregorian forms; and volume three explained Gregorian theory. Wagner considered the early neum, the *accentus gravis*, to be a variant of the virga as it appears in the St. Gall manuscripts; Wagner called it *virga jacens* (horizontal virga), and interpreted it as a sign for length, that is, as a quarter-note. This doubled note value was increased to triple value (a dotted quarter-note) by the episema.

Wagner's *Gregorianische Formenlehre* included much material on the principles that govern the relationship between the Latin textual accent and the Gregorian music. He discovered occasional "misplaced" melismas in the chant, and observed that this procedure of emphasizing a secondary, rather than the main, syllable of a word caused difficulty for the modern musician because of its seeming violation of "the supreme law of all vocal music"—that regarding the unity of the word and the music.<sup>12</sup> However, Wagner concluded, the practice was understandable in connection with the early medieval rhythmic system of various long and short note values; when the groups of tones were performed in equal note values, however, the practice lost its justification. Willi Apel has commented:

9 *A New School of Gregorian Chant* (New York: Fustet, 1925); *The Chants of the Vatican Graduale* (tr. Monks of St. John's Abbey) Collegeville, St. John's Abbey Press, 1940.

10 *Neumenkunde*, first edition, 1905.

11 *Einführung in die Gregorianische Melodien* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Hartel, 1895-1921). Three volumes in various editions. Vol. I was reprinted in English in *Coecilia*, Vols. 84-86 as *Introduction to the Gregorian Melodies*. Vol. II is *Neumenkunde*; Vol. III, *Gregorianische Formenlehre*.

12 *Gregorianische Formenlehre*, pp. 291-293.

It is difficult to see how this change of rhythm — assuming that it took place — could affect the picture. There is no other way of dealing with it than to admit frankly that the "supreme law of vocal music" had no validity, certainly no universal validity, in Gregorian chant. . . Whether the "barbaric" melismas in Gregorian chant result from (the intention to counteract, rather than over-emphasize the text) or from plain indifference, it is impossible to say.<sup>13</sup>

Wagner believed that the melismatic chant ante-dated the syllabic chant, although in the fourth and fifth centuries, the degree of richness may not have been the same as that of the sixth century solo chants.

Gustave Reese cited Wagner's important writings on the influence of Byzantine liturgy on Roman chant,<sup>14</sup> and the musical illustrations in *Neumenkunde* comparing melodic figures as they appear in the *Vaticana* and in Italian, English, French, and German versions.<sup>15</sup> Significant, too, was Wagner's evidence for his theory that the virga was a long note and the punctum a short note, and that medieval neums containing two or more notes represented metrical feet.<sup>16</sup> Some idea of the importance and scope of Dr. Wagner's contribution may be gained from the bibliography of this book.

#### 6. SOLESMES' MOST FORMIDABLE OPPONENT

"The most formidable opponent Solesmes ever encountered"<sup>17</sup> was the French Benedictine Dom Jules Jeannin (1866-1933). He was also, according to Reese, "the greatest authority on Syrian chant."<sup>18</sup> Jeannin's major contribution to the Gregorian controversy was the *Étude sur le rythme grégorien*.<sup>19</sup>

In this work, he concluded that the measure and the rhythm in chant are independent of each other. The Vatican edition of the chant, he wrote, was practically based on a double-method: that of Pothier's oratorical rhythm and that of Mocquereau's musical and natural rhythm. But, in any case, both were wrong, for there are two basic note-values in plainchant: long notes (the equivalent of our quarter-notes), and short notes (eighth-notes). These are arranged in a free

13 Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 289. Apel pays great tribute to Wagner's contribution; see pp. 324, 362, 367, 390, 406, etc.

14 *Die Gregorianische Melodien*, I, p. 44 *et seq.*

15 Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

16 *Die Gregorianische Melodien*, I, p. 396 *et seq.* Another of Wagner's important contributions was his study of the medieval repertory of the Short Responses; Apel (*op. cit.*, p. 245) states that this brief but informative study summarizes virtually all that is known about this repertory. Of perhaps more incidental interest is Wagner's count of the ordinary and variable chants of the Mass throughout the year; of the 631 chants of the Mass (of his time); the texts of 606 are from the Bible, and of these, 439 are from the Psalms.

17 J. Robert Carroll, "The Forest And The Trees", *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 2, p. 89.

18 Reese, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-75. Dom Jeannin's most important writings on Syrian chant include the following: *Mémoires liturgiques Syriennes et Chaldaïques* in collaboration with Julien Puyade and Anselme Ghibas-Lassale; Vol. I, 1924; Vol. II, 1928; "Le chant liturgique syrien," in *Journal Asiatique*, Xme Serie, XX, 1912, 295 and 380; and XIme Serie, II, 191, 365; and "L'Octoechos syrien. Étude historique, étude musicale," *Oriens Christianus*, New Series III, 1913, 82, 277; this latest, also, in collaboration with Julien Puyade.

19 *Étude sur le rythme grégorien* (Lyon: Étienne Glippe, 1926).

succession of measures, in each of which the tonic verbal accent occupies the preferential place.



There are really two studies in the *Étude sur le rythme grégorien*. In the first, "Double Direction of Movement," Jeannin noted that the Greeks distinguished between two kinds of rhythmic movement, that of rising and falling (*i.e.* arsis-thesis) and that of falling and rising (thesis-arsis).<sup>20</sup> He also discussed the difference between Riemann's meaning of the word *measure* and the ancient meaning of that word, and Riemann's claim that the ictus naturally corresponded to the beginning of the measure.

Jeannin quoted Mocquereau to the effect that the arsis-thesis movement is the essential element, in fact, the soul of the chant rhythm, the very rhythm itself.<sup>21</sup> But, he continued, citing many examples, if it is true that rhythm is only a rising and a falling, how does one account for the myriad examples that are a falling and a rising? Mocquereau claimed that the problem was solved by the kind of preceding movement. Jeannin, however, disagreed, stating that the *two* kinds of movement must be conceded. He quoted Lhoumeau's solution as distinguishing between metrical accent and rhythmical accent, and also Potiron's "masculine" and "feminine" rhythmic movement. In chant, Jeannin wrote, the action produced by a rising rhythmic accent is replaced by the rising tonic accent, intensified by the following metrical accent.<sup>22</sup>

The second study was entitled "La mesure dans le chant liturgique et l'âge d'or grégorien." In his other writings, Jeannin wrote, he proved that liturgical oriental music, both Jewish and Christian, is based on one kind of *measure* of origin. The principal mensural systems of interpreting these measures involve two ways of considering rhythm: the *neum-time*, representing each neum as a time value, and favored by Houdard, Fleischer, Bernoulli, and others; and the *neum-foot*, championed mostly by Peter Wagner.<sup>23</sup>

Regarding the two kinds of note values, long and short, Jeannin quoted the 10th century theorist, Hartker and other medieval theorists regarding actual medieval practice. He also discussed the various manuscript signs, and criticized Mocquereau for concerning himself with the manuscripts only, and not with the theoretical evidence of the time as well. All the theoretical evidence, according to Jeannin, indicates the fact of the two basic note values.

There was extensive discussion of the episema and its functions, Jeannin noting that the vertical episema is a Solesmes sign and is not found in the manuscripts. The horizontal episema signified a doubled

20 As explained by Riemann, these would become, in practice, an iambus  and a trochee . This, however, does not take into account the difference between feet and metres.

21 Jeannin, *op. cit.*, p. 16, quoting *Le nombre*, I, p. 98.

22 Jeannin, *op. cit.*, p. 23, fn. 1; p. 26; *et passim*.

23 Cf. Wagner's theories of the virga and the punctum, the virga jacens, etc.

note value to him, and he cited "errors" in the Solesmes transcriptions of the episemas and neums.<sup>24</sup>

Jeannin sympathized with the Solesmes desire for an adequate rhythmic edition of the chant, but stated that the Solesmes editors themselves cannot tell what the exact value of the rhythmic indications of the manuscripts is. One must either accept the fact of doubled note values (as cited by the medieval theorists) which would transform the Solesmes ictus theory, or else render the chant impossible to sing because of a great number of episemas.

Jeannin's treatment of the oriscus was lengthy and enlightening. He considered it essentially an embellishment, perhaps rendered as a turn or a trill.<sup>25</sup>

He quarreled with the Solesmes interpretation of the chant manuscripts; the Benedictine editions are not faithful editions of the chant, Jeannin stated, because they do not follow the manuscript indications, especially in the matter of the Latin accent. He criticized Mocquereau's refusal to consider the Latin tonic accent the determining factor in musical accent ("absolute verbal cacophony"), but found the Vatican edition of the chant unsatisfactory, too, stating that it was based more on the "ages of chant decadence" than on the "golden age" of the chant.<sup>26</sup> The appendices included several of Mocquereau's replies to Jeannin's anti-Solesmes essays, chiefly those dealing with the interpretation of the neums.<sup>27</sup>

Apel cited an article by Jeannin, "Du si bémol grégorien," in which the mensuralist pointed to numerous contradictions between equally excellent sources.<sup>28</sup>

Reese wrote that most modern mensuralists agree with Jeannin that the chant had only two kinds of notes, long and short, and not three, as Dechevrens and other early mensuralists believed. They also agree with Jeannin's claim that the episema and the Romanian letters in the manuscripts are not indications of rhythmic nuances, but are rather precise directions, the episema and the letters *t*, *x*, and *a* requiring the doubling of the note value, and *c* and *m* reminding the singer of the exact observance of the long or short note.<sup>29</sup> Jeannin insisted that the punctum and the virga were equal in duration, since the episema and other rhythmic signs accounted for the strictly proportional differences in the time values of the notes.

<sup>24</sup> Jeannin, *op. cit.*, p. 71 et seq.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178 et seq.

<sup>27</sup> Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 150, pointed out a major error in Jeannin's work: "Jeannin concluded from the occasional employment of the word *tabula* in medieval writings on plainsong that castanets were used to accompany the singing of the chant. This view, which, if correct, would provide evidence tending to weigh against Mocquereau's claims, is based on a misinterpretation of Du Cange of the word *tabula*, which refers simply to the cover (often of ivory) of the chant books.

<sup>28</sup> *Tribune de St. Gervais*, Paris, XXV, 1928, pp. 143, 175. Cited by Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

<sup>29</sup> Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

## 7. DIVINI CULTUS SANCTITATEM

The position of Pope Pius X regarding the chant and the liturgical restoration was reaffirmed in 1928 by Pope Pius XI in his Apostolic Constitution, *Divini Cultus Sanctitatem*. The Pope recounted the legislation of his predecessor and cited the progress that had been made in the liturgical and the Gregorian revival. Then he wrote:

... And the Gregorian Chant which is to be used in every church, of whatever order, is the text which, revised according to the ancient manuscripts, has been authentically published by the Church from the Vatican Press.<sup>30</sup>

## 8. SOWA AND THE ANTIPHONS

In Germany, Heinrich Sowa worked on a rendition of the Antiphons in triple metre, made up essentially of an alternation of long and short notes in the manner of the first rhythmic mode.<sup>31</sup> The notes were grouped  $\overset{\cdot}{\text{d}} \overset{\cdot}{\text{d}}$  or  $\overset{\cdot}{\text{d}} \overset{\cdot}{\text{d}}$ , without bar lines. Sowa's book also included an eleventh-century treatise which has been preserved in the Codex lat. 1492 of the library of the University of Leipzig. The first part is a tonary of antiphons, some of which receive commentaries indicating modal changes. The tonary is followed by a short treatise, in which the author distinguished between *transformatio*, a change into the final of another mode, and *transpositio*, a change into a cofinal, caused by the lack of a semi-tone. Apel referred to this "transformation" as "modal ambiguity."<sup>32</sup>

The first part of Sowa's volume dealt with the tonal studies. He used two kinds of note-values, quarter-notes for the short notes and half-notes for the long notes. His book also dealt with early organum, especially early examples in the antiphons. In the second part of the book, the rhythmic study, Sowa cited various chant theorists and their ideas of rhythm.

In "Textvariationen zur Musica Enchiriadis," Sowa examined the variations in the manuscript texts of the *Musica Enchiriadis*.<sup>33</sup>

## 9. DOM LUCIEN DAVID

Dom Lucien David (1875-??) was a Benedictine follower of the teaching of Dom Pothier. In *Le rythme verbal et musical dans le*

<sup>30</sup> *Divini Cultus Sanctitatem*, December 20, 1928, Section IV, Choral Offices. (Reprinted in *The White List of the Society of St. Gregory of America*, fourth edition, 1954), p. 20. The last four words of this paragraph seem to ignore completely the possibility of any "privately introduced" (i.e. Solesmes) rhythmic signs.

<sup>31</sup> Heinrich Sowa, *Quellen zur Transformation der Antiphonen: Tonar und Rhythmusstudien* (Der Barenreiter-Verlag zu Kassel, 1935).

<sup>32</sup> Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

<sup>33</sup> "Textvariationen zur Musica Enchiriadis," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, (XVII, 1935, p. 194 et seq.). Cited by Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 126. Sowa's *Ein Anonymer Glossierter Mensuraltraktat* (1279) (Königsberg: E. Steinbacher, 1930), included an extensive foreword in which the author illustrated such matters as the ligatures, the long and short modes, abbreviations, hocketing, and double organum. A very good table of ligatures was included, and three basic note values, quarter-notes, half-notes, and dotted half-notes were used.



*chant romain*,<sup>34</sup> he re-iterated the Pothier principles, although Apel felt that he did not do so very clearly.<sup>35</sup> The Gregorian music itself and its intensity, according to David, are the real elements dictating Gregorian accent. As director of the periodical, *Revue du chant grégorien*, David had great influence in the dissemination of chant theory.

The first part of *Le rythme* was concerned with verbal rhythm. Dom David discussed intensity and rhythm, Latin pronunciation in the classical period, the elements of duration, melody, and intensity, and the words "rhythm" and "intensity" in ancient tradition and in philosophy. In his treatment of rhythm and musicians, he noted errors by some performers of the chant, in the matter of harmonized accompaniments, and quoted such musicians as Mathis-Lussy, d'Indy, Bertelin, and Dumesnil on rhythm and accent. David claimed that the Latin words themselves have an arsis-thesis effect; the rhythm of the words *Deus Dominus*, for example, is different from that of the words *Dominus Deus*. Therefore, some of Mocquereau's theories, especially those concerning ictus, are clearly wrong. David agreed with Mocquereau, however, that the normal order is arsis-thesis.

Part two of David's book was entitled "Le rythme d'intensité et la chant grégorien." Regarding verbal and musical accentuation, he wrote that the element of intensity which dominates the organization of the rhythm in all western vocal music is the same for the Gregorian melodies. He accepted the Solesmes principles of binary and ternary groupings. The final section of the book dealt with accent and duration.

In an essay, "Les signes rythmiques d'allongement et la tradition grégorienne authentique,"<sup>36</sup> David advanced the theory that the Romanian letters of the St. Gall manuscripts called for a type of chant performance that conformed not to its golden age, but rather to a transitory period in its history.<sup>37</sup>

#### 10. THE ABBÉ DELORME

Dom Gregory Murray, in a review, referred to a periodical entitled *La musique d'église*, which published, in 1934, a series of articles by the Abbé G. Delorme. These articles, entitled *La question rythmique grégorienne*, were of enormous importance, according to Murray, for they provided the vital clue to the problem of the authentic chant rhythm.<sup>38</sup>

These articles examined the notation of some of the more important chant manuscripts; the investigation was limited to the single

<sup>34</sup> Dom Lucien David, *Le rythme verbal et musical dans le chant romain* (Ottawa, Les Editions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1933).

<sup>35</sup> Apel, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>36</sup> *Revue du chant grégorien*, XLII, 1938, p. 180; XLIII, 1939, 1, 38, 78, 111, 142.

<sup>37</sup> Cited by Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 140, fn. 1.

<sup>38</sup> *The Downside Review*, Downside Abbey, England, January, 1959.

category of notational signs dealing with single notes. Delorme discovered a similarity in the notation of the melodies in the Metz, Nonatolian, and Aquitanian manuscripts. With few exceptions, whenever the same melody was found in two or more of the notations, two distinct signs were used for a single note.

The two signs cannot have a melodic significance, wrote Murray, for these five reasons:

- (1) many points indicate high sounds in the Laon 239;
- (2) more tractuli than points are used in the same manuscript for low sounds;
- (3) consecutive sounds of equal pitch are indicated both by tractuli and by points;
- (4) both signs are used for any degree of the scale;
- (5) the same indifference to pitch is found in both the Nonatolian and Aquitanian notations.

Murray concluded that any hesitation in attributing a rhythmic significance to these signs is dispelled when reference is made to the St. Gall manuscripts—a fourth notational system:

The episema . . . corresponds again and again to the Laon tractulus, but nowhere to the Laon point. Moreover, the passages in St. Gall marked with "c" show a general agreement with the Laon points.

What conclusions are we to draw from these remarkable facts, except that there were two note values in the Gregorian Chant, a long and a short, (as all the contemporary literary evidence indicates,) and that these two note values are shown in each of the different notations by two distinct signs?<sup>39</sup>

#### 11. THE ANTIPHON STUDIES OF JAMMERS

Ewald Jammers (1897-?), whose study of the antiphons in the Codex Hartker led him to conclude that, based on the neumatic symbols, all the antiphons are essentially in 4-4 metre, is an important recent mensuralist.

In *Der Gregorianische Rhythmus*,<sup>40</sup> Jammers noted that Pius X had called for the reproduction of the melodies in the manner in which they were first artistically conceived, and asked rhetorically: what was the rhythm of the chant? Mocquereau's theories were wrong, he said, since all the evidence has pointed to a mensural interpretation of the melodies, and he presented paleographic evidence for his work on the neums. The book included an analysis of some of the melodies, especially of the Introit antiphons; the appendix also contained many musical examples.

*Die Essener Neumenhandschriften der Landes- und Stadt-Bibliothek Dusseldorf*,<sup>41</sup> was a discussion of the codices, their con-

<sup>39</sup> Murray, *op. cit.*

<sup>40</sup> *Der Gregorianische Rhythmus* (Strassburg: Heitz & Co., 1937).

<sup>41</sup> *Die Essener Neumenhandschriften der Landes- und Stadt-Bibliothek Dusseldorf* (Alopp Henn Verlag Ratingen, 1952).

tents, with explanations and examples, of the manuscripts in the Dusseldorf library. It included several pages of beautifully reproduced manuscripts.

*Anfänge der Abendlandischen Musik*<sup>42</sup> dealt mostly with the organum of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Included were many examples of tropes, and also of the *conductus*, and there was an excellent section on organum in the *Musica Enchiridis*, with examples in transcription.

Jammers concluded that there was no real fixed Gregorian tradition, but rather various traditions, such as those of Guéranger, Pothier, Dechevrens, Houdard, Wagner, Jeannin, etc. He quoted the manuscripts and the medieval theorists to prove that the evidence indicates a mensural rendering of the chant. The *Anfänge* also contained charts on the Gloria melodies, which were analyzed. Many Sanctus melodies were transcribed in mensural notation, as well, and there was an analysis of "tradition" in some of the Gregorian anthems.

### 12. VOS-MEEÛS

The Abbe' Joseph Vos was a Belgian musicologist of the Diocese of Liège. He studied the problem of chant rhythm for almost fifty years, but died (in 1945) without having completed his work or published his studies. He willed his manuscripts to Dom Francis de Meeûs, O.S.B., of the Abbey of St-Andrè in Belgium. Dom Meeûs has been at work on the revision and publication of the Vos studies. One of these appeared in the *Acta Musicologica*,<sup>43</sup> and a presentation of some of the essentials of Vos' theory of chant reconstruction was made by Meeûs in a letter to the editor of *Caecilia*.<sup>44</sup>

Vos was a mensuralist, but disagreed with the concepts of Jeannin, which, he suggested, were over-simplified. Each chant melody, he decided, contains a number of important tones which serve as "modal functions." These tones are the central part of the measures, and the problem in chant restoration is merely to locate them. The foundation and essence of chant rhythm, he said, is a musical proportion between melodic motives, which are to be sung in a rather slow tempo. By finding the notes with "modal function" in each Gregorian melody and bringing them into relief, the question of reconciliation between the verbal and the musical accent is solved, wrote Meeûs. This restoration utilizes several kinds of note values: half notes, dotted quarter-notes, quarter-notes, dotted eighth-notes, and eighth-notes, plus occasional double-dotted notes.

42 *Anfänge der Abendlandischen Musik* (Strasbourg: Librairie Heitz, 1955).

43 "The Problem of Gregorian Rhythm," *Acta Musicologica*, XXVIII, fasc. IX, 1956.

44 Vol. 84, No. 4, December, 1957. Dom Gregory Murray, in "Gregorian Rhythm in the Gregorian Centuries: The Literary Evidence" (*Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 3), cited an article by Vos-Meeûs, "L'introduction de la diaphonie et la rupture de la tradition grégorienne au XIe siècle," (*Sacris Erudiri*, VII, 1955, p. 177 et seq.) which defended the thesis that the equalist system of chant performance came about because of the spread of organum.

### 13. MARIE PIERIK

Marie Pierik has been influential as a popular historian writing about the music of the Church. Her books<sup>45</sup> indicate a sympathy for the equalist-accentualist position of Pothier; she was one of the first American writers to follow Gastoué in differentiating between the Solesmes school of Pothier and the neo-Solesmes school of Mocquereau. Pierik considered the equalist theories of Pothier to have been the vital contribution of the Solesmes era, and the rhythmic signs and editings which now distinguish the Solesmes editions to have been Mocquereau's finest contribution.

### 14. GUSTAVE REESE

Gustave Reese, in *Music in the Middle Ages*,<sup>46</sup> acknowledged the "brilliant efforts" of the Solesmes monks in the chant restoration, giving Guéranger credit for providing the impetus for the new edition of the Gregorian melodies through his liturgical studies. He credited Pothier with the restoration of the melodic outlines of the chant, and Mocquereau with the attempt at a restoration of the rhythm and for making available to scholars the *Paléographie musicale*.

His list of the medieval theorists (c. 500-1100) whose writings are often cited in the current controversy for evidence as to how the chant was actually sung is important, as is his reminder that the manuscripts have only two kinds of markings, the episema and the Romanian letters.<sup>47</sup>

Solesmes scholars have made it difficult to ascertain just what they mean by an ictus, wrote Reese; after failing to find a clear definition in all of Solesmes writing, he quoted a dissembling, non-definition by Dom Suñol, as typical:

The rhythmical ictus is simply a dip of the voice, an alighting place sought by the rhythm at intervals of every two or three notes in order to renew or sustain its flight until it reaches its final resting place. The ictus must be divorced from any idea of force or lengthening out. It is a common fault to assimilate it to the accent of the words and give it their value. In itself it may be strong or weak; it only gains its dynamic or quantitative value from the note which happens to correspond to it. If the ictus chances to be strong by its position, it does not appropriate the intensity thus bestowed upon it; its stress extends to the whole of the compound time which it commands, and it keeps only the function of an alighting or resting place. It can be readily understood that this must be so in order to safeguard the unity of the compound beat.<sup>48</sup>

45 *Gregorian Chant Analyzed and Studied* (St. Meinrad, Indiana: Grail Publications, 1951); *The Song of the Church* (New York: Longmans, Green, & Company, 1947); *The Spirit of Gregorian Chant* (Boston: McLaughlin and Reilly, 1939); *Dramatic & Symbolic Elements in Gregorian Chant* (New York: Desclée, 1964).

46 Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1940).

47 *Ibid.*, pp. 123-127 and 140.

48 Dom Suñol, O.S.B., *Text Book of Gregorian Chant* (English tr. of *Metodo completo de Canto gregoriano*, first edition, 1905), p. 73. Quoted by Reese.

The idea of grouping rhythmic units without stress, as this definition seems to indicate, is puzzling, wrote Reese; perhaps the ictus is really a mental division by the performer of beats of equal force into groups of two or three. It is up to the physio-psychologist, then, to settle the problem of how the ictus is communicated in performance, since, according to Solesmes, it is neither a stress, a shortening, nor a prolongation, but is definitely perceptible!<sup>49</sup>

Although Solesmes writers agree that the Romanus letters *p*, *f*, and *k*, are used in the manuscripts to indicate intensity, their editions contain *no* sign for intensity at all. Mocquereau contended that intensity existed in chant only as gradual *crescendi* and *diminuendi*; Reese pointed out that the letters in question stand over individual neums in the manuscripts, and that Solesmes scholars themselves agree that the signs affected only the notes which they accompanied.<sup>50</sup>

Some mensuralists have contended that the chant was sung, up to the twelfth century, in irregularly grouped measures, the first note of each measure receiving a stress; when, about the twelfth century, organum came into greater use, it was necessary that the long and short notes of chant be equalized so that the singers could keep together. It was, of course, in the twelfth century that staff notation became widespread. Reese suggested that the monks of Solesmes, in their chant restoration, used the manuscripts of this and later periods, since the intervals of the earlier, staffless neums could be determined only by comparing them with later versions on staves. Solesmes then concluded that the prevalent equality in note values, indicated by thirteenth-and-fourteenth-century writers, had been true of Gregorian rhythm from the beginning.

The mensuralists deny that this equality of note values was the authentic Gregorian rhythm, and present weighty evidence of this from the theoretical treatises of the fourth-to-twelfth centuries. Furthermore, the mensuralists claim, the episemas and the Romanian letters in the manuscripts were not indications of rhythmic nuances that varied according to the context, but rather were precise directions, the episema and the letters *t*, *x*, and *a* requiring that a note value be doubled; the letters *c* and *m* reminding the singer of the exact observance of the long or short note.

The mensuralists agree with Solesmes and with the accentualists that plainsong rhythm was free; they believe, however, that it was a rhythm formed by freely-mixed groups ("measures"), not necessarily of equal length, rather than by a regularly recurring stress.<sup>51</sup> Reese believed that the mensuralists have an impressive amount of historical evidence on their side, although the Solesmes editions at least do agree with each other in method, an advantage not possessed by the various mensural transcriptions. At any rate,

49 Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 143.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 144, fn. 19.

... assuming that any of the three (schools of chant theory) are really on the right path . . . there is no need, in the present state of our knowledge, to reject any of the three views as wholly wrong.<sup>52</sup>

Perhaps, wrote Reese, the three modern points of view all have some historical justification; perhaps the early chant rhythm was not definitively systemized for universal use. Since chant was sung by groups of people, some method had to be devised to keep them together; each monastery or group of monasteries may have evolved a method of its own, simply as a matter of practical performance, rather than as a recognition of rhythm as a standardized musical element.

The Romanian signs may have represented a local usage that in time gained fairly wide application, and they may provide an indication of a transition in Western music generally towards rhythmic systematizing, achieved, only after long groping, in the 13th century.<sup>53</sup>

Whatever the original plainsong rhythm may have been, Reese agreed that at one time, perhaps when organum flourished, Gregorian Chant really was sung with equal time values, and the mensuralists may correctly place this "decline in authenticity" as recently as the twelfth century. But this "decline", if judged solely on the grounds of art and beauty, does not lead to anything less valid than what had gone before, said Reese; even if the Solesmes views should ultimately be shown to be historically unfounded, they may, because of the beauty of their results, prove that the investigation and the misunderstanding of the early medieval rhythm has been worthwhile. Still, while admiring the beauty of the Solesmes interpretations, one must remember that they are historically suspect.<sup>54</sup>

### 15. JOSEPH GOGNIAT'S LITTLE GRAMMAR

Joseph Gogniat, a friend and pupil of Peter Wagner, was a follower of the accentualist school of Dom Pothier, and was opposed to the theories of Mocquereau.<sup>55</sup> His main thesis was that the Vatican edition of the chant is a rhythmic edition, and that the Vatican preface, together with the traditional chant notation, is all that is necessary for the correct performance; no other rhythmic signs need to be added. He bolstered his thesis with quotations from the decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Gogniat offered a careful explanation of the Gregorian notation and of simple, composite, and ornamental neums; and because the

52 *Ibid.*, p. 146.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

54 *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

55 Gogniat, *Little Grammar of Gregorian Chant* (tr. by Ch. Dreisoerner, S.M.) (Fribourg, Switzerland: Oeuvre St. Canisius, 1939).



*Vaticana* clearly indicates whatever rhythmic signs are necessary, the Solesmes dots and dashes are not needed. The rhythm is based on the accent of the Latin language and the arrangement of neums, wrote Gogniat. The four elements of the rhythm are the Latin accent, the accent of the neum, the *mora vocis*, and the bar lines. The rhythm may be binary and ternary, according to Solesmes theory, but there are occasions, especially in syllabic chant, where there is a longer succession of unaccented syllables, and therefore there may be as many as four or five notes before another accent is reached.<sup>56</sup>

The introduction to Gogniat's book consists of a letter from the then Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, who became Pope Pius XII. This letter indicates, at the least, very high ecclesiastical approval of the Gogniat theories.

#### 16. CODETTA

The half-century herein discussed might be labeled a time of action-reaction. The Papal efforts to provide an authentic and artistically restored chant for the whole Church were attacked by the Solesmes restorers, who were then criticized by the defenders of the Papal attempts. An official Vatican chant did become a reality, only to be rejected by various mensuralists who, having gone their own way, continued paleographic and musical studies; and by Solesmes, as well as by vested interests among the music publishers. Solesmes gradually became a renowned center for chant study, and the Solesmes editions gained a virtual monopoly in many parts of the western world. The mensural theorists, attacking Solesmes with vigor, venom, and historical evidence, seem to have ended the five decades ahead of the other schools of chant theory. But for all their research and scholarship, and for all Solesmes' publicity and influence, the fact remains that the official Vatican version was a Pothier (accentualist) document. And it IS official!

<sup>56</sup> An example would be the text "sudarium et vestes" in the Sequence for Easter.

### Chapter VIII

## FURTHER SOLESMES CONTROVERSY AND THE SPREAD OF MENSURAL THOUGHT (1950 TO THE PRESENT)

The years since 1950 have not brought a definite solution to the problem of the rhythmic interpretation of the chant; research and study have resulted in the publication of many important works on the subject, but conclusions seem to be far from definitive solution.

#### 1. CURT SACHS JOINS THE MENSURALISTS

The eminent musicologist Curt Sachs refused, in *Rhythm & Tempo*, to recount "the valiant jousts" of the mensuralists vs. the accentualists, but, on the basis of the testimony of the medieval theorists, he unhesitatingly aligned himself with the mensural school. Wrote Sachs:

The outstanding trait of Gregorian cantillation, mentioned all through the Middle Ages, though neglected today, is the mingling of short and longer notes. The contemporary writers insist again and again on a careful distinction between the two values . . .<sup>1</sup>

The chant, however, had no metrical plan (as did Greek music), because it was composed on texts in Latin prose; there were no recurrent metres. It was probably sung in regular tempo; deviations from the norm were probably local and temporary forms of expression.<sup>2</sup> Sachs suggested that the distinction between the short and long notes, in a proportion of 1:2, must have been under attack as early as the eleventh century, for Berno, the Abbot of Reichenau (d. 1048), warned his singers against men who spurned the important distinction

<sup>1</sup> Curt Sachs, *Rhythm and Tempo: A Study in Music History* (New York: The W. W. Norton Company, 1953), p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

between longs and breves.<sup>3</sup>

The theory that the abandonment of long and short notes for notes of equal length came about with the growth and spread of polyphony could not be true, however, Dr. Sachs stated, because there *was* no polyphony until the twelfth century, except for the early two-part organums; and because the organum itself was confined to a very small part of the liturgy in a very few cathedrals, churches, and abbeys.

The actual reason for the collapse of tradition was the fact that the quasi-metrical chant stood alone in a foreign surrounding of non-metrical language and poetry, and was eventually influenced by them.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. APEL FAVORS POTHIER

Willi Apel, in *Gregorian Chant*<sup>5</sup>, admitted the value of Solesmes editions in liturgical usage, for they have helped choirs and congregations sing the old chant melodies, and their value has been proved in music education. But, he wrote, since the primary obligation of the Solesmes monks was to the Church, rather than to musicology, utility was of more importance than historical authenticity, and the Solesmes editions resemble practical editions of Bach, including phrasings, dynamics, and tempi. It is important for a student to know what is authentic and what is an editorial addition, however, and the Solesmes editions do not make any distinction. The ictus, Apel wrote, is perhaps the most controversial point of the Solesmes editions, for there is no trace of the vertical episema in any medieval source, and the whole historical validity of the theory is, "... to put it mildly, highly questionable."<sup>6</sup>

Apel objected to the exaggerated importance of the rhythmic problem in our time. Of course the chant had rhythm, but rhythm is not synonymous with a fixed rhythmic system, which so many scholars have been unsuccessfully trying to find in the chant. The chant melodies lend themselves to a flexible, variable rhythmic scheme, almost of a rhapsodic character, similar to that of much folk music. But the rhythmic structure of these melodies is so free that it varies from individual to individual, and more especially from generation to generation. Also, wrote Apel, if a rhythmic system existed, evidence comparable to that existing for the melodies would be found either in the manuscripts or in the works of the medieval theorists. True, there are some indications of a rhythmic nature in the St. Gall manuscripts, but these are so limited and so vague that they cannot possibly be given the credence that is given to the melodic indications.<sup>7</sup>

There is no historical foundation for Mocquereau's major theory,

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting Berno's *Musica seu prologus in tonarium* (in Gerbert, *Scriptores*, II).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>5</sup> Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

that of binary and ternary groupings and the ictus, Apel believed. Mocquereau's adaptation of the signs for prolongation, while ignoring those for acceleration, serve only to make his editions "a mixture of historical exactitude and ingenious fancy."<sup>8</sup>

The equalist-accentualist position of Dom Pothier comes as close as may be expected to a plausible and practical solution of the rhythmic problem, Apel wrote; the main premises of Pothier's theory are clearly implied in, and intelligible from, the notation of the manuscripts, although Apel would combine this solution with that of Houdard, subtly varying the speed of performing the neums in melismatic chant according to the number of notes each contains.<sup>9</sup>

In a review,<sup>10</sup> Apel summarized his position:

Since there is no such thing as the rhythm of Gregorian Chant, the equalist rendition will probably remain with us for a long time. This is quite all right, provided that it is presented as what it really is; not historical truth but a working compromise. There is, however, no reason for retaining the entirely fictitious trappings that usually go with present-day performance, the ictus, the cheironomic drawings, and the like. A return to the simple and direct methods of Dom Pothier is strongly to be recommended.

## 3. CARROLL'S DEFENSE OF SOLESMES

J. Robert Carroll of the staff of the Gregorian Institute of America, has been a defender of Solesmes. In an essay, "The Forest and the Trees,"<sup>11</sup> and a monograph, *Are The Solesmes Editions Justifiable?*<sup>12</sup> he attempted to answer some of the criticism of Solesmes editorial methods.

In his essay, Carroll noted that Solesmes is taking advantage of recent research to make corrections in its editions, having already proved the *Vaticana* so full of errors that it cannot possibly be used as the basis for future scholarly editions! Nevertheless, the *Vaticana*, together with the Solesmes rhythmic signs, *is* usable, and musicians should pragmatically support these editions because they have proved workable. Carroll restated the Solesmes doctrine that one must either accept or reject Mocquereau's teachings completely, since there is no other possible position (sic) which may be considered.<sup>13</sup>

Carroll's monograph is a defense of Mocquereau's rhythmic practices. Admitting that the rhythmic signs in the Solesmes books are editorial markings, he stated that, since most people have neither the time nor the inclination for specialized study, such editions are not

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>10</sup> *Caecilia*, Vol. 85, No. 4, Fall, 1958, p. 393.

<sup>11</sup> J. Robert Carroll, "The Forest and the Trees," *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 2, May 1957.

<sup>12</sup> Toledo, The Gregorian Institute of America, 1957.

<sup>13</sup> Carroll, "The Forest and the Trees," pp. 86-90. Solesmes insists that the alternative to its work is chaos; others believe rejection of Solesmes would lead to wider acceptance of the Vatican edition and to further mensural study.

only justified, but actually are needed, to provide uniformity and beauty of chant style. Carroll wrote:

It was very quickly apparent after the publication of the "pure" Vatican edition (without supplementary rhythmic signs of any kind) that the average church choir would never produce convincing or artistic chant without some additional aid. The Solesmes editions, as no others before or since, have supplied this aid.<sup>14</sup>

The Benedictines have not conspired to avoid authenticity, Carroll wrote; considerable thought has gone into the placement of the editorial additions, based on the manuscript indications and on regular Solesmes editorial policy. This policy is founded on the following considerations:

- (a) the manuscript indications are frequently unclear because of the bad penmanship or carelessness of the copyist;
- (b) the Vatican edition is defective;
- (c) the manuscripts contain "many real errors"
- (d) few of the manuscripts give any kind of complete rhythmic plan for any melody.

Solesmes, therefore, attempts to place the rhythmic signs in accordance with its understanding of the manuscripts and of tradition. "This placement is, of course, a matter of judgement, but it is based on a study of the authentic tradition."<sup>15</sup>

It is possible to criticize Solesmes for their uniform application of rhythmic signs to melodies which range from the eighth to the sixteenth centuries and from various countries, Carroll admitted. "Solesmes will be the first to admit that such oversimplification has its drawbacks, but it would be well to point out that there is a line beyond which it becomes impractical to go in such matters."<sup>16</sup>

In his attempt to explain the ictus, Carroll contradicted official Solesmes doctrine. He wrote that Solesmes believes that the Latin accent was independent of the musical "downbeat" in the early Middle Ages, but that the word accent does have its own intensity, even when it occurs on what Solesmes considers an upbeat.

The simple fact is that intensity belongs to the word accent, regardless of the position of the ictus, and this is what the Solesmes theory of the independence of the accent and the ictus really means.<sup>17</sup>

Also, although Mocquereau, Desroquettes, Suñol, and others have

<sup>14</sup> Carroll, *Are the Solesmes Editions Justifiable?*, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6-8.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10. Desroquettes, however, has written: "... we consider that the Latin accent is light, lifted up, and rounded off like an arch, is not heavy or strongly stressed, is arsis and not thesis. ... to place the ictus. ... on the accented syllable. ... would be, we maintain, to spoil the rhythm and melody. ... of our venerable melodies." (*Simple Introduction to Plainsong*, p. 26).

written that the Solesmes ictus is imperceptible, "more in the mind than in the voice,"<sup>18</sup> Carroll wrote:

Thus, whether it is considered good or bad, the ictus cannot be said to be imperceptible. . . . The simple fact is that the word accent, sung properly in accord with Solesmes theory, sounds the same, as far as intensity is concerned, whether ictic or not.<sup>19</sup>

In an analysis of a section of the Gradual, *Eripe me*, from the St. Gall manuscript and in the Solesmes transcription, Carroll defended Mocquereau's methods; however, statements such as this:

. . . We may make the final descending note more deliberate, a treatment which is in accord with the general Solesmes style. Such points of style are not evident from the notation, of course, but they must be considered in any fair criticism of the method. . . .<sup>20</sup>

do little to convince one of Solesmes' claims to authenticity.

#### 4. MONSIGNOR SCHMITT AND CAECILIA

Although Monsignor Francis Schmitt, the editor of *Caecilia*,<sup>21</sup> has opened the pages of that journal to the presentation of equalist, mensuralist, and various other interpretations of chant, he belongs to the Pothier school. Without minimizing the importance of the Solesmes work in chant restoration, he recognized the problems that Solesmes stubbornness has caused from the days of Pius X to the present time,<sup>22</sup> and held, with Wagner, that if Solesmes had prevailed in the days of Pius X, the liturgical books would contain a chant that had existed at no time, at any given place.<sup>23</sup>

The stubborn willfulness of Solesmes was attacked in a *Caecilia* editorial that replied to J. Robert Carroll. Monsignor Schmitt wrote that to tell readers there is no alternative to Solesmes (the present Solesmes position) is a lie, for the Vatican edition existed before the ever-changing Solesmes editions appeared, having been adopted by Pius X in his decree of August 7, 1907.

If no methods of chant survive in a universally used edition save that of Solesmes, just what does Mr. Carroll think the Roman Polyglot Press is? The

<sup>18</sup> Desroquettes, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> Carroll, *Are the Solesmes Editions Justifiable?*, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>21</sup> *Caecilia*, *A Review of Catholic Church Music*. Quarterly. Omaha, Nebraska.

<sup>22</sup> *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 2, May, 1957; pp. 80-81. An example of this attitude was the warning of Dom Desroquettes to music educators, that caution be used in leaving a system which has given the world unity of method and artistic style; that nothing be done until "we are satisfied that another system is perfect and is actually better than Solesmes." (Lecture, "Gregorian Chant as Prayer and Art," opening session, Liturgical Department, NCMEA National Convention, 1960. Reported in *Musart*, June, 1960, p. 8).

<sup>23</sup> *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 2, p. 80.

simple method outlined in the preface of the Vatican *Graduale* has been in use universally since the time it appeared. What is true is that the first negation to the restored unity of the chant came from Dom Mocquereau.<sup>24</sup>

There are areas in Europe—including Rome—where the Solesmes editions have never been used and will probably never be used, wrote Monsignor Schmitt. He continued:

But the really sore point is that the Vatican *Graduale* is regaining some small ground in this country. And this is disturbing, because there may be things to explain, and the tight pedagogy of Solesmes should not be asked to explain itself to anyone but Solesmes. Students of Solesmes teachers say that there is never any ill spoken about other systems, that there is peace—peace at their price, for they, like Mr. Carroll, prefer to think nothing else exists.<sup>25</sup>

Monsignor Schmitt agreed that the Solesmes system is simply theory, and that Mocquereau's *Le nombre* is a purely theoretical work. The Vatican edition, too, is based on a theory, but it happens to be the theory that Rome adopted. As research continues, other theories may be adopted in the future, although the Church will take its own time in the matter. "Why, then, the great pretence, the great compassion on the unwashed, the shameful omniscience and pride"<sup>26</sup> of the School of Solesmes and its defenders before the rest of the chant world?

We cannot accept, on the one hand, the oft-proven artificiality of the rhythmic system of Solesmes, nor on the other hand the mensuralistic system of any given set of manuscripts. Some of the latter have added greatly to our knowledge of chant history; the former has only created five decades of confusion.<sup>27</sup>

With Monsignor Schmitt continuing as editor of *Caecilia*, further comment and criticism from this quarter may be expected.

##### 5. DOM GREGORY MURRAY'S ATTACKS ON SOLESMES

One of today's most vocal opponents of Solesmes is Dom Gregory Murray, O.S.B. (b. 1905). A one-time supporter of Solesmes, (Desrocquettes once described him as "one of the most brilliant disciples of Dom Mocquereau,"<sup>28</sup>) Murray, after years of research and study, has concluded that not only do Solesmes theories lack historical validity, but that they have also provided one of the major barriers to

<sup>24</sup> *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 3, August, 1957; pp. 170-172.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

<sup>27</sup> *Caecilia*, Vol. 86, No. 4, Winter, 1959, p. 127.

<sup>28</sup> Desrocquettes, *Monographie grégorienne*, XIII, 1934, p. 5.

the investigation of historical evidence, and he has rejected them.

Dom Murray's major essays have appeared in *The Downside Review*, the journal of the Downside Abbey in England; he is a member of this Benedictine community. The essays have been reprinted in America in *Caecilia*.

In "Plainsong Rhythm: The Editorial Methods of Solesmes,"<sup>29</sup> Murray derided the Solesmes claim that their rhythmic signs are merely a modern representation of the signs in the ancient manuscripts. Dom Aldhelm Dean, for example, has written:

Modern rhythmic signs, in our Solesmes choir books, are no new invention, an innovation calculated to deprive us of our liberty; they are merely a modern way of reproducing the rhythmic signs found in the best MSS., and we have no more right to neglect them, if we wish to sing the melodies as they were intended to be sung, than we have to change the notes themselves.<sup>30</sup>

Dom Murray replied that Dean

... must know well enough that this is not true; that most of the rhythmic signs in the Solesmes editions are purely editorial additions, and that, unfortunately, Solesmes editions provide no means of distinguishing between the MS. signs and the Solesmes additions.<sup>31</sup>

Murray attacked the entire ictus and binary-ternary theory of Solesmes, noting that no literary evidence from the past gives any support to either principle; nor is there any ictus mark, as such, in *any* ancient manuscript, since all the authentic rhythmic signs concern the *lengths* of notes, as both Mocquereau and Gajard admitted.<sup>32</sup>

The first note of a neum does not always have an ictus, wrote Murray in his study of Credo I, especially if it is immediately preceded by a word accent. Mocquereau was so insistent about his theory of the rhythmic importance of word endings and the relative unimportance of word accents that he completely ignored melodic motives, although some of them occur as often as twenty times in this one *Credo*. Because of his determination to mark as many word-endings as possible with his "ictus", Mocquereau was oblivious to the fact that,

... in default of positive melodic, harmonic, metrical, or quantitative indication to the contrary, an accent of itself indicates rhythm.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Downside Review*, Autumn, 1956; *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Dom Aldhelm Dean, *Solesmes—Its Work for Liturgy and Chant* (New York: Society of St. Gregory), (n.d.), p. 18.

<sup>31</sup> Dom Gregory Murray, "Plainsong Rhythm," p. 10. Mocquereau freely admitted (*Monographies grégoriennes*, III) that all the vertical episemas and all the doubling dots in the Solesmes *Credo I* were his own; none had any basis in the manuscripts.

<sup>32</sup> Murray, "Plainsong Rhythm," p. 11, fn. 4, quoting *Monographie grégorienne*, IV, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> Murray, "Plainsong Rhythm," pp. 16-17.



For example, the rhythm of these word groupings is identical:

Déus et Dóminus  
Dóminus Génitor.

The word endings here make no difference to the rhythm at all, but rather to the phrasing; the rhythmic identity is due to the identical accents. But according to Mocquereau, who insisted that the ictus should come at the ends of the words, these two phrases are rhythmically different. Conversely, Mocquereau seemed unable to differentiate between obvious rhythmic differences. For example, these lines:

O Salutáris Hóstia  
Tántum érgo Sacraméntum

were offered by Mocquereau as rhythmically identical! Murray wrote:

Could anything be more absurd? Would any intelligent musician fail to observe that the first line is iambic and the second trochaic? Could any musician worthy of the name be permanently satisfied with a theory whereby words in contradictory metres are sung to syllabic melodies of identical rhythm? <sup>34</sup>

Murray noted that the two Gregorian melodies of the *Pange Lingua Gloriosi* are almost identical, the one obviously a variant of the other. But Solesmes edited them with contradictory rhythms, each rhythm claiming to be the "correct" one, the rhythm inherent in the melody. It is inconceivable, Murray wrote, that if the rhythm of one or the other version was originally as Solesmes has given it, that the melody could then be distorted into the kind of "counter-rhythm" that Solesmes has given for the alternate version. No one knowing Mocquereau's rhythmic version of one could possibly evolve his completely different rhythm for the other. But these Solesmes markings are the result of Mocquereau's rules: they have no manuscript warranty. Having decided that the first note of a neum has an ictus, he puts an ictus in the one version on the second syllable of *lingua*; then from this "next certain ictus" he, by another of his rules, counted back in twos and marked another ictus on the second syllable of *Pange*; then, he taught, we have "the authentic Gregorian rhythm!"

Murray surmised that the edited Solesmes books have been widely used because they permit a cut-and-dried method which need only be followed, not questioned; uniformity of interpretation and polished performance can thus result, with ease and with a limited amount of work.

All the literary evidence of the Gregorian period indicates a mensural (proportional), not equalist rendering of chant note values, wrote Murray in "Gregorian Rhythm in the Gregorian Centuries: The Literary Evidence." <sup>35</sup> Mocquereau's attitude toward the medieval theoretical works dealing with chant:

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>35</sup> *The Downside Review*, Summer, 1957; *Caecilia*, Vol. 84, No. 3, pp. 177-199.

It is not on the disputed texts that we have based our Solesmes teaching, but on the evidence of the manuscripts, which form a solid block, often in opposition to the authors. . . We therefore base our theory on the unshakable rock of the well-established facts of paleography, not on the shifting sands of the medieval authors, who not only contradict one another, but often, alas! do not really know what they are talking about. <sup>36</sup>

is incredible, for certainly the monks and writers of the ninth century knew more about the subject at hand than did those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; they were monks who sang every day in choir the very music about which they wrote. Also, the best music manuscripts in existence were the works of monks of precisely the same period as the literary treatises. Father Murray suggested that Solesmes writers reject the theoretical works because they can find in them no support for *their* rhythmic ideas.

Quoting extensively from the theoretical writers concerning proportionalism <sup>37</sup>, Murray suggested that the spread of organum probably caused the equalist execution, since, as Wagner wrote, the singers had to be kept together. <sup>38</sup> Murray also repudiated his earlier work, "Gregorian Rhythm: A Pilgrim's Progress," <sup>39</sup> demonstrating the fact that musical rhythm is actually indicated by emphasis of some sort, quantitative, dynamic, melodic, harmonic, or metrical. Without some such emphasis, rhythm is either absent or imperceptible, and an ictus, which is not in some way perceptible or clearly implied as a point of emphasis is a figment of the imagination! <sup>40</sup>

In "Accentual Cadences in Gregorian Chant" <sup>41</sup> Father Murray was concerned with the treatment of cadences based on accent, especially in the Gregorian "recitations." The Solesmes rule that the first note of each neum takes an ictus is not correct, he wrote; when a neum is immediately preceded by an accented syllable on an isolated note, the rule does not apply;

In all the liturgical recitations . . . we must remember that, if the cadence

<sup>36</sup> Mocquereau, *Monographie grégorienne*, VII, 1926, p. 31. Gatard also wrote that the theoretical writings are no more reliable than the notes students take down at lectures given by professors, since they represent the oral teaching of a master. (*Plainchant*, p. 44).

<sup>37</sup> Including St. Augustine: *De Musica* (c.388); Cassiodorus (d.575), who cited the *De Musica*; St. Bede (d.735); *De Arte Metrica*; St. Aldhelm (d.709); *Letter IV* (P.L. 89, 95); Alcuin (d.804); *Carmina* (P.L. 101, 781); Aurelian of Réomé (early 9th century); *Musica Disciplina*; Remigius of Auxerre (end of 9th century); in Gerbert: *Scriptores*, I, 68; Hucbald of St. Armand (d.circa 930); *Scholia Enchiridis* and *Commemoratio Brevis* (in Gerbert: *Scriptores*, I, 226-227); Berno of Reichenau (d.1048); *Micrologus in Tonarium* (in Gerbert: *Scriptores*, II, 77-78); Guido of Arezzo (d. circa 1050); *Micrologus and Versus de Musicae Eplanatione* (in Gerbert, *Scriptores*, II, 30); and Aribo (end of 11th century): *De Musica* (in Gerbert: *Scriptores*, II, 227).

<sup>38</sup> Peter Wagner, *Gregorianische Formenlehre* (1931), p. 301.

<sup>39</sup> This account of Murray's conversion to Solesmes principles was first published in *The Downside Review* (1934); then it was printed in pamphlet form, as well as in *Music and Liturgy* in England and in *The Catholic Choirmaster* in America; translated into French and issued in *La revue grégorienne*, and finally included in the Solesmes series, *Monographies-grégoriennes*.

<sup>40</sup> "Gregorian Rhythm," pp. 195-199.

<sup>41</sup> *The Downside Review*, January, 1958; *Caecilia*, Vol. 85, No. 1, February, 1958, pp. 40-50.

is constructed on an accentual principle, then logic demands that the decisive verbal accent should fulfil its decisive rhythmic function in every case. According to Solesmes, this is not so. The Solesmes authorities insist on two different, nay contradictory, rhythms for the spondaic and dactylic forms of the same cadence. . . .<sup>42</sup>

This principle is borne out in the writings of the Blessed Hartker (tenth century), who had

obviously never heard of such a thing as a spondaic cadence with a hiccup on an "off-the-beat" accent; that peculiar phenomenon was invented almost a thousand years after his death.<sup>43</sup>

The true musical interpretation of every syllabic cadence, in chant based on accent, is to place the ictus on the accented syllable every time, and to lengthen the accented syllable in the spondaic cadences, wrote Murray. This principle must be consistently applied in monotonal psalmody and other non-metrical texts. Thus the verbal accent and the "ictus" will coincide in a natural, simple manner. In many examples, Father Murray demonstrated that this would provide a relief from the "unnatural, highly improbable, and rather absurd" Solesmes markings of these cadences.<sup>44</sup>

Dom Murray believed that the Belgian Jesuit, Vollaerts, had at last found the key to the authentic Gregorian rhythm, and called upon Solesmes to publicly acknowledge that their own books were merely practical editions, (including a number of their own rhythmic signs, incorporated because of a special theory of rhythm which is now obsolete.) The Solesmes monks, with all the paleographic resources at their disposal, are in a better position than anyone else to prepare authentic editions of the chant, based on Vollaerts' solution, wrote Murray;<sup>45</sup> their magnificent task of restoring the pure and authentic Gregorian Chant may now be completed. It would be regrettable, he wrote, if instead of acknowledging Vollaerts' great work in chant rhythm, the Solesmes authorities were to adopt an attitude of intransigence. Murray's book *Gregorian Chant According to the Manuscripts* is a clear and logical explanation of the Vollaerts theories.

## 6. THE VOLLAERTS SOLUTION

Dr. J. W. A. Vollaerts, a Belgian Jesuit (1901-1956),<sup>46</sup> has suggested that perhaps, between the periods of the Greek and Roman metrical system (at the very beginning of the Christian era) and the metrical music of later times, there may have existed an isolated and

<sup>42</sup> "Accentual Cadences," p. 47.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, fn. 13.      <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>45</sup> *The Downside Review*, January, 1959; *Caecilia*, Vol. 86, No. 2, Summer, 1959. Dom Gregory Murray, *Gregorian Chant According to the Manuscripts* (London: L. J. Cary, 1963).

<sup>46</sup> J. W. A. Vollaerts, S.J., *Rhythmic Proportions in Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Chant* (Leyden, Holland: E. J. Brill, 1958).

now-lost area of plain-chant. His book, he stated, contributed to the discovery of the rhythmic proportions of this early medieval ecclesiastical music. The first half of the book considered the manuscripts; the latter half, the chant theorists.

Vollaerts admitted his indebtedness to previous studies, especially to those of Delorme. His system was based mainly on his study of the Laon manuscript in the Metz notation, dating from the ninth or tenth century.<sup>47</sup> This manuscript was more important to him than the St. Gall manuscripts (which have been the basis for most of the Solesmes study), because, unlike St. Gall, Laon has an amount of consistency in the use of distinct signs for marking long and short notes. Two basic signs are used for long notes: a tractulus and a virga, and even in composed neums the signs retain their meaning. A different sign is used to indicate short notes.<sup>48</sup>

Vollaerts compared various manuscripts of different and independent origin—such as the Aquitanian,<sup>49</sup> Nonatolian,<sup>50</sup> and Beneventum, as well as five of the St. Gall manuscripts—to determine the rhythmic meaning of the Laon neums. In the comparison, consistently matching a specific neum in one with a specific neum in another, he found a remarkable number of manuscripts which match the Laon neums exactly. The book gives numerous examples of this correspondence. In some cases, all the manuscripts except the St. Gall agree with the Laon; Vollaerts noted, however, that in most cases the St. Gall notations are simply ambiguous and could possibly be interpreted as being in agreement with Laon, also. A constant rhythmic tradition, therefore, underlies all the manuscripts under consideration, the individual variants showing only the plasticity of the chant.

There is general agreement that the episema is a mark signifying a long note, but Vollaerts' study indicates that it was not used consistently in the St. Gall manuscripts. Father Vollaerts totalled the entire body of St. Gall manuscripts and found that the total number of passages marked with a *c* (for *celeriter*) equalled the total number of short sounds in the Laon manuscripts. From this he drew the conclusion that in the St. Gall manuscripts, only the notes affected by the letter *c* are to be sung short—the others are all long, whether marked with an episema or not. This is especially true of syllabic chant, while in the melismatic chant, account must be taken of the composed neums which are short anyway, and require no other sign of brevity. Vollaerts discussed these neums, demonstrating that it is the long note,

<sup>47</sup> The Laon 239, the *Antiphonale Missarum*, was published as Volume X of the *Paléographie musicale*.

<sup>48</sup> Waite has written that it is unmistakable that the Gregorian notation was intended to represent specific rhythmic values; he believed that the metrical system of the chant was so firmly established that the rhythmic modal system of Notre Dame was based on it. (*The Rhythm of Twelfth-Century Polyphony*, Yale University Press, 1954), pp. 20 and 27.

<sup>49</sup> In Codex 1118 of the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale; edited by Dom Ferretti in Vol. XIII of *Paléographie musicale*.

<sup>50</sup> Two folios in the Capitular Archives of Monza, and a third folio in Milan.

not the short, which gives the chant its motion.

In the chapter on "Liquescent Neums and Ornamental Notes," Vollaerts explained what he believed to be the real function of the episema. He considered the types of melodies and their adaptation to different texts, making the addition of notes necessary. He also discussed the use of ornamental notes, due either to the text (*e.g.* liquescent notes), or to embellishment (anticipations, passing tones, neighboring tones, etc.), basing this part of his study on the work of the Blessed Hartker. The role of the short note and the general rhythmic character of the chant are clarified, accordingly. Hartker often used the episema and the letter *c* to compensate for the addition or deletion of ornamental notes and the text, or both. Vollaerts concluded, therefore, that the episema is not mainly to mark a long note, since the note is already long without it; rather, it reminds the singer that in this particular chant, there is no need for the addition of notes for extra syllables. The passage, in other words, is to be sung without embellishment.

Vollaerts, quoting Guido, found a reference to "other sounds," and these he considered to be a third kind of note of a duration between the long and short notes. Further, he interpreted an episema over a virga at phrase endings as a sign for a "double-long". The chant, therefore, moves in long notes, except for ornamental or embellishing short notes, and for the double-longs which occur at certain endings.

Father Vollaerts reminded his readers that because the singers were so close to the tradition, the medieval neum notation was of less importance to the medieval singer than printed music is to the contemporary musician. Therefore, the positive indication of any sort in the manuscripts is a most definite one; the absence of such a sign is, however, not necessarily so significant, because to the medieval copyist there was no reason or necessity for noting long durations repeatedly.<sup>51</sup>

Vollaerts listed four causes for the decline of the authentic plain-song tradition and the rhythmic decay: the negligence and the in-

<sup>51</sup> Some of Vollaerts' conclusions regarding the simple neums are significant. Ordinarily, a two-note neum consists of two short notes; if the neum is lengthened, however, then both notes must be lengthened. Solesmes lengthens only the first. Likewise, a neum of three notes consists of two short notes followed by a long; when the neum is lengthened, all three become long. (Solesmes lengthens only the penultimate note.) Finally, a descending group of three notes is represented by three signs; each of these normally indicates its proper time value. However, when the penultimate note is short, then the final note may be lengthened, as is done in some of the manuscripts. Vollaerts presented a full transcription of the Graduale for the Second Sunday of Lent, in his book, together with the complete neumatic notation from the eleven manuscripts he considered most important; this is an example of the scholarship typical of his work.

Vollaerts' method and scholarship were attacked, however, in a review of the book by Prof. J. Smits van Waesberghe of the University of Amsterdam in *Caecilia*, Vol. 87, No. 3, pp. 128-137. Dr. van Waesberghe did not agree that the proportion of long notes to short notes in chant is 2:1, rather, there are nuances under each heading, long and short, he said. In ignoring the work of experts who, on the basis of a study of the same manuscripts, have reached different conclusions, Vollaerts left his work in an indefensible position, wrote Waesberghe. While some of Vollaerts' methods were scientific, some

competence of the singers, of which the great teachers and theorists complained; the carelessness of the copyists; the development of part-singing and the rise of troping; and the eventual overwhelming of the short, ornamental notes by the regular, ordinary notes.<sup>52</sup>

The Belgian musicologist offered convincing proof to Apel, Murray, and others, both from his manuscript analyses and his quotations and explanations of the medieval theorists, that his realization of the chant is correct and valid, so far as it goes. Whether it is *the* solution to the problem of chant rhythm, however, with universal applications, or whether it is merely the solution to the rhythmic problems of the Laon manuscripts remains to be seen.

### 7. ROME REAFFIRMS THE EQUALIST THEORY

Rome has long-since adopted the equalist-accentualist theories of Dom Pothier for the official Vatican chant books, and this interpretation of the Gregorian rhythm is likely to remain the official one for some time. This is because the chant may not be replaced or altered except by regulation from Rome, and the Vatican moves very slowly in such matters. In an Instruction on *Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy*, dated September 3, 1958, the Sacred Congregation of Rites declared:

58. The decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites of August 11, 1905—the "Instruction concerning the publication and approval of books containing the liturgical Gregorian Chant" (Decr. Auth. S.R.C. 4166)—remains in force, as do the subsequent "Statement regarding the publication and approval of books containing liturgical Gregorian Chant" of February 14, 1906 (Decr. Auth. S.R.C. 4178) and the Decree of February 24, 1911, which referred to some special questions about the approval of books on the chant of the "Propers" for certain dioceses and religious congregations. (Decr. Auth. S.R.C. 4260).

What was laid down by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on August 10, 1946, "Concerning permission to publish liturgical books" (AAS 38, 1946, 371-372) also applies to books on liturgical chant.

59. Therefore, the authentic Gregorian chant is that which is found in the typical Vatican editions, or which is approved by the Sacred Congregation of Rites for some particular church or religious community, and so it must be reproduced only by editors who have the proper authorization, accurately and completely, as regards both melodies and the texts.

The signs, called *rhythmica*, which have been privately introduced into

were also defective, and the conclusions leave much to be desired. The Belgian Jesuit used photographs of manuscripts which were unclear; he did not give cogent reasons for his conclusions; and he even retraced steps taken by other investigators, in one case by van Waesberghe, himself. In summary, the reviewer accused Vollaerts of incomplete research, of basing conclusions on partial evidence, of suppressing evidence which did not coincide with his 2:1 proportionalism, and of misreading the medieval theorists. He cited inaccuracies in the Vollaerts book, and stated that the tragedy of the whole study was that the Jesuit spent a lifetime in study and defense of a strictly 2:1 proportionalism which is not taken seriously, at least by many Belgian musicologists.

<sup>52</sup> Vollaerts, *op. cit.*, p. 217 *et seq.*

Gregorian chant, are permitted, provided that the force and meaning of the notes found in the Vatican books of liturgical chant are preserved.<sup>53</sup>

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of the second Vatican Council, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963, reinforces the previous legislation on sacred music in the liturgy (Chapter VI). Two paragraphs refer specifically to the Chant:

116. The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy; therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.

But other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action, as laid down in Article 30.

117. The typical edition of the books of Gregorian chant is to be completed, and a more critical edition is to be prepared of those books already published since the restoration by St. Pius X.

It is desirable also that an edition be prepared containing the simpler melodies, for use in small churches.<sup>54</sup>

#### 8. FOR THE FUTURE

The dream of Pope Pius X for the restoration of Gregorian chant to the Roman liturgy has gradually been more-and-more realized; chant is sung more regularly in the seminaries and religious houses of study than ever before, and most Catholic schools teach "Gregorian" as a matter of course. The position of chant as the "official" music of the Roman church has been consistently re-affirmed, even in the December 4, 1963 *Constitution on Sacred Liturgy* of the Second Vatican Council. Performance of plainsong leaves much to be desired in many places, of course, but improvement would seem to be more a matter of time and culture than lack of interest. Among Catholics, the fact that other members of their faith worshipped to the same music more than a thousand years ago adds great interest and meaning.

The place of the controversial Solesmes editions is clarified by the final paragraph of the 1958 Instruction by the S.C.R. It is interesting to note that, for the first time in Vatican decrees dealing with the Solesmes books, a word other than "tolerated" is used; the paragraph cited states that such editions are "permitted." This is undoubtedly due to the widespread circulation the Solesmes books have achieved in the past fifty years. At any rate, the monopoly held by Solesmes for so long in this country and elsewhere is evidently broken.

The final paragraph of the 1963 *Constitution on Sacred Liturgy* opens the way to continued study and to more critical study. And a

<sup>53</sup> Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy*, September 3, 1958. (Printed in *Casellia*, Vol. 85, No. 4, Fall, 1958), pp. 345-377.

<sup>54</sup> *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, Second Vatican Council, December 4, 1963.

revision of the *Vaticana* is authorized. Will this lead to an eventual adoption of mensuralism in the Vatican books? Time will tell. The studies of the mensuralists continue, even though, for the time being, the equalist theory is the "official" Roman policy. Possibly Rome will accept mensuralism in the future, since historical evidence seems to be on its side, if a workable, historically-based system can be worked out. Certainly the mensural studies are of enormous value in music history, the study of styles, and the science of paleography. Further discoveries, theories, and evidence are awaited with great interest!



## CONCLUSIONS

Gregorian Chant reached its zenith in the eighth and ninth centuries, two or more centuries before the invention of staff notation. By the eleventh century, the authentic rhythmic tradition was disappearing, and by the thirteenth century, the chant had been almost completely replaced by figured music in practical usage. In the sixteenth century, attempts at revisions and at abbreviating the melodies resulted in the mutilation of the traditional chant. About 1850, considerable interest was aroused in a revival of the authentic chant, and studies and paleographic research culminated, in 1903, in a *Motu Proprio* by Pope Pius X, ordering the restoration of the chant to the churches. The following year, the Pope authorized an official version of the Gregorian repertory to be prepared.

There was, obviously, controversy over the interpretation of the manuscript signs, when the work of the chant restoration was attempted. Mainly because of the scholarship of the Solesmes Benedictine, Dom Joseph Pothier, the melodic problem is today considered solved. Since the chant was (ideally) sung unaccompanied, in unison, there is no real harmonic problem. But today, even after more than a hundred years of research and study, there is still widespread disagreement among the experts about the rhythm of the chant.

Three main schools of thought regarding Gregorian rhythm have evolved: the Accentualist school, that of Solesmes, and the various Mensural systems. Each of the three has made an enormous contribution to the worship of the Church and to musicology by the study and research involved in the restoration of the melodies, and the attempts at finding the true rhythm.

After centuries of mutilation and neglect, the plainsong was desperately in need of revival; it was a fortuitous combination of circumstances (or, perhaps, a benign Providence) that led the Abbot Guéranger of Solesmes to start the movement toward restoration

about the time that musicologists and paleographers were able to begin the work, and that elected a Pope (Pius X) whose love for the chant was surpassed only by his zealous determination that it once again be given the position it deserved in Catholic worship. The pastoral enthusiasm that caused young Father Sarto, as a parish priest, years before his election as Pius X, to teach his peasant congregation a Gregorian Mass was responsible for many of his most important acts as Pope, chiefly those concerning sacred music and the frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist.

The fact that Rome has given official status to the equalist-accentualist theories of Dom Pothier is no barrier to further investigation regarding plainsong rhythm—especially in view of the Second Vatican Council's CONSTITUTION ON LITURGY. Musicologists have been encouraged, ever since the time of Pius XII, to continue and even to redouble their efforts to find the authentic rhythm, if such a thing existed. Research and study, therefore, continue.

The *Accentualist* theory, it will be recalled, holds that the chant adopted the equal time values of the words, when quantitative Latin syllables became accentual in the fifth century; the word accent is considered to be the principal rhythmic determinant in the music resulting in a free, non-metred rhythm based on notes of equal length. Gontier's early (1859) definition of chant as "an inflected recitation in which the notes have an unfixd value, the rhythm of which, essentially free, is that of ordinary speech," has influenced all the accentualists. Pothier, probably the most important of these, taught that the accent and rhythm of the words, carefully observed, not only bring out the meaning of the text, but also give the music its motion. Other important accentualists were Suibertus Birklé, who explained the Pothier doctrines in terms of accents and pauses; Dom Johner, whose acceptance of the Pothier theories was included in one of the finest of all manuals of the chant; Dom David, who accepted the Solesmes binary and ternary groupings but insisted that the words themselves are the most important element in the rhythm; Amadée Gastoué, who differentiated between the Solesmes (*i.e.* Pothier), and neo-Solesmes (*i.e.* Mocquereau) schools and who attacked Mocquereau; Joseph Gogniat, who noted that the Vatican edition is a rhythmic edition and that Solesmes signs are not needed; Father Schmitt, editor of *Caecilia* and outspoken critic of Solesmes; and Willi Apel, who has insisted that the accentualist position is only *a*, not necessarily *the*, solution to the problem, but that it is the best compromise possible in our time.

In *Solesmes* theory, Pothier's equal note values and free rhythm were retained, but the idea of the importance of the verbal accent was discarded; instead, single pulses were grouped into two or three pulses, each beginning with an ictus which is independent of the Latin tonic accent. These groups are freely mixed into larger and larger rhythmic

divisions; the resulting "balance between sections" is provided by the rising phrase (arsis) and the falling phrase (thesis). Solesmes distinguished between an elementary rhythm, compound time, and composite rhythm in its ictic theory. Dom André Mocquereau founded this school, and devoted his life to the study of the manuscripts and the formation of his theories.

*Le nombre musical grégorien* (1908 and 1927) claimed the restoration of the authentic Gregorian Chant on the basis of the natural laws of rhythm, the natural rhythm and accent of the words, neumatic notation, melodic form and modality, and the Roman letters and other manuscript signs. Four editorial signs are used in the Solesmes books: the vertical episema, to mark the ictus; the horizontal episema, which has the effect of a ritard; the dot, which doubles the value of a note; and the comma, which marks the breath. Mocquereau considered word endings to be weak (thetic), and therefore gave them the ictus. He utilized the manuscripts only, discounting the writings of the medieval theorists. The *Paléographie musicale*, a great contribution to scholarship, was a photographic reproduction of many of the most important manuscripts.

Dom Gatard was a Solesmes historian; Dom Aldhelm Dean, a defender of Mocquereau, who held that the Solesmes signs indicate to the modern singer exactly how the chant was sung in past centuries; Dom Joseph Gajard, present choir-master at Solesmes, has stressed the idea that in chant the music is more important than the words, and has summarized Solesmes method as insisting on the complete mutual independence of rhythm and intensity and of the rhythmic ictus and the Latin tonic accent. Dom Jean Hébert Desroquettes has recently warned music educators against leaving the Solesmes system. Other Solesmes defenders have been the Irish Jesuit, H. Bewerunge, who led the attack for Solesmes against the Vatican edition, and J. Robert Carroll, currently on the staff of the Gregorian Institute of America.

The *Mensuralists* deny that all the notes in the chant are of equal duration, stating that all the evidence—of the medieval theoretical treatises as well as of the manuscripts—indicates at least two kinds of notes, longs and breves, in a proportion of 2:1 or some modification of that proportion. These notes are grouped, in various mensural systems, in from two to eight "beats", each "beat" being considered a measure. The measures follow each other irregularly, however; there is no regular metrical pattern. There really is no "mensural school," for the mensuralists are agreed only on the theory of non-equal note values; in their realizations, no two agree.

Antoine Dechevrens, S.J., founded mensuralism in 1861; his immediate followers were Ludwig Bonvin and Gerhard Gietmann, both Jesuits. Other important mensuralists have been Oskar Fleischer, who believed in three different chant note values; Georges Houdard, who decided that each neum had the value of a modern quarter-note; Peter

Wagner, who proposed measured note values but without metre; Alexandre Fleury, S.J., who theorized that all the notes in chant are quarter notes, except for doubled ones and halved ones; Hugo Riemann, who considered that all chant should be transcribed into strict 4-4 metre; Dom Jeannin, who insisted on two note values arranged in free succession with the verbal (tonic) accent occupying preferential place; Heinrich Sowa, who rendered the antiphons in triple metre, alternating long and short notes; Delorme, who found in several notational systems similarities for indicating long and short notes; Jammers, who determined that all the antiphons are essentially in 4-4 metre; Dom Vos and Dom de Meéus, with their unusual rhythmic formula; Curt Sachs, who sided with the mensuralists on the basis of the medieval theoretical writings; the Jesuit Vollaerts, who demonstrated that the long note, not the short, gives the chant its motion and that the true function of the horizontal episema is to indicate that embellishment is to be avoided; J. Smits van Waesberghe, who felt that a 2:1 proportionalism is too rigid and insisted on nuances; Dom Gregory Murray, formerly one of Solesmes' supporters, now one of its bitter enemies; and Gustave Reese, who states that at our present stage of knowledge, there is no need to say that any of the schools of chant theory is wrong. Reese noted that the mensuralists present the most impressive historical evidence; the accentualists can prove that at some time in music history (perhaps as late as the twelfth century), the chant actually was sung in notes of equal duration; and the Solesmes editions actually provide a completely aesthetically satisfying solution, regardless of historical exactitude.

There seems to be, at this time, no solution to the problem of the rhythm of the chant. For the Catholic world, Rome has adopted the equalist-accentualist theories of Pothier for the official chant books, and this interpretation is likely to remain the official one for some time. The Solesmes rhythmic signs, added to the official Vatican version, are "tolerated," as long as "the force and meaning of the notes as found in the Vatican chant books are preserved." For the teacher of chant in the schools and choirs, therefore, the only possible choice is between the official Vatican version and the edited Solesmes version. This practical problem must be met by everyone actively engaged in Catholic liturgical worship, and the decision must be reached in terms of knowledge of the historical development of the *Vaticana* and of Solesmes theory, of motivations and purposes, as well as of comparative ease of execution. For many, the Papal authorization of the one edition, backed by substantial musicological opinion, will heavily outweigh the more-easily performed edited version, which is "tolerated," particularly when its historical basis is perceived to be so shaky.

For the musicologist and the music historian, the choice is not so limited. Most musicologists who have studied the matter are convinced that historical evidence is on the side of one or the other of the men-

sural systems; whether or not Rome ever adopts a series of long and short notes, the mensural studies are of enormous musicological and paleographic importance. Further study is vital, of course, for, since no two mensural systems agree, much must still remain to be discovered and analyzed.

The chant teacher or performer, of course, must make a decision based on knowledge and understanding, not on blind faith in one system or another, or in the disciples of one school or another. The aim of this book has been to make available to all concerned with chant usage the information upon which a course of action could be determined, information they could possess without access to the archives of the country's largest libraries and a reading knowledge of several languages. It is as wrong for a supporter of the *Vaticana* to reject the Solesmes books out-of-hand, without understanding their rationale, as it is for a Solesmes-indoctrinated teacher to refuse to consider the possibility of any other system. For members of both groups, an awareness of the probable historical validity of the mensural idea will place their own efforts in better perspective. So will the realization that the problem of the authentic chant rhythm is by no means solved, and that, on the basis of his knowledge and understanding of the problem, whatever practical solution one chooses, it is exactly that, and nothing more.

There has been greater accomplishment in the literature about plainsong during the past hundred years than was accomplished in the previous seven hundred. The next century will undoubtedly produce a great deal more information; perhaps it is not unreasonable to hope for some definite solutions, especially in the light of the *Constitution on the Liturgy* (1963) directing that a new critical edition and study be completed.

Since there is no controversy when no one cares about a theory, when research is at a stand-still, when information and ideas are not exchanged and shared, the present situation must not be disparaged. This is especially true in the light of the present increased emphasis on congregational participation in Catholic worship. Further research and controversy can lead only to greater spiritual and aesthetic fulfillment for those who study, teach, and sing this great treasury of art, the heritage of almost two thousand years of Christian worship.

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CHART PLACING THE MAJOR FIGURES  
OF THE CONTROVERSY

ACCENTUALISTS	SOLESMES	MENSURALISTS
(Lambilotte-B- 1796-1885)	Mocquereau-F- 1849-1930	Dechevrens-F- 1840-1912
(Guéranger-F- 1806-1875)	Bewerunge-I- c.1906	Bonvin-G-1850-1939
(Gontier-F- d. 1881)	Gatard-E- 1862-1920	Gietmann-G-c.1905
(Hermesdorff-G- 1833-1885)	Šunol-Sp- d. 1946	Fleischer-G-1856- 1933
Pothier-F- 1835-1923	Dean-E- contemporary	Fleury-F-d. 1913
Jausions-F- d. 1870	Gajard-F- 1885-	Riemann-G-1849-1919
Birkle-F- c. 1900	Desrocquettes-F- contemporary	Houdard-F-1860-1913
Gastoué-F- 1873-1943	Carroll-A- contemporary	Wagner-G-1865-1931
Aubry-F- 1874-1910		Jeannin-F-1866-1933
Johner-G- 1874-1954		Bernouilli-G-1867- 1927
David-F- 1875-?		Sachs-A-1881-1959
Burge-I- c. 1906		Sowa-G-c. 1931
Gogniat-S- c. 1939		Jammers-G-1897- Reese-A-1899-
Apel-A- 1893-		Delorme-F-c. 1934
Schmitt-A contemporary		Vos-B-d. 1945
		de Meeús-B-contemp.
		Vollaerts-B-1901-1956
		Murray-E-1905-

A - American	G - German
B - Belgian	I - Irish
E - English	S - Swiss
F - French	Sp - Spanish

Where no birth and death dates could be located, the date of major publication of material engaging in the theories of chant rhythm has been substituted, and indicated by the letter *c* for *circa*.

## A GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN THE TEXT

<i>Antiphon</i>	A remnant of Gregorian antiphonal psalmody; a short text set to syllabic or neumatic chant and sung before and after a psalm or canticle.
<i>Antiphoner</i>	Liturgical book containing the choir chants for the Office.
<i>Arsis</i>	Literally, "lifting;" in chant, the rising melodic movement.
<i>Chironomy</i>	Motions of a conductor's hand, intended to indicate the direction of the melody.
<i>Conductus</i>	Monophonic or polyphonic song of the 12th-13th century; perhaps originally intended to accompany the entrance or procession of a priest.
<i>Episema</i>	Greek word meaning "sign;" in chant, the horizontal episema, found in the MSS. is understood to indicate a broadening of the tempo. Solesmes adds the vertical episema to indicate the ictus.
<i>Graduale</i>	Liturgical book containing the parts of the Mass which are proper to the Choir.
<i>Ictus</i>	A stress or accent; Solesmes uses it to separate the binary and ternary groupings.
<i>Kyriale</i>	Liturgical book containing the chants for the Ordinary of the Mass—the eighteen Gregorian Masses, the <i>ad libitum</i> chants, and the Mass for the Dead.
<i>Melismatic Chant</i>	Gregorian chant of the most florid nature, with many neums, or even dozens of neums, on one syllable of the text.
<i>Neum</i>	Sign used for the writing of the chant; a neum may represent from one to four or more notes. Neums are believed to have grown out of the acute, grave, and circumflex accents of Greek and Latin literature.
<i>Neumatic Chant</i>	Chant in which a syllable of the text is sung to one or more neums (usually two to four notes).
<i>Office</i>	The Canonical hours at which the prayers of the Divine Office are said. These are Matins (during the night), Lauds (at daybreak), Prime (about 6 A.M.), Terce (about 9 A.M.), Sext (at noon), None (about 3 P.M.), Vespers (evening), and Compline (nightfall).

<i>Ordinary</i>	The part of the Mass which remains the same for each day. Musically, the Ordinary is made up of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus (Benedictus), and Agnus Dei.
<i>Organum</i>	The earliest type of polyphonic music, that written from the 9th to the mid-13th century.
<i>Punctum</i>	A single-note neum, usually rendered as an eighth-note.
<i>Proper</i>	That part of the Mass which varies from day to day. Musically, the Proper consists of the Introit, Gradual and Alleluia or Tract, Sequence, Offertory, and Communion.
<i>Quilisma</i>	A neum which occurs between two notes; it is thought to indicate vibrato. In Solesmes editions, it has the effect of lengthening the note immediately preceding it.
<i>Syllabic Chant</i>	Chant having one note to each syllable of the text. (Occasionally, however, there may be two or three notes to a syllable.)
<i>Thesis</i>	Literally, "lowering;" in Solesmes theory, the repose following an arsis.
<i>Tonic Accent</i>	The stress of one tone over others. In classical poetry, this was achieved by a higher pitch.
<i>Trope</i>	A textual addition to the authorized liturgical texts; sometimes a few interpolated words, sometimes lengthy explanatory sentences.
<i>Virga</i>	A single-note neum, usually rendered as an eighth-note.

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