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Ryan W. Dohoney

The untimely passing of James McKinnon in 1999 remains a point of great sorrow not only among scholars of medieval liturgy and chant but also among the musicological community at large. The publication of his magnum opus *The Advent Project* (2000) and subsequent scholarly debate sparked by its provocative history of the composition of Roman Mass Propers have insured that his legacy will remain vital to students of chant and religious studies for decades to come.

As Kenneth Levy notes in his contribution to *Western Plainchaint*, the first millennium was the "Lake Erie of [McKinnon's] musicological boatings" (231). Beginning with his publication in the first issue of *Current Musicology*, James McKinnon was a tireless investigator into the music of the Christian liturgy from late antiquity through the early Middle Ages. While his initial work explored the place of instruments within the music of the Christian liturgies of the first millennium (1965), his later work focused on the organization and development of the Roman Mass. In the mid-1980s, McKinnon began ambitious studies into the origins of the Mass Proper. His examination of psalmody in the ancient synagogue argued that psalmody did not have its origins in Jewish practice as thought by earlier scholars such as Peter Wagner (McKinnon 1986). Instead, McKinnon posited a late fourth-century "psalmodic movement" that popularized psalm-singing in monastic communities and led to the formation of the Gradual as psalm-singing became a greater part of both monastic and lay liturgical expression (1987; 1994).

Building on his earlier understanding of the development of psalm-singing, McKinnon embarked in the final years of his life upon a daunting endeavor: to trace the development of other elements of the Mass Proper. The resulting study, compiled in the final months of McKinnon's life and published posthumously as *The Advent Project* (2000), argued that the Proper was the result of a project organized by the Schola Cantorum in Rome in the late seventh century. What is remarkable about McKinnon's theory is that the Mass Propers, far from being the result of centuries of development

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and transformation, were the product of a burst of focused activity that provided the temporal and sanctoral cycles with much of their textual and musical material. McKinnon's work has been met with fascination and critique, raising many provocative questions about the development of early chant.[1]

The essays compiled in *Western Plainchant in the First Millennium* are the beginning of an engagement with McKinnon's challenging ideas. This commendable, if slightly uneven, collection explores a number of methodologies, including manuscript studies, exegetical concerns of genre and liturgy, and problems of medieval music theory and chant analysis. Its breadth documents the state of the field, testifying to the depth and richness of chant studies.

The eighteen essays cover a broad range of contemporary issues in chant studies. Joseph Dyer and Peter Jeffery engage with McKinnon's "psalmodic movement" thesis and explore in greater detail the processes by which congregational psalm-singing arose. Nancy van Deusen, Theodore Karp, and Calvin Bower each explore aspects of the sequence in a particularly illuminating group of essays, while Kenneth Levy, Edward Nowacki, and John Boe explore sources and analytical strategies for Old Roman chant. Essays by Thomas J. Talley, Alejandro Planchart, Ruth Steiner, David Hiley, Lázsló Dobszay, David G. Hughes, and Thomas Forest Kelly chart the courses of development of particular feasts, offices, repertoires, and groups of manuscripts. Charles Atkinson furthers his work on the connections between music and grammar in the advent of notation, while Michel Huglo finds in the diagrams of the *Musica Isidori* a tantalizing connection to the scale of Old Hispanic chant. The collection is rounded out by Richard Crocker's reflections on the performance of nuance markings from the St. Gall and Laon manuscripts. (The volume also includes a compact disc that provides numerous musical examples from the essays sung by Crocker.)

Both Joseph Dyer and Peter Jeffery's contributions are particularly admirable for their expansion of McKinnon's work on psalm-singing in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Dyer's "The Desert, the City and Psalmody in the Late Fourth Century" differentiates the types of monastic disciplines that were practiced in the fourth century. Weaving together numerous early sources on monastic life in the fourth and fifth centuries, Dyer shows that the diversity of devotional activities which characterized monastic life ranged from inaudible rumination to deliberate and measured recitation of memorized verses that were akin to "a muted rumble or hum" (17). Dyer argues that the desert monks' devotion to the psalms was great, but that credit for the development of psalm-singing in the larger Christian community should be given to urban ascetics. These urban monastic com-

munities, especially those of Palestine, Syria, and Cappodocia, were directly connected to the urban churches and their lay congregations. This link between lay and monastic communities provided a crucial point of contact that popularized congregational psalmody. Dyer's article is commendable both for this needed reassessment of the musical and liturgical transmission in late antiquity and its correction of our historical myopia through consultation of the widest variety of sources.

In "Monastic Reading and the Emerging Roman Chant Repertory," Peter Jeffery examines the transformation of the Gradual's performance from a congregational activity to a solitary, monastic one. Using many of the same patristic sources as Dyer, Jeffery begins his investigation by emphasizing the importance of Jerusalem in the dissemination of responsorial psalmody. The liturgical practices of its churches, especially their psalmodic vigils and congregational psalm-singing, moved from east to west in the fourth century, transmitted by the continual flow of pilgrims to and from Jerusalem. Drawing on McKinnon's own work with these sources, Jeffery posits a mid-fourth-century origin in the east and a late fourth-century expansion to the west.

The problem, as he constructs it, is how best to understand what became of congregational psalm-singing once references to it disappear from the sermons of the church fathers. Jeffery notes that fourth-century homiletic literature ceases to be a valuable source of information because the office of preaching had been extended beyond well-educated bishops to priests and deacons. The patristic authors' sermons were recycled, compiled, and anthologized to serve the needs of these new preachers and guarantee a measure of quality. These anthologies show initial liturgical orderings of psalms that are analogous to the type of "properization" that McKinnon discusses in *The Advent Project*. Citing the commentary of Arnobius the Younger, Jeffery argues that monastic sources bear witness to an early medieval exegetical tradition that transformed the psalms from a category of reading, whose status perpetuated its inclusion in homilies of the fourth-century, to a category of prayer in which the monk offered a sacrifice of praise primarily in the celebration of the Divine Office. Treating the psalms as personal prayer led to the reservation of psalm-singing for clerical and monastic choirs while the Mass Ordinary was delegated to the congregation. Jeffery's view contrasts sharply with the theory of some "undocumentable mania for virtuosity" (82).[2] Jeffery's work indicates to no small degree that the history of Roman monasticism parallels the history of Roman chant.

Where exegetical concerns and commentary traditions led Jeffery and Dyer to reconsider the development of psalmody in the early medieval lit-

urgy, Nancy van Deusen uses similar psalmic commentaries to explore the meaning of the sequence to medieval Christians. Her essay "Songs of Exile, Songs of Pilgrimage" offers a brief yet thoughtful examination of Augustine and Cassiodorus' commentaries on Psalm 136. Van Deusen argues that the sequence can be understood as a transitional song both by virtue of its liturgical position between Alleluia and Gospel and its textual content. Sung at the midpoint of the Mass, the sequence's "central themes are those that have roots in the Old Testament, and resolution and clarification in the New Testament" (113). It acts as a newly-composed psalm whose poetic text is ripe for the exegetical treatment that made the psalms so rich a corpus of devotional texts. Though I would have liked to have seen her draw on later medieval commentaries to elaborate her use of Augustine and Cassiodorus, van Deusen's understanding of the sequence as a song poised "between goals—the song of the Lord in a strange country" remains compelling (114); her essay is a fine example of how we might come to terms with religious and musical meaning in the genre of the sequence.

Calvin M. Bower's "From Alleluia to Sequence: Some Definitions of Relations" and Theodore Karp's "Some Notkerian Sequences in Germanic Print Culture of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," also enhance our understanding of issues surrounding the sequence. Bower's essay reconsiders the origins of the sequence from the point of view of the Alleluia and identifies the earliest layer of the sequence repertoire as *alleluia cum sequentia*. His extensive manuscript comparisons explore three relationships between the two genres: name, melodic incipit, and liturgical association. Bower's conclusion shows that at their beginning, the Alleluia, verse, and sequence were interrelated as a magnificent prelude to the gospel; only later did the sequence begin to develop as a distinct genre with unique aesthetic concerns.

Theodore Karp's essay considers the printed Würzburg *Graduale Herbipolense* (1583 A.D.) and its repertoire of sequences. After considering the variants in sequence sources, he concludes that "differences of dialect exist in the Sequence repertory in a manner similar to Proper chants of both Mass and Office" (425). The repertory in the *Graduale Herbipolense* is also a testament to the popularity of the sequence in the Würzburg area while it declined elsewhere in Europe after the Council of Trent banned the use of all but a limited number.

Kenneth Levy's contribution, "*Tollite portas*: An Ante-Evangelium Reclaimed?" is the first of three articles to explore Old Roman chant. He compares three northern Italian chants belonging to the Old Roman tradition with a text derived from *Tollite portas* of Psalm 23.[3] These chants are what Levy calls "multiples": chants with similar liturgical position and function

that have some musical similarities. These similarities, Levy argues, are attributable not to literate transition but "to independent aural descent from common aural sources" (234). Levy then compares the Florence *Tollite* with a Gregorian *Tollite* and finds that they share both a high G mode and some elements of melodic contour. He suggests that all of these chants may descend from "a common Gallican modal-melodic formulation that by ca. 700 was well enough attached to Psalm 23:7 for it to retain something of its musical profile when given a variety of liturgical assignments and subjected to a variety of local idiomatic remodelings" (237). Levy's argument is meant to bolster his own theory of chant transmission: that chant repertoire flowed from Gaul to Rome instead of moving from Rome to Gaul, as is commonly accepted. Thus, he views the possible common Gallican origin of the *Tollite* chants as evidence of this reversed flow that influenced the later Gregorian *Tollite*.[4]

At the heart of this essay is a problematic assertion. Levy hypothesizes that Frankish cantors found the received Roman chant presented as

> too prolix and repetitious; its constant melodic twistings, which were scarcely distinguishable from one another, suited it poorly for the task of memorization faced by each of the empire's choirmasters when the new Gregorian edition circulated. (237)

I have two objections to Levy's hypothesis. First, Levy's focus on literate transmission fails to take into account that the "Gregorian edition," as he calls it, was most likely not an edition of any kind but an oral tradition performed by cantors versed in the Roman liturgy. Second, his argument that the melodies of Roman chant were too difficult to memorize seems more the result of the repertoire's novelty to the Franks than anything inherent in the melodic structure of the Roman chant.[5] This point is made quite forcefully in the next essay in the volume, which turns to the analysis of Old Roman melodies.

Edward Nowacki also addresses the problem of memorization and musical structure in Old Roman chant. In "Reading the Melodies of the Old Roman Mass Proper: A Hypothesis Defended," Nowacki argues that Old Roman chant employs trichordal structures, many of which were applicable to several modal environments and were themselves pre-modal concepts. Nowacki presents a theory of the modes that considers them "labile, establishing their sure footing only at key moments in the structure, and often only at the very end" (323). He argues that this is a long-recognized feature of E mode chants which often present a "Dorian physiognomy" by emphasizing D–F and F–A thirds, only establishing E as a focus at the end of the chant. Through his analysis of other modes, Nowacki is convinced that this

trichordal structure pervades the entirety of the Old Roman musical language. This emphasis on the intervallic structure of these chant leads Nowacki to answer the criticism, made by Levy as well as McKinnon, that Old Roman chant is difficult to memorize. "Surely," he says, "anything that would promote distinctiveness, such as the identification of certain figures with certain intervallic structures, would make this task [of memorization] more feasible" (322).

The remaining essays in this collection focus on the "central question" of Gregorian chant eloquently articulated by Oliver Strunk: "How can we control the evidence of our oldest manuscripts? To what extent does their melodic tradition reflect that of earlier times?" (1977:60–61). Alejandro Enrique Planchart's "The Geography of Martinmas" and David Hiley's "Style and Structure in Early Offices of the Sanctorale," attempt to exert some control of the evidence in light of McKinnon's understanding of properization. Planchart's survey of the Proper chants for the Mass of St. Martin of Tours reveals that numerous projects for this saint's feast were undertaken on both sides of the Alps, revealing a discontinuity between the Roman and early Gregorian masses. Planchart sees two consequences of this discontinuity for our understanding of Martinmas. First, St. Martin may have been venerated at St. Peter's in the seventh century and at the Lateran in the twelfth. Second, Planchart believes that the transmission of the chants for Martinmas may reaffirm Bruno Stäblein's hypothesis that the liturgy sent to Pepin and Charlemagne was a papal liturgy selective in its inclusion and exclusion of particular feasts important in other basilicas. Though this is a thoughtful essay, I would have liked to see Planchart explore why St. Martin's cult was propagated with such vigor in the communities for which these masses were composed.

David Hiley's contribution examines the feast of St. Wolfgang (canonized 1052 A.D.) as another example of the properization of particular feasts. Hiley turns his attention to the stylistic description of various Office chants in hopes that they may provide guideposts for an inquiry into the Divine Offices similar to *The Advent Project*. He examines in detail one antiphon from the office of St. Wolfgang—*Gaudeat tota*, composed by Hermanus Contractus—as an example of eleventh-century chant style. In the music, Hiley notes a general tendency for these chants to divide tonal space into distinct segments that are bounded by the *finalis*, upper fifth, and upper octave. Hiley also argues that this new approach to tonal space is consistent with the trend in eleventh-century theoretical writing in which "modality is defined in terms of scale segments, namely the fourth below the *finalis*, the fifth above it, the fourth between the upper fifth and the upper octave, and even the fifth above that" (159). The segments correspond to the bound-

aries of tonal space explored in the melodies of Wolfgang's office.

This segmented construction of Hermannus' *Gaudeat tota* provides what Hiley calls an extreme example of this tonal tendency, linking it to the localized influence of the composer-theorist at the monastery of St. Emmeram in Regensburg. The chants of Hermannus Contractus are not the only examples of such tonal organization. The twelfth century, Hiley states, is a "time of consolidation" with the appearance of rhymed Offices that exhibit such melodic structures. Hiley suggests that chants which offer the greatest promise of analysis are those which have been composed as "projects," by determining if they display the particular handling of tonal space as seen in Hermannus' chant.

As Hiley notes in his consideration of the manuscript transmission of Office chants, the greatest divergences occur in series of Matins antiphons, leading him to assert that "whatever archetype may have existed in the early ninth century, it did not include Matins antiphons" (160). However, I would caution against too great an emphasis on the archetypes as a guiding research principle for the Divine Office. Offices such as the one for St. Wolfgang were ritual performances through which local communities mediated their identities. The Divine Office is a much more fluid set of liturgical practices whose individualistic nature, circumscribed by geography and community, is the rule and not the exception.[6]

Despite these reservations, I find Hiley persuasive in his argument that numerically ordered series of antiphons and pieces composed in a modern style similar to Hermannus' chants for Wolfgang constitute later office compositions. The musicians of the eleventh century, it seems, initiated their own compositional projects that achieved limited distribution. This "modern" style, however, eventually achieved dominance throughout Europe and made its way into the majority of the chant repertory.

David G. Hughes' contribution, "From the Advent Project to the Late Middle Ages: Some Issues of Transmission," reports on the author's recent work on the earliest manuscript traditions using computer models. By exploring variations among manuscripts of French origin, he attempts to show that the introduction of notation, at its inception, codified a tradition that was universally stable but became increasingly varied. Staff notation, he argued, only increased variations through scribal error and the introduction of aesthetic preferences such as pitch alterations of E to F and B to C. These assertions provoke numerous questions. Is Hughes content, for example, with McKinnon's hypothesis of the development of the unified tradition to which the earliest manuscript sources seem to attest? Does the localization of musical practices lead to uniformity with early literate procedures only to become more localized with the introduction of pitch specific notation?

Hughes hazards a guess as to the use of notation as a "defensive weapon by means of which a cantor could say, 'Our way is the right way, *and we have this notated gradual to prove it*'"(185). Yet this statement assumes that notation had acquired authoritative value over the coexistent oral repertory. This seems unlikely in a culture in which orality and literacy were value-free endpoints of a fluid continuum.

Thomas Forest Kelly's "The Modal Neumes at Sens" takes an interesting look at the use and abuse of tradition in printed chant collections in the eighteenth century. Kelly interrogates the claim made by Léonard Poisson in his 1745 treatise *Nouvelle méthode, ou Traité théorique et pratique du plain-chant* that the melismas added to responsories (known as neumes) had been retained from "an ancient and uninterrupted usage." Kelly argues that the chants were accretions introduced with the adoption of the neo-Gallican liturgy at Sens (443 A.D.). He questions how long the neumes remained in use at Sens, wondering if their use persisted until the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65 A.D.). This, I would argue, is not likely. As accretions to the neo-Gallican liturgy, the neumes most likely fell out of use in the latter half of the nineteenth century with the return of the French church to the Roman rite.

Two essays by Charles M. Atkinson and Michel Huglo explore the manuscript transmission of music theory, emphasizing the relevance of Latin grammatical treatises and classical philosophy to chant studies. Atkinson's "Glosses on Music and Grammar and the Advent of Music Writing in the West" continues his earlier exploration of the connection between Latin grammatical treatises and the origin of music notation in which he argued that the Latin acute accent became the Paleofrankish *podatus*, the grave became the *clivus*, and the circumflex became the *torculus* (1995). This article explores the commentary tradition on Latin grammatical texts, specifically Donatus' *Ars maior* (late fourth century A.D.) and Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (early fifth century A.D.) which served as grammatical authorities in Carolingian education. In a fascinating examination of the glosses, Atkinson finds not only consistent descriptions of singing but also sections pertaining to prosodic accents that were neumed. Atkinson offers a compelling complement to his previous study that reveals how the intellectual and musical milieu of the Carolingian era created an environment fertile for the beginnings of notation.

In "The Diagrams Interpolated into the Musica Isidori and the Scale of Old Hispanic Chant," Michel Huglo examines the musical diagrams that accompany the manuscripts of Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* and finds connections not only to Plato's *Timaeus* but also to the scale used in Old Hispanic chant. The lambdoid diagram, as it is called, indicates a relation-

ship to Porphyry's lost commentary on the *Timaeus*. The diagram that gives the scale of Old Hispanic chant shows us a scale formed from two disjunct tetrachords, each structured as tone–semitone–tone, just as in the *Musica enchiriadis*. From the similarities between the scales used in Old Hispanic and Old Gallican chant, Huglo argues for a common source in the scale of Byzantine chant. The Platonic diagrams that are interpolated into the *Musica Isidori* testify to the importance of fourths, fifths, and octaves in the composition of Old Hispanic chant as well "as in Gregorian chant—the heir to Gallican chant" (256).

The moral center of this collection, however, is László Dobszay's essay "Concerning a Chronology for Chant." Railing against an "agnosticism" that has pervaded chant studies in the preceding decades and the "grapholatria" that entices some to consider chant knowable only after the advent of notation, Dobszay holds up McKinnon's work as an example of what might be done to combat such trends. Dobszay reiterates his call for a rapprochement between ethnomusicology and chant studies, arguing that memory was powerful enough to sustain as well as shape many chronological layers of chant composition. "Without the experiences accumulated in the study of living oral cultures," he writes, "one cannot fully understand the living conditions and historical dimensions of a repertory where notation was of a secondary character in relation to sound production" (219). Dobszay decries positivism and agnosticism "as twin brothers" that limit scholars' activities where documentary evidence is thin. As a remedy, he suggests that chant scholars' hypotheses should be accompanied by indices of data that allow for revision and reconsideration by others, thus allowing chant studies to be guided by "intelligentia instead of ratio" (227).

The sheer bounty and diversity of scholarship contained within *Western Plainchant in the First Millennium* is a fitting tribute to the life and work of James McKinnon. Far from settling any debates that have invigorated chant scholarship in the past decades, *Western Plainchant* raises as many questions as it answers. From manuscript transmission, to cultural understandings of ritual performance, to the transformation of theory and analysis, the essays in this volume show that there is rarely consensus on any particular topic—especially regarding chant in the first millennium. But they also beautifully demonstrate the plurality of approaches necessary to gain even the simplest understanding of plainchant. The interdependence of these scholars' work, as in the clusters of articles around such subjects as the sequence or Old Roman chant, exemplify this necessity. It is the strength of our field and the direction in which McKinnon's legacy points us.

Notes

1. See Dyer (2001) and Jeffery (2003).

2. For Jeffery's summary of the theory of virtuosity as a cause for the decrease in congregational singing see Jeffery (1992:112–14).

3. The three *Tollite* chants are taken from Verona, BC 107, fol. 92, London, BL Add. 34209, and Florence, BNC, Conv. sopp. F III 565, fol.2.

4. Levy has elaborated upon his theory in a series of articles elsewhere and only briefly recapitulates his main points here. See Levy (2003).

5. Levy has discussed his theory of a notated antiphoner as early as the late eighth century in *Gregorian Chant and the Carolingians* (1998). His theories have most recently been critiqued in Treitler (2003). Other recent writings on the interplay between orality and literacy in medieval music include Boynton (2003) and Karp (1998).

6. On the issues involved in the study of the Divine Office see Fassler and Baltzer (2000). See especially Jeffery (2000) in this regard.

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