MUSICAL NOTATION AND LITURGICAL BOOKS
IN LATE CAROLINGIAN NONANTOLA

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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Introduction

In the preface to the second volume of the *Paléographie musicale* (1891) – the first of the two dedicated to the comparative study of the gradual *Instus ut palma* – the Solesmes scholar Dom Mocquereau first coined the term *nonantolienne* to refer to the type of musical notation associated with the northern Italian Benedictine abbey of St Sylvester in Nonantola.¹ What seems likely to have been simply a working definition for use in the semiological studies of the French abbey eventually conferred on this particular music script the status of an independent notational canon. This recognition, together with the graphic peculiarities that certainly distinguish the Nonantolan music script, ensured that this notation ‘très curieuse, et si particulièrement exceptionelle’ would occupy a place in every major musicological overview on neumatic notations in the last century. Along with its description in general overviews, Nonantolan notation has also been the object of some specific studies in the past forty years. However, many aspects of it are still lacking a full and in-depth analysis, without which our understanding of one of the most important music scripts from the early Middle Ages cannot be complete.

The present study will address, in particular, two main issues that have been hitherto unexplored or only partially dealt with by previous scholarship. Firstly, how did Nonantolan notation function in the written representation of sound? Secondly, what were the cognitive processes involved in the creation and development of this notational type? In order to answer these questions, it is of pivotal importance to place the early use of a music script at the Benedictine abbey in the precise cultural environment that produced this canon. This involves the study of dynamics that have been previously considered tangential to the analysis of a music script, such as the abbey’s institutional history – ecclesiastical, political and liturgical – and manuscript production – texts, script, decoration and book-making – as the outcomes of complex cultural and social interactions. Musical notation is, in every sense, a manifestation of an intricate net of relationships between written culture, orality and institutional connections.

Because of this study’s particular focus on the early phase of development of Nonantolan notation, the primary sources for the musical graphs discussed here will be the oldest surviving notated manuscripts and fragments. Their study, particularly their dating, will constitute a first

¹ *Paléographie Musicale [= PM],* vol. 2 (Solesmes: Imprimerie Saint-Pierre, 1891), pp. 23–25, Tables 11–18. ‘Il existe cependant en Italie une notation très curieuse, et si particulièrement exceptionelle [...] elle n’est arrivée à sa perfection que dans le célèbre monastère de Saint-Silvestre de Nonantola [...] c’est pourquoi nous donnerons désormais à cette notation le nom de *nonantolienne*,’ pp. 23, 25.
and crucial step towards the correct interpretation of the importance and historic role of the abbey’s music writing. Because the analysis of the text script is inextricably connected to the development of the monastic institution and its library, Chapter 1 will delineate the history of the abbey from its foundation to the early eleventh century, focusing specifically on ecclesiastical and political relationships with transalpine communities and other centres of the Carolingian empire during the course of the ninth century. The second half of the chapter will be devoted to a reconstruction of the formative phases of the early monastic library, its manuscript production, the evolution of the institutional type of minuscule script, and the collection of texts preserved in the surviving corpus of manuscripts.

A series of palimpsest folios in the manuscript Vatican, Biblioteca Vaticana, Pal. lat. 862, and a gathering in the composite manuscript Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sessoriano 96 are here argued to represent the earliest examples of Nonantolan notation among the manuscripts recorded in published lists of surviving notated manuscripts, and it is on them that this study of the music script will be based. These sources will be examined in detail in Chapter 2. In particular, the palaeography of the text script will be analysed in the context of the picture that has emerged in the previous chapter in order to resolve the issues surrounding the dating of the manuscripts, especially that of the gathering in Sessoriano 96. The codicology of these sources will be also studied in depth, especially in the case of the complex reconstruction of the palimpsest in Pal. lat. 862. The most recent techniques of digital image restoration have been employed, for the first time, to access the hidden musical and textual material of the original Nonantolan manuscript. Finally, a complete transcription of the contents of Sessoriano 96 and Pal. lat. 862 will be provided.

The study of the liturgy preserved in these manuscripts will be presented in Chapter 3. The transmission of liturgical texts is of primary importance for the understanding of the particular practice at Nonantola and sheds light on its possible relationships with other traditions or monastic centres. In the case of Pal. lat. 826, the presence of the Gloria trope Pax sempiterna and its particular sequence of verses will be, among other features, crucial pieces of evidence for corroborating the localisation of the manuscript provenance in Nonantola. Sessoriano 96, on the other hand, transmits a distinctive organization of chants for the office and mass of St Benedict, as well as a series of marginalia that will reveal further details about the history of this particular gathering and of the individuals that had access to it. Moreover, the office chants will be studied for their textual correspondences with passages from the Life of St Benedict that forms Book II of the Dialogi by Gregory the Great, to provide an insight into the shaping of the saint’s liturgy in Carolingian Nonantola.
Once the precise cultural and historical context and the date of the manuscript sources have been established, a complete analysis of Nonantolan notation will be presented in Chapter 4. Music signs will be studied for their use and function, mainly in comparison with other main notational families from the same period. As stated in the introductory remarks to the chapter, the focus will be in particular on the behaviour of signs and graphs as part of a music script and on their relationship with the representation of sound and its transmission. The treatment of pitch and the graphic means exploited by Nonantolan scribes for its realisation will also constitute part of the analysis. The study of the set of signs that form Nonantolan music script will make a distinction between signs in isolation on a syllable and those employed in combination with other signs for larger melodic movements, which differ considerably in their shape and use.

The final chapter will be devoted to the exploration of the design and development phase of Nonantolan notation. In particular, essential graphic elements used in the formation of graphs will be identified and their notational origin revealed. A discussion of the basic notational layer that may have reached Nonantola will also be presented. The study will aim to provide an insight into the cognitive processes in the minds of the early Nonantolan notators: how signs and sign-meaning were perceived and what may have been the dynamics of the scribes’ approach to the range of techniques used in the creation of musical graph. This chapter will complete the various levels of investigation on the way music was written in the northern Italian abbey in the last decades of the ninth century, and results will be presented in the Conclusions.

Before delving into the study proper, it is necessary to illustrate here the status quaestionis of Nonantolan notation as emerging from all previous studies. In 1891, the Benedictine monk Dom Mocquereau proposed a relationship between the newly-identified Nonantolan notation and the so-called Bolognese type (e.g. as found in Roma, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 123), suggesting the latter to be a possible antecedent of the former, mainly because of the particular length of the virgae, which often carries a pitch indication. Mocquereau’s comparison influenced later studies, generating one of the most problematic aspects of the interpretation of the Nonantolan graphs. Johannes Wolf drew on the Solesmes position and defined the characteristic signs for a single note in isolation on a syllable as ‘long, almost vertical virgae’, comparing them to the Bolognese notation of the troper-proser Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2824. In his Monumenti Vaticani di paleografia musicale, Bannister proposed a reading of Nonantolan graphs by defining them, according to the classification of accent-neumes and point-neumes, as ‘mixed points’

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2 PM 2, p. 25.
Gregório María Suñol began his short description of Nonantolan notation with a question concerning the presence of this music script in other northern Italian centres. The Italian *notació primitiva* (e.g. Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. 4770, 10646 and Ottob. 167) may be, according to Suñol, at the base of the Nonantolan music script, and he denied a direct descent from Bolognese notation. Further reflections were proposed by Paolo Ferretti in a few pages of his *Étude sur la notation Aquitaine*, focusing in particular on the *membra disiecta* of a gradual in Nonantolan notation now in Monza and Milano. Rather than an actual study, Ferretti gave a description of some of the features of the music script and its treatment of pitch, which he compared to that in Aquitanian notation. Giuseppe Vecchi leant towards the notation’s independent genesis in the northern Italian monastery, while pointing to Bolognese notation as a possible notational basis for the Nonantolan canon. Of a different opinion is Ugo Sesini, who considered instead a possible relationship with Lotharinginan notation. Vollaerts included the Nonantolan music writing among the ‘rhythmic notations’ and shared with Jammers the idea of a connection with Aquitanian notation. After the first half of the last century, speculation about the origin of Nonantolan graphs – often rather impressionistic and with numerous problems in their chronology of surviving notated sources – was left behind in order to focus more on semiological issues and on the interpretation of musical signs.

In 1970 Ave Moderini published the first and, until now, only monograph on Nonantolan notation. The two volumes are divided into, respectively, a catalogue of sources and a study of the notation, complemented by an appendix with musical transcriptions and tables. The limitations of Moderini’s study, especially issues in the reading and consequent interpretation of graphs, have been highlighted by Nino Albarosa in later studies. Furthermore, Moderini did not fully engage in the analysis of possible relationships between Nonantolan music script and other major notations, remaining only at the level of a very superficial comparison and

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7 PM 13, p. 82.
12 See below, note 17.
thus missing some of the most interesting peculiarities of the musical script. In *Schriftbild der einstimmigen Musik*, Bruno Stäblein proposed a chronology of Nonantolan notation in two *Epochen*, corresponding to manuscripts in adiastematic notation (tenth to eleventh century) and on staff (late eleventh century to twelfth). In Stäblein’s diagram of neumatic notations, the formative phase of Nonantolan notation is set to around 900 (‘um 900’) and he identifies in the Palaeofrankish (as in the Breton notation of Angers, Bibliothèque de la Ville, MS 91) the possible notational substratum from which the Nonantolan canon was developed, along with other notations of the group *Italienisch*. A noteworthy aspect of the Stäblein’s classification is that the genesis of other Italic notations – such as the so-called Bolognese and the notations of Novalesa, Mantova/Verona, and central Italy and Benevento – is considered to have taken place also around the year 900, despite the fact that none of them appears in manuscript sources before the middle of the tenth century to the start of the eleventh. In *Die Neumen*, Solange Corbin simply described the main graphic features of this notation and argues for its belonging to the group of *accent neumes*. Corbin presents an interesting consideration concerning the difficulty of distinguishing, in Nonantolan notation, between a ‘*punctum*’ and a ‘*virga*’ when they are connected graphically to the corresponding syllable. Corbin also noted a strong relationship with Aquitaninan notation, mostly in cases when signs are not connected to the chant text.

The most complete and fundamental contribution to the study of Nonantolan notation to date is by Nino Albarosa. Originating as a review of Moderini’s volumes, Albarosa’s study analysed every musical graph in detail, taking a strictly semiological approach. Albarosa did not, however, engage in a discussion of the role and historic weight of surviving notated sources, but treated the Nonantolan music script mainly as a uniform and coherent phenomenon. Lastly, for Giacomo Baroffio ‘Nonantola may have conserved and developed a neumatic type parallel to an ancient Italic musical repertory’ of which the *Cantatorium* – now in the abbey museum and dating to the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth – would preserve important

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14 Stäblein, *Schriftbild*, p. 27.

Some recent studies on the presence of Nonantolan notation outside the abbey have considered the hypothesis that this music script may not have been created at the Benedictine abbey. Kitty Messina published two studies of the membri disiecta, now divided between Monza and Milan, coming from a gradual that was once kept in the chapter library in Monza and may have been destroyed there to be used as binding material.\footnote{K. Messina, ‘La tradizione liturgica di Nonantola nei frammenti monzesi’, Rivista Internazionale di Musica Sacra 23 (2002), pp. 149–169; K. Messina, ‘I neumi nonantolani nel patrimonio frammentario monzese’, Studi Gregoriani 20 (2004), pp. 85–125.} According to Messina, while the notation should be considered Nonantolan, the place of compilation may have been a different one, such as Verona.\footnote{K. Messina, ‘La tradizione’, p. 153.} However, it is difficult to understand why a Monza provenance should be discarded, especially since the chapter library preserves other traces of the presence of Nonantolan notation: the marginalia in the sacramentary Monza, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS f 1/101, dating to the middle of the tenth century, as well as a later notated ritual MS b 15/128, possibly compiled in Monza in the early years of the following century.\footnote{R. Dalmonte, Catalogo musicale del duomo di Monza (Bologna: Forni, 1969), p. 20–23, 28.} In her articles, Messina did not comment on or indeed mention these manuscripts, but a specific study is needed to assess whether there may be actual evidence of a Monzese development of the Nonantolan canon, as it appears, or if its presence was due simply to scribes coming from and having trained there. From a first survey, the chronology of surviving notated sources in Monza reveals that the earliest traces of notation in the tenth century are Nonantolan and that only at a later stage was this canon replaced by an East Frankish type, possibly due to the strong presence of Germanic ecclesiastical figures.\footnote{For example, the manuscripts c 12/75 (antiphoner, eleventh century), c 13/76 (gradual, eleventh century) and the annotation in b 20/136 (f. 135v). See Dalmonte, Catalogo, respectively pp. 17–20, 10–12, 36.} Nonantolan graphs may have reached Monza through the practices of individuals trained at the Benedictine abbey who found refuge in Monza after the destruction of the abbey in 899, or during the following phase of decline in the first decades of the tenth century.
century, thus creating a ‘monzese’ type of this notation. Moreover, this local type itself differs, in the shape of certain graphs, from those traces of Nonantolan music script in Verona: these do not appear until well into the eleventh century, and moreover their design and use seem to be closer to those manuscripts that were surely compiled in Nonantola than to examples from Monza. However, an in-depth study of the presence of Nonantolan notation in Verona is still lacking. Many traces of notation dating to the middle of the eleventh century have been attributed to the cantor Stephen, compiler of the Carthus, the liber ordinarius of Verona cathedral, and the tonary in the manuscript Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XCIV (89). Other traces are found in the following manuscripts: LXXXVI (81) (sacramentary with chant incipits in margins, tenth to eleventh century, Nonantolan and Veronese notation); LXXXVII, addenda (tenth century, Nonantolan and Veronese notation); LXXXVIII (83) (office of St John the Evangelist, eleventh century); XCIII (92) (antiphoner, Verona, eleventh century, alaphabetic, Nonantolan and Veronese notations); CII (missal, eleventh to twelfth century); CIII (antiphoner-hymnary, twelfth to thirteenth century); CIV (palimpsest fragment, eleventh century); CV (98) (missal, eleventh to twelfth century, Nonantolan and Veronese notations); CVII (psalter-hymnary, late twelfth century); CIX (102) (hymnary, eleventh to twelfth century); CIX, f. 72v (notated hymn, twelfth century); XCIV and LXXXVII (marginalia in Nonantolan notation).

Once Nonantola rose again in the early eleventh century, other influential figures moved to other nearby centres. This is evident from the presence of Nonantolan neumes in an eleventh-century missal, probably compiled in Bergamo and now in the composite manuscript Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, CLVI, as demonstrated by Gionata Brusa. Nonantolan monks also reached the city of Mantua, as can be seen from the many musical additions to the gradual-troper-sequentiary Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS CVII (105). The isle of Torcello near Venice also employed Nonantolan neumes because of its institutional affiliation. The distinctive ‘torcellese’ style can be seen in Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2679, and in four palimpsest bifolia recently found in the Priesterseminar of Brixen/Bressanone in South Tyrol/Alto Adige. The bifolia come from a gradual dating to the end of the eleventh century and were reused, possibly still in the Veneto area, some hundred years later for the copying of a gradual in square notation. Unlike the sources for other notational families, surviving Nonantolan notated sources

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22 For the presence of Nonantolan neumes in Verona see the list in Baroffio, ‘Music Writing Styles’, p. 111, note 36. For the catalogue of liturgical manuscripts dating from before 1100 in the Biblioteca Capitolare see S. Polloni, I più antichi codici liturgici della Biblioteca Capitolare di Verona (Sec. 5.–11.) (Verona: Archivio Storico Curia Diocesana, 2012).
24 I am grateful to Dr G. Gabrielli (Bolzano/Bozen) for bringing these fragments to my attention.
are scarce and often fragmentary, especially for the early phase of this particular type. The reconstruction and comprehension of the musico-graphic phenomenon at one of the most influential institutions in the north of the Italic peninsula has been challenging and often limited. Furthermore, discordant opinions on the reading of musical graphs and their meaning, as outlined above, highlight the need for a new and comprehensive approach that will rely on a range of historical data, explored in the study of the abbey’s institutional history, its liturgy and its manuscript production, that will guide and support the correct interpretation of the Nonantolan music script.
Chapter 1

The abbey and its library: preconditions for a notation

1.1. The abbey of Nonantola (752–1100)

1.1.1. Anselm and the early years (752–803)

The abbey of St Sylvester in Nonantola was founded in 752 by Anselm, once duke of Friuli, with the help of a considerable grant of land from his brother-in-law, the Lombard king Aistulf, in the third year of his reign.²⁵ In 751 Aistulf had occupied the capital of the eastern Roman empire, Ravenna, and a few months later he demanded tribute from Rome and control over the castra of the Roman Campania: it was the moment at which the Lombard kingdom was at the peak of its expansion.²⁶ Anselm had already left his duties as duke of the northeastern part of the Regnum when he started leading a group of brothers in reclaiming the land from the marshes and woods of the Po plain where the monastery was to be constructed. The abbey was consecrated in 753 with the help of Archbishop Sergius of Ravenna († 769). The following year the relics of St Sylvester were transferred from Rome, helping the monastery to acquire prestige and importance, as well as lending it an influential political and strategic role aside from its religious authority.²⁷

For the Lombards, the foundation of the Nonantola abbey in finibus Aemiliae – i.e. at the most eastern border of the region of Emilia – was primarily a tactical choice. The decision to found an abbey in Nonantula was probably made before the Lombards’ conquest of nearby Ravenna. The archbishop’s see in Ravenna had jurisdiction over a vast territory, from the river Po in the north to Ancona in the south, comprising the exarchate of Ravenna and the duchy of the Pentapolis; Aistulf’s interest was therefore in placing an important and powerful monastic

²⁵ M. Branchi, Lo scriptorium e la biblioteca di Nonantola (Modena: Artestampa, 2011), p. 15. Much of the pre-1750 scholarship on Nonantola (Ughelli, Bollandistes, Mabillon, etc.) is mentioned and reviewed in G. Tiraboschi, Storia dell’Augusta Badia di San Silvestro di Nonantola (Modena: Società tipografica, 1784–1785). At present we lack a comprehensive monograph on the history of the abbey, while the most complete and recent bibliography on the subject can be found in Branchi, Lo scriptorium, pp. 397–441.
centre to mark the boundary and establish a religious and political stronghold. Meanwhile, the threat of a complete Lombard invasion of the papal see in Rome led Pope Stephen II to appeal to the Frankish court, and in 755 Pippin III moved his troops towards Italy.

At this time, most of the Italian peninsula was already Lombard, and Lombard politics permeated every level of its aristocracy. The newly installed abbot was exiled in 756 by the Lombard king to the southern Italian abbey of Montecassino. Although the exact reasons behind this are still unclear, it was probably because of Anselm’s favouring of Carolingian interests and his opposition to the party of king Desiderius. During Anselm’s period of exile, Nonantola was led ad interim by the priest Vigilantius, about whom we know very little; his name suggests a possible Lombard-Italic origin, and he was probably chosen from among Anselm’s first followers.

Having been seen as an internal threat to the Lombard monarchy, Anselm could return from exile only after northern Italy had fallen under Frankish rule. Charlemagne invaded Italy in 773 and defeated a Lombard army at the edge of the Alps. Between autumn 773 and June 774 he besieged Verona and the Lombard capital Pavia and crowned himself king. A primary Carolingian base was established at Verona and would play a major role in the planning of the next series of troop movements that Charlemagne would order. At this time, it is almost certain that Charlemagne sought Anselm’s advice and counsel. Prior to becoming a monk and abbot, Anselm had been duke of Friuli and a military commander of some note. Charlemagne, who

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29 Wickham, Early Medieval Italy, p. 46.
30 This may have been due to Anselm’s loyalty to the anti-Byzantine politics of Ratchids and Aistulf; see M. Dell’Omo, ‘Montecassino altomedievale: I secoli VIII e IX. Genesi di un simbolo, storia di una realtà’ in Il monachesimo italiano dall’età longobarda all’età ottoniana (secc. VIII–X), ed. G. Spinelli OSB (Casena: Centro storico benedettino italiano, 2006), p. 177. Sources do not agree on the number of years Anselm spent in the southern Italian abbey: the Nonantolan Catalogus abbatum says seven years, but the Catalogi rerum langobardorum says until the end of Desiderius’ reign, thus about sixteen years. See Monumenta Germaniae Historica [= MGH], Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI–IX, ed. G. Waits (Hannover, 1887), pp. 571 and 503. From the Catalogus abbatum nonantulanorum, we also know, however, that in Montecassino Anselm ‘beate vixit et multos codices adquisivit’, MGH 1878, p. 571. For a discussion of Anselm’s acquisitions see below, §§2.2.2–3.
31 According to the Catalogus abbatum the priest Vigilantius ‘feliciter Nonantolanum gubernavit coenobium et multa commoda ibidem acquisivit in libris et in alis multis rebus’, Bortolotti, Antica vita, p. 274. The importance of this ad interim abbot is not to be underestimated, given his possible role in the formation of the early Nonantolan library.
32 Anselm was able to return to Nonantola, possibly thanks to Charlemagne’s own intervention: see B. Bachrach, Charlemagne’s Early Campaigns (768–777): A Diplomatic and Military Analysis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 274.
surely enjoyed the visits of influential churchmen to his court, was now particularly in need of Anselm’s knowledge of Lombard politics, military tactics and geography, which would explain the abbot’s presence at Charlemagne’s headquarters in the spring of 776. Rule from across the Alps meant an absentee monarch. In 781 Charlemagne had his son Pippin crowned king of Italy (781–810) and Pippin headed an autonomous but, at the same time, dependent administration.

Following the establishment of this new geopolitical scenario, Anselm became one of Charlemagne’s most trustworthy ambassadors and was able to establish the basis for strengthening the abbey’s relationship with the Frankish court. Charlemagne in turn gave privileges and exemptions to Anselm, which de facto resulted in the abbey’s complete autonomy from local powers. Anselm died in 803, but the close collaboration with the Frankish emperors also continued under Anselm’s successors Peter and Ansfrith, resulting in arguably the most wealthy and powerful period in the early history of the abbey. Finally, the Nonantolan founder became St Anselm sometime in the tenth century, evidence of his cult being apparent by the end of that century.

1.1.2. Abbots Peter I and Ansfrith (804–837)

Peter I (fl. 804–824) became abbot in 804 and remained head of the monastery of Nonantola for some twenty years. Very little is known about the early years of Peter’s abbacy and his background; it is not known whether he was of Frankish origin or educated in a monastery north of the Alps, or even at the imperial court. Soon after conquering northern Italy, Charlemagne sponsored a gradual and systematic insertion of new figures recruited among loyal vassals from the elites of the regions annexed by the Franks, such as Burgundy, Alamannia and Bavaria. Among them were the Alemannic bishop Eginus of Verona (fl. ca. 780–799) and his successor Rathold (fl. 799/802–840), formerly a member of Eginus’s chapter clergy, both linked, like Waldo (fl. 786–806), bishop of Basel and administrator of the diocese of Pavia, to the Franco-Alemannic abbey of Reichenau. It is possible, then, that just as all the Lombard dukes were

34 Bachrach, Charlemagne’s Early Campaigns, p. 483.
38 Brachi, Le scriptorium, p. 29.
gradually removed from office and replaced after their deaths with Frankish counts, Anselm’s vacant see was also soon occupied by a Frankish clergyman, Peter.\footnote{Zoboli, \textit{Il monastero}, p. 36.}

In 813, Peter I was sent to Constantinople together with the then bishop of Trier, Amalarius of Metz († 850).\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 164–175.} The imperial court’s appointment of the two churchmen may have been based on their complementary skills and backgrounds. Amalarius’s competence in liturgy, liturgical studies and religious matters – most likely stimulated and fostered by his master Alcuin – distinguished him as a man of great intellect, and the new bishop of Trier soon became one of the most influential figures at Charlemagne’s court. Although we have relatively little knowledge of Peter I’s training as a clergyman, it is possible to imagine that the imperial crown chose him for his familiarity with Byzantine politics and customs. The relationship between the two ambassadors continued after their return from Constantinople: they carried on a correspondence and engaged in a debate over the Office.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 164–191, esp. 164–175. Amalarius even wrote an eighty-line poem for Peter I on their journey to the East, including ‘Quid pater, angustus repedes quid in equora calles?’, \textit{ibid.}, pp. 249–251.}

In 814, Louis the Pious, Charlemagne’s last surviving son, became sole emperor and in 817 he divided the administration of the empire; his eldest son Lothar was given Italy with the title of Emperor.\footnote{J. L. Nelson, ‘The Frankish Kingdom, 814–898: The West’ in \textit{The New Cambridge Medieval History}, ed. R. McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), vol. 2, p. 112.} Despite taking over a weaker military power, Charlemagne inherited a strong and well-organised state from the fallen Lombard kingdom. The influence of one administrative system on the other and the process of adaptation were quickly evident, particularly in Nonantola. In charters from the early decades of the ninth century, such terms as \textit{vassus}, \textit{scabinus}, \textit{comes palatii}, \textit{missus domini imperatoris}, \textit{curtis}, etc., began to be used in Nonantola—juridical terms that were almost completely absent in the documents of Anselm’s time.\footnote{Zoboli, \textit{Il monastero}, p. 36. See also C. Azzara, ‘Monachesimo e diritto tra regnum langobardorum e regnum Italiae’ in \textit{Il monachesimo italiano}, pp. 67–78, esp. 72–78.}

Peter I was certainly aware of this terminology, which demonstrated his knowledge of the Carolingian state and its legislation. Other parts of the Po valley were less receptive and continued using Lombard formulae even under Frankish rule.

There is no reason to doubt that Nonantola was, at this time, a very prominent religious and administrative centre, not only in the most northern part of the Italian peninsula, but also within the whole of the empire. During his abbacy, Peter I strengthened the abbey’s prestige and wealth with the acquisition of land, controlling over 400 square kilometres in the surrounding area.\footnote{B. Andreolli, ‘Terre monastiche: Evoluzione della patrimonialità nonantolana tra alto e basso medioevo’ in \textit{Il monachesimo italiano}, pp. 738–770, and Zoboli, \textit{Il monastero}, pp. 79–140.} After Peter I’s death in 824, Nonantola’s political prominence continued to increase
greatly; the abbey developed even closer links to the Frankish court during the abbacy of his successor Ansfrith (fl. 825–837). In 828, three years after his election, Ansfrith was sent to Constantinople by Louis the Pious, along with Halitgar, bishop of Cambrai. This was the second time that a Nonantolan abbot had acted as ambassador with legatine authority and was responsible for mediation between the Carolingian and Byzantine empires. If Peter I was chosen primarily for his knowledge of diplomacy and Byzantine customs, the court’s insistence on nominating Nonantolan abbots – demonstrated through Ansfrith’s ambassadorship – seems to show quite clearly that the abbey was, in essence, perceived as the ultimate outpost of Carolingian power in northern Italy. Nonantola and its abbots were thus active participants in the Frankish political world, and the imperial court’s interest in consolidating the Frankish presence in the territories south of the Alps led to the establishment of direct links with other Alemannic monastic communities. During the course of the century Nonantola would benefit from a network of relations with the most influential Benedictine monasteries of the empire such as Reichenau and St Gall.

1.1.3. Carolingian Nonantola and the libri memoriales

The most important witnesses of this network of relations are the libri memoriales – also called libri vitae or libri confraternitatum – from Reichenau and St Gall. These lists contain the names of those monks of sister communities to be remembered in their daily prayers. The link between Nonantola and St Gall was established at the time of abbot Grimaldus of St Gall (fl. 841–872), archchancellor to Louis the Pious, and was certainly in place around the year 865. The list of Nonantolan monks can be found in the St Gall Liber vitae (St Gall, Stiftsarchiv, C3 B55) and dates to the 860s. It is notable that the monastery at St Gall established a direct confraternity link with only two Italian abbeys: Bobbio (846) (thanks to the two abbeys’ common Irish foundation by St Gall in 612 and St Columbanus in 614, respectively) and Nonantola (860s), possibly for its importance and wealth. More than with any other centre in the rest of the peninsula, Nonantola

45 See Vita Hludowici imperatoris in MGH, Scriptores II (Hannover: Hahn, 1829), p. 613.
46 For a comparative study of the two lists see Schmid, ‘Anselm von Nonantola’.
was thus primarily in contact with foundations north of the Alps, ensuring a bond between the abbey and other centres of the empire, as promoted by Carolingian politics.  

The confraternity between Reichenau and Nonantola was probably established thanks to the personal relationship between two abbots. Both Haito of Reichenau (fl. 806–823) and Peter I were in close contact with the court in Aachen and both were sent to Constantinople, in 811 and 813/814 respectively. It is probable that Peter visited the abbey in Reichenau on his way to the imperial court in Aachen and that Haito may have stopped at Nonantola while travelling to Constantinople, so that the exchange of confraternity lists could already have begun in the 820s. The *liber confraternitatum* of the abbey of Reichenau (Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS Rh. hist. 27) dates to 826 and includes many later additions. This Reichenau list contains the names of the 851 monks that lived under Anselm and Peter I in the first seventy years of the abbey’s existence, while the later St Gall list contains more than a thousand names for Nonantola. Abbot Peter I appears at the head of a remarkable number for a community, a number that would make Nonantola one of the largest monastic centres in the whole of the empire. The veracity of this number has long been debated. However, what could seem like an exaggerated figure may instead be not far from reality: the *Vita Anselmi*, written in the early eleventh century, gives a not very different figure, stating that 1,144 monks were under their oversight. This may also be conceivable if we take into account the abbey’s dependencies and other foundations. In any case, Nonantola is certainly the centre with the highest number of names in the Reichenau *liber confraternitatum*.

1.1.4. *Calm before the storm* (837–899)

It is noteworthy that the period of weakness for the Carolingian empire after the *divisio imperii* and especially after the death of Charles the Bald (877) was mirrored by a general instability in the administration of the Nonantolan abbey. A total of ten abbots, in a period of just over sixty years, strove to keep the monastery up to the level of the early abbots’ legacy. The last two decades of the ninth century saw a period of stasis: with the empire under attack in the north and

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53 Ludwig, ‘I *libri memoriales*’, p. 150.
west by the Vikings, and facing internal struggles from Italy to the Baltic, from Hungary in the east to Aquitaine in the west, the efforts of the imperial court were absorbed by continuous threats. From 887 to 890, after the death of abbot Theoderic, the abbey’s previously uninterrupted succession of abbots came to a standstill, and in 891 the monastery was severely damaged by a fire; this was to be the first of a series of unfortunate events that led to the abbey’s longest period of decline. A few years later, in 899, Nonantola was completely destroyed by the Hungarians; many monks were killed in the raid and manuscripts were burnt. It would take more than a century for the monastery to recover from this shock: one hundred years of desolation and an absence of basic administration.

1.1.5. The ‘short’ tenth century (900–1001)

After the Hungarian invasion, Abbot Leopard (fl. 899–911/2) fled with the few surviving monks and remained hidden for some time. We are not told where this group of monks went or how long they stayed there, nor whether all returned to Nonantola once the crisis had settled. It is possible that some were hosted in nearby monasteries and decided to stay on. In any case, the abbey’s premises, reputation and power were now severely jeopardised and the splendour of the previous century irrevocably lost. Reconstructing this phase in the history of the abbey is arduous, since the very small amount of surviving documentation from tenth-century Nonantola – uncorrupted by later forgery – provides conflicting evidence. On one hand, the slow process of the abbey’s reconstruction, which started relatively early in the century, shows that the 899 devastation by the Hungarians did not completely eliminate the economical and organizational resources of the abbey. On the other hand, the apparently sparse production of documents and manuscripts (to judge from what has survived) shows that the tenth century was indeed a period

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55 In 885 Pope Adrian III died near Nonantola (in San Cesario sul Panaro) while travelling to Worms for an imperial diet. His body was then buried inside the church, where his relics are now kept. The Vita Adrianii was one of a series of texts, both hagiographical and historiographical, that were composed in Nonantola during the course of the eleventh century, aimed at reconstructing the sense of identity and historical heritage after the desolation of the preceding century (see below, §2.1.6).

56 ‘[…] cessavit abbatiam annis quatuor. Regnante Berengario augusto, tertio imperii eius […] apparuerunt per totam noctem ignaes in celo acies super universum orbem. Et die septimo intrante mense Martio propter culpam incurie combustum est a igne monasterium Nonantule a summo usque deorsum’, MGH, Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum, p. 572.

57 ‘In ipso anno venerunt Ungari in Italia […] et venerunt usque ad Nonantulum et occiderunt monachos et incenderunt monasterium et codices multos conceremaverunt atque omnem depopulati sunt locum’, ibid.

58 ‘Leoparidus cum certis alius monachis fugierunt et aliquandiu latuerunt’, ibid.

of strain for Nonantola that lasted for several decades and a time when all the monastery’s activities were kept at a minimum.\textsuperscript{60} This was due in particular to the abbots’ political and administrative weakness, as well as to their very short mandates.\textsuperscript{61}

The sociopolitical and administrative structure of Ottonian Italy was polycentric and heterogeneous in its constitutive elements.\textsuperscript{62} It is in this transformed organization of the empire that we should see the substantial change in the role of the monastery, which was no longer directly involved in the court’s politics and decision-making as in the previous century but was now merely a political tool in the hands of the empire for the management of the Regnum. Nevertheless, the attention of the kings of Italy and the Ottonians to the lands in the Po plain area remained close, and this was managed through a careful distribution of abbatial and bishopric posts to faithful functionaries: the king of Italy, Ugo of Provence (fl. 924–947), appointed three of his sons to Nonantola (Geoffrey), Piacenza (Boso) and Milan (Tebald). Later the Ottonians entrusted the monastery of St Sylvester to the most powerful bishops of nearby centres and to high officials of the empire, and through this the relationship with the papacy was also mediated.\textsuperscript{63} The abbey lost much of its territory before 962, when Otto I gave control of the monastery to the bishop of Modena and imperial arch-chancellor Guido.\textsuperscript{64} However, the Preceptum of Otto II (982) still describes the monastery as desolated and in need of restoration, as well as having been governed \textit{ad interim} by local bishops without a proper abbot for fifty years or more.\textsuperscript{65}

1.1.6. The eleventh century (1002–1100)

The period of decline for Nonantola lasted until the beginning of the eleventh century, when the abbey had just started its reconstruction thanks to Otto III; but this new condition lasted for only a few years, until a great fire destroyed the abbey in 1013. Whether it was by chance or caused by the war between the two Italian kings Arduinus of Ivrea and Arrigo is not known.\textsuperscript{66} At that time the abbot of Nonantola was Rudolf I (fl. 1002–1035), under whom the monastery was rebuilt

\textsuperscript{60} Branchi, \textit{Lo scriptorium}, p. 49.
\textsuperscript{61} Parente and Piccinini, \textit{Lo splendore riconquistato}, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{62} Branchi, \textit{Lo scriptorium}, p. 50.
\textsuperscript{63} Branchi, \textit{Lo scriptorium}, p. 51.
\textsuperscript{64} V. Fumagalli, ‘Vescovi e conti nell’Emilia occidentale da Berengario I a Ottone I’, \textit{Studi Medievali} 3 (1973), pp. 137–204.
\textsuperscript{65} ‘[...] iam per quinquaginta annos et amplius propter episcopos qui pene tota ipsius monasterii terram pro beneficio tenuerunt, desolatum et ad nichilum prope redactum sit; nos vero cum dei adiutorio id restaurare et redintegrare cupimus’, \textit{MGH, Ottonis II Diplomata}, ed. T. Sickel (Berlin, 1888), p. 329.
\textsuperscript{66} Parente and Piccinini, \textit{Lo splendore riconquistato}, p. 21.
very quickly and who, thanks to the long period of his abbacy – the longest after St Anselm – was able to provide a phase of stability for Nonantola. It is certain that he also promoted the monastery’s greatest cultural renaissance, particularly of liturgical and scholarly studies.\footnote{For a discussion of eleventh-century manuscript production at Nonantola see below, §2.2.7.}

In 1044, Emperor Conrad II rewarded the bishop of Milan, Eribertus, with the abbacy of Nonantola for his help in Conrad II’s election to king of Italy in 1027.\footnote{P. Golinelli, ‘Nonantola nella lotta per le investiture da abbazia imperiale a monastero esente’ in Nonantola nella cultura e nell’arte, p. 29.} After his death, no other emperor was able to interfere with the monks’ power to elect their own abbot. Under abbot Godescalc (fl. 1053–1059) the monastery restated its political and economical autonomy, and in 1085 the abbey introduced a new system for the repartitioning of feudal rights over the monastery’s land.\footnote{The Partecipanza Agraria di Nonantola is still active. See R. Venturoli, La Partecipanza Agraria di Nonantola (Modena: Centro studi storici nonantolani, 1988).} During the course of the eleventh century the monastery reached its greatest extent, with ca. 1,500 square kilometres of surrounding land and various other territories in northern Italy and Tuscany.\footnote{A considerable amount of land was also donated by one of the powerful dynasties in eleventh-century northern Italy, the Canossa. See Parente and Piccinini, Lo splendore riconquistato, p. 17, and R. Rinaldi, ‘L’abbazia di Nonantola e la dinastia canossana: Contatti e relazioni attraverso i secoli X e XI’, in Il monachesimo, pp. 679–706.} In the second half of the century Nonantola was also involved in the investiture controversy, and, despite being an imperial monastery, it hosted Pope Gregory VII in 1077.\footnote{Golinelli, ‘Nonantola nella lotta per le investiture’, pp. 25–33.}

A series of texts that must have played an extraordinarily influential role in the formation of the abbey’s political ideology and sense of identity can be dated to Rudolf I’s abbacy.\footnote{On the writing and reading of history in the early Middle Ages, see, for example, McKitterick, History and Memory. In addition to these texts, many documents were forged during the late tenth century to the late eleventh: see Codice diplomatico longobardo, ed. L. Schiapparelli (Rome: Istituto storico italiano, 1929), pp. 290–294 and 305–310.} The primary source for reconstructing the history of the abbey is the Catalogus abbatum nonantulanorum, the first phase of compilation of this Catalogus may date to the early tenth century, while the second phase of textual additions to the pre-existing list of abbots can be dated to the early eleventh century and no later than 1053.\footnote{The Catalogus has been edited in MGH, Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum and Bortolotti, Antica vita.} The Catalogus records the long succession of abbots throughout a period of more than three centuries of the abbey’s history, from the founder Anselm (752) to Rudolf II (1053), i.e. from the end of the eighth century to the mid-eleventh.\footnote{For a historiographical assessment of the Catalogus see C. Frison, ‘Note di storiografia medievale nonantolana: Alcune considerazioni in margine al Catalogus Abbatum Nonantulanorum’ in Nonantola nella cultura e nell’arte, pp. 120–130.}
survives in a single manuscript from Nonantola dating from the early eleventh century. Other texts that can be ascribed to the same period are *De fundatione monasterii nonantulani* and *De translatio nonantulana corporis Sancti Silvestri*. It is thanks to the abbots of the eleventh century that the abbey of Nonantola could be born again and reconstructed and could reclaim its fundamental role as an organizational centre and as a nodal point of the surrounding territory. This economic and cultural prosperity would continue throughout the following century.

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75 The manuscript has no shelfmark and it is now in the Archivio Abbaziale. On the *Vita Anselmi* see Bortolotti, *Antica vita*, and on monastic hagiography in early medieval northern Italy see Golinelli, ‘L’agiografia monastica’, pp. 17–38, esp. 23–38.


77 Between 1111 and 1112 the prior Placidus of Nonantola wrote the *Liber de honore Ecclesiae*, a literary work that is an invective against the emperor Henry V. Placidus’ work is not only a clear sign of the full political autonomy regained by Nonantola but also a proof of the intellectual renovation and high cultural level of the abbey, particularly in the canonical school. See Parente and Piccinini, *Lo splendore riconquistato*, p. 22, and on Placidus’s *Liber* see J. W. Busch, *Der Liber de honore ecclesiae des Placidus von Nonantola: Eine kanonistische Problemderörterung aus dem Jahre 1111* (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 1990).
1.2. The library of Nonantola

1.2.1. The history of an abbey through that of its library

It is well known that the histories of certain medieval monastic communities can be traced and followed also through the histories of their libraries and manuscript production. Such libraries were enlarged and enriched through copying or acquisitions, impoverished and damaged by wars and famine; the observation of the sequence of events in the development of a particular book collection offers the scholar the opportunity to explore the life of a religious centre, often more fully than by reading charters alone. There is a long list of forged charters and documents that survive only in cartularies and later copies, but books and their contents, their script or decoration are very seldom products of counterfeit. In the world of manuscript production, once a certain tradition of handwriting and scribal practice had become established in a particular centre, new generations of scribes trained in that scriptorium would usually continue to write in that tradition. For this reason, changes in the choice of texts, as well as in the type of script or decoration, reveal the intentionality of graphical as well as artistic taste, often reflecting liturgical reforms or significant cultural changes.

This is particularly significant in the case of Nonantola, for very few charters survive from the first two centuries after its foundation. The destruction resulting from barbarian invasions, devastating fires and a few centuries of neglect has left us with scarce documentation about the role and position of the abbey in the late Lombard and early Carolingian periods. Needless to say, understanding the question of the origin of the Nonantolan type of script, its forms and its production will allow a consideration of the history not only of the abbey but also of the entire Lombard kingdom and of the circulation of manuscripts in the Italian peninsula from the last decades of the eighth century until the beginning of the tenth. The history of one of the most important monastic libraries in the Carolingian empire, from the splendour of the ninth-century collection to the dispersal of manuscripts after the abbey was destroyed in 899, can be studied through the thirty-seven manuscripts surviving from the eighth- and ninth-century library; these doubtless represent a very small portion of the original collection.

1.2.2. The early library and uncial manuscripts

The first documentary evidence of a concrete act towards the formation of a bibliotheca dates from the early years after the abbey’s foundation. According to the later Catalogus abbatum nonantulanorum, during the period of his exile in Montecassino (756–772), Anselm ‘acquired many
codices’, while the abbot *ad interim*, the priest Vigilantius, ‘himself acquired many useful books’. There is no way to tell for certain how many manuscripts were actually obtained by the two abbots, since no catalogue of the late eighth-century library exists. Besides the *Catalogus*, the sole surviving manuscript evidence informing us that Anselm procured a certain number of manuscripts for the abbey during his abbacy is an inscription in the manuscript Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sess. 77 (*CLA* IV, 423) (Fig. 1.1).

Fig. 1.1. Sess. 77, f. 3v.

The manuscript contains, among other texts, the *Formulae spiritualis intelligentiae* of Eucherius of Lyon (ca. 380 – ca. 449); despite the late antique decoration, which has led scholars to date it as early as the sixth century, the type of uncial in which the manuscript is written may be dated instead to the second half of the eighth century. Here, on f. 1r, an early ninth-century Nonantolan hand writes *hic codex adquisitus est per domnum Anselnum abbatem et est de primo armario*.

Localising the exact origin of Sess. 77 is problematic but it seems quite likely that it may have been written in a northern Italian centre, possibly Bobbio. This is the reason it is very important to treat the eleventh-century *Catalogus*’s statement carefully. Firstly, the fact that the *Catalogus* tells us only about the Cassinese acquisition does not exclude the possibility that Anselm may also

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78 *multos codices adquisivit*; ‘Vigilantius presbiter […] multa commoda ibidem adquisivit in libris’, MGH 1878, p. 571.
79 Branchi, *Lo scrittorium*, p. 21; *Codices latini antiquiores [= CLA*], vol. 4, p. 6.
80 See *Patrologia Latina [= PL*], vol. 50, cols 727–773. In Sess. 77 the title is *Divinarum scientiarum libri tres* (f. 8r); see Branchi, *Lo scrittorium*, pp. 21 and 136–139.
81 This line also provides us with an insight into the organisation of the library in *armaria*. The same inscription was later copied by an eleventh-century hand, possibly at the time of Rudolf II (1035–1053); see Branchi, *Lo scrittorium*, p. 137.
have obtained manuscripts from other parts of the Lombard kingdom after his return from Montecassino. Secondly, the hand that wrote the inscription may have erroneously attributed the acquisition to Anselm when, in fact, Vigilantius may have been responsible for obtaining the manuscript. In both cases we may be treating Sess. 77 as a possible acquisition from Montecassino only because of its association with the figure of Anselm when, in fact, it may have been procured in the north.

The complexity of this phase of early acquisitions can also be observed in the rest of what survives of the eighth-century abbey (see Table 1.1a). Other than Sess. 77 there are four manuscripts written in uncial for which we can exclude a Nonantolan origin and which we can consider to be products from other Lombard scriptoria:

ROMÊ, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale

— Sess. 13 (CLA IV, 418)
— Sess. 55 (CLA IV, 420a)
— Sess. 58 (CLA IV, 422)
— Sess. 128 (CLA IV, 428)

The oldest surviving manuscript from the library at Nonantola is Sess. 13 (CLA IV, 418) (Fig. 1.2): dating to the first half of the sixth century, it was certainly in Nonantola by the end of the ninth century.83 The script is an expert calligraphic uncial from a very good tradition; the identification of the writing centre where it was made has been contested, and it may come from the northern Italian area of Ravenna or from the Castellum Lucullanum near Naples.84 Sess. 13 is certainly a product of that late antique tradition involving the most important Italian scriptoria such as Vivarium, Verona and Ravenna, which were also responsible for the promotion of a graphical unity throughout the Italian peninsula. Some recent studies, especially by Michael M. Gorman, confirm a southern Italian provenance on the basis of some internal textual elements, thus making Sess. 13 a likely piece of evidence of Anselm’s acquisitions from Montecassino.85

Of considerable value is another of the manuscripts that entered the library during Anselm’s time: Sess. 55 (ff. 1v–79v: CLA IV, 420a) (Fig. 1.3), a complex, composite manuscript

83 Branchi, Lo scriptorium, pp. 125–126. A few marginalia (e.g. f. 9v) are added by hands writing in Nonantolan minuscule which could be compared to the one in Sess. 70.
containing the earliest witness of the complete text of the *Confessions* and partly a palimpsest with *scriptio inferior* from a fifth-century uncial manuscript transmitting Pliny’s *Historia naturalis* (ff. 169r–176v: *CA* IV, 421).\(^86\) Separate sequences of quire numbers indicate that the sixth-century elements were originally produced as two companion volumes, somewhere in northern Italy during the second half of the century.\(^87\) One bifolio (ff. 68–69: *CA* IV, 420b) in pre-Caroline minuscule, which was inserted in the manuscript in order to fill a textual lacuna, may provide us with a clue about the origin of Sess. 55. The debate is centred on where these folios may have been written, since it is possible that the missing text may have been recovered from an *in situ* exemplar. While Cencetti considered the script in this bifolio to be an example of the early Nonantolan minuscule, Lowe and Bischoff were more cautious in attributing the origin of this addition to the Nonantola. According to Valentina Longo, the wide use of Insular abbreviations and distinctive elements of Merovingian script would point towards a different centre but would also tend to dismiss the attributions to southern Italy. For these palaeographical reasons, a likely scriptorium for Sess. 55 may be Bobbio, especially given the presence of a palimpsest – a

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\(^87\) Branchi, *Lo scriptorium*, p. 129.
### Table 1.1 MANUSCRIPTS IN NONANTOLA UPTO 800

#### 1.1a Uncial and half-uncial manuscripts

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<th>MS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>CLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 13</td>
<td>sixth century, first half</td>
<td>Southern Italy (Castellum Lucullanum?)</td>
<td>Augustine</td>
<td>IV, 418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 55</td>
<td>sixth century, second half</td>
<td>Northern Italy</td>
<td>Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Pliny (palimpsest)</td>
<td>IV, 420a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 58</td>
<td>eighth century</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Augustine, Cyprianus</td>
<td>IV, 422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 77</td>
<td>eighth century, second half</td>
<td>&quot; (Verona or Ravenna?)</td>
<td>Eucherius, Jerome, Hilary of Arles, Salvian</td>
<td>IV, 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 128</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Jerome</td>
<td>IV, 426</td>
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#### 1.1b Minuscule manuscripts

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<td>Sess. 94</td>
<td>eighth century, second half</td>
<td>Southern Italy (Montecassino?)</td>
<td>Pseudo-Jerome, Pseudo-Chrysostom, Chrysostom</td>
<td>IV, 425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 590</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Eugippus</td>
<td>IV, 427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.E. 1006</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Fulgentius</td>
<td>IV, 428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.E. 1357</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Augustine</td>
<td>II, 161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add. 43460</td>
<td>eighth/ninth century</td>
<td>Nonantola</td>
<td>Augustine, Jerome, Commodian, Chrysostom (palimpsest)</td>
<td>II, 180*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*BK II, 2407
frequent practice in Bobbio – of Pliny’s *Naturalis Historia* in a fifth-century uncial (ff. 169–176). 88 Finally, in the 1664 catalogue Ferrari transcribed the now lost inscription *aliquando fuit aquisitus a quondam abate Anselmo, non constat cuius monasterii*, which would confirm that the manuscript was also commemorated as part of Anselm’s acquisition. 89 Another manuscript associated with Nonantola that could be attributed (in origin) to a northern Italian copying centre is Sess. 58 (*CLA IV*, 422). The late uncial in which the text is written has been dated by Lowe to the eighth century. On f. 112v the scribe switched to the more compressed cursive half-uncial minuscule in order to finish the text on that page. This provides a rare glimpse of the range of scripts available to a northern Italian scribe before the diffusion of pre-Caroline minuscules. In Sess. 58, explicits are framed by *vermiculatae* bars and leaves derived from the *bederae distinguishentes*, a decoration typical of the *Schlusstittelornamente* in uncial manuscripts from the fourth century and documented in Veronese and Ravennate codices in the seventh century. 90 The last manuscript associated with Nonantola in uncial is Sess. 128 (*CLA IV*, 426) containing Jerome’s *Adversus Iovinianum*, which has been dated to the end of the eighth century, written ‘doubtless in northern Italy’. 91 A few palaeographical elements led Lowe to consider a possible Veronese or Bobbiese origin. Drawing from the latter, Bischoff suggested that the manuscript might have been copied in Nonantola by a Bobbio scribe, or from a Bobbio exemplar, sharing numerous elements that could link its compilation to that of Sess. 58. 93 The decorative models – in particular pre-Carolingian Insular features – would seem to suggest an even broader area of influence, involving centres such as Luxeuil or Corbie. 94

1.2.3. Eighth-century codices in minuscule and the origins of Nonantolan minuscule

With the exception of Sess. 13, much of the oldest corpus of late antique *advenae* came to Nonantola, as one might expect, from nearby copying centres – e.g. possibly Bobbio, Verona or Ravenna. During the first few decades of the early library, newly copied manuscripts also entered the abbey from outside. Five surviving manuscripts in minuscule, dating from the second half of the eighth century to the turn of the ninth, enriched the Nonantolan collection (see Table 1.1b):

| Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale |

89 *Ibid.*, p. 128. The inscription may have been removed when the manuscript was restored in the twentieth century. On the library catalogues, see below, §2.2.7.
90 Branchi, *Lo scriptorium*, p. 128.
91 *CLA IV*, p. 7.
92 *Ibid.*: ‘the use of mam for “misericordiam” and the peculiar form of Z suggest Verona, but these may be North Italian features and not strictly Veronese. The insular symbol for “autem” suggests Bobbio, but its use may have been known to other centres too.’
93 Bischoff, ‘Manoscritti nonantolani’, p. 102.
This group of manuscripts has been the focus of intensive scrutiny by Marco Palma.\(^95\) The results of Palma’s enquiry suggest that before coming to Nonantola, these five manuscripts were copied in southern Italy in the second half of the eighth century, and thus formed part of Anselm’s original acquisition from Montecassino. Palma’s argument is based on evidence that the sixth-century half-uncial manuscript of Eugippus, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 3375 (CLA I, 16), is the direct exemplar for Sess. 590.\(^96\) Since the Vatican manuscript had long been attributed to the scriptorium of the Castellum Lucullanum near Naples, and since there is evidence that Vat. lat. 3375 remained in southern Italy for most of its existence – vast portions of the text having been rewritten by an eleventh-century Beneventan hand – Sess. 590 is likely also to have been copied in a southern Italian scriptorium.\(^97\) This localisation of Sess. 590’s copying centre in turn generates a series of further attributions, since palaeographical analysis shows that the same hand that wrote the Sessoriana Eugippus was also responsible for the compilation of V.E. 1006 and V.E. 1357 (Fig. 1.5, 1.6).\(^98\)

In a second study, Palma also attributes the two remaining manuscripts, Sess. 94 – containing among other texts a pseudo-Jerome commentary on the Gospel of Mark, which Bischoff attributed to the Irish monk Cummeanus – and Add. 43460, to a southern Italian copying area.\(^99\) In this case, however, given that there is no explicit textual evidence for the manuscripts’ origin – e.g. that of an exemplar – Palma based his considerations on purely palaeographical grounds. In particular, he mentions the shapes for \(a\) as \(\& + \epsilon\), the tall (double) \(\epsilon\),

\(^{95}\) The results have been published in a series of articles that appeared in Scritture e Civiltà from 1979 to 1983.


\(^{97}\) Palma, ‘Nonantola e il Sud’, p. 80.

\(^{98}\) Ibid., p. 81. The strikingly close resemblance of the hands in Sess. 94, 590 and V.E. 1006 had already been noticed by Lowe in CLA IV, p. 7.

the uncial $d$, the tall initial $I$, and ligatures with $-i$ as features pointing to an earlier dating of Sess. 94 than that proposed by Lowe (‘saec. VIII–IX’).\textsuperscript{100} In addition, restating Lowe’s opinion, Palma demonstrates the remarkably close resemblance of one of the hands in this manuscript to that responsible for the copying of the previous group of books, thus adding the miscellany in Sess. 94 to the list of possible Anselm acquisitions. From this series of considerations Palma argues that these five manuscripts, as products of the southern Italian graphical tradition, represent what

\textsuperscript{100} CLA IV, p. 7.
survived of the earliest nucleus of the eighth-century library. In addition, these manuscripts would have constituted the graphic model from which the Nonantolan script was then developed, at least in its initial phase. They could demonstrate that the Langobardia Minor – i.e. the southern part of the Lombard kingdom – possessed a certain degree of graphical influence as early as the second half of the eighth century. Palma also goes so far as to consider the Nonantolan script type to be an ‘imported script’, which very soon entered a period of decline in favour of the new type of minuscule that was gradually being developed north of the Alps, and which came into the library thanks to Nonantola’s strong network of relationships with other centres in the Carolingian empire.\footnote{Palma, ‘Alle origini’, pp. 148–149.} However, while Palma’s philological work is exemplary, this reading of the evidence requires some substantial reconsideration and his conclusions should be approached with great caution, as I will explain here.

Palma’s interpretation is markedly contrary to almost all previous scholarship on the subject, in particular that of Schiapparelli, Lowe, Cencetti and Bischoff. In his \textit{Codices latini antiquiores}, Lowe quite explicitly assigned all five manuscripts to northern Italy and, possibly, to...
Nonantola itself.\textsuperscript{102} In two of these instances, Sess. 94 and Add. 43460, Lowe acknowledged some similarities between this type of northern Italian pre-Caroline minuscule and the early Beneventan.\textsuperscript{103} However, this resemblance is to be considered mirror-like and does not necessarily imply any hierarchical connotation – i.e. northern Italian pre-Caroline minuscule is like early Beneventan just as much as the converse is true. Palma’s weighting of this statement is, by contrast, aimed at supporting his reconstruction of events in favour of a direct descent. Furthermore, Lowe did not mention this group of manuscripts in his famous study of the Beneventan script, nor in \textit{Scriptura Beneventana}.

The first, ‘tentative period’ of the southern Italian minuscule is set by Lowe to the end of the eighth century / beginning of the ninth. The example he chose is the copy of Pomerius’ \textit{De vita contemplativa}, Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, VI B 12 (BK II, 3577), which is datable to 817–835 by the paschal table on f. 255v. The manuscript, thus, dates to more than fifty years after Anselm’s return to Nonantola around the year 772 and still presents a non-calligraphic minuscule in a state of ‘indecision and flux’.\textsuperscript{104} By contrast, during the same years the Nonantolan type was, to borrow Lowe’s terminology, in its \textit{period of maturity}; moreover, Bischoff’s ‘peak’ of the script’s formation was also fixed in the first decades of the ninth century.\textsuperscript{105} Even if we followed the hypothesis that the texts were copied by a scribe trained in a local, southern Italian script, it would be difficult to demonstrate that the type of minuscule that he employed was first developed in the south. There are very few other examples of minuscule from the same area. Those that exist all date to well into the second half of the eighth century (ca. 750 to 797): Montecassino, Archivio della Badia, MS 753 (\textit{CLA III}, 381); Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Patr. 61 (\textit{CLA VIII}, 1029); Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Lat. 7530 (\textit{CLA V}, 569); and Cava dei Tirreni, Archivio della Badia, MS 2 (XXIII) (\textit{CLA III}, 284).\textsuperscript{106}

As is evident from earlier Cassinese manuscripts, the shift to this type of minuscule happened rather abruptly in the 770s–780s. The predominant scripts in southern Italy before this time were uncial (\textit{SB I}, Pl. IV–V), half-uncial (\textit{SB I}, Pl. I–III) and cursive (\textit{SB I}, Pl. I), and these

\textsuperscript{102} Lowe’s descriptions of the script and suggestions for possible places of origin are: Sess. 94, ‘pre-Caroline North Italian minuscule with many ligatures, not unlike Beneventan […]. Written probably at Nonantola’; Sess. 590, ‘North Italian pre-Caroline minuscule […]. Written in Italy, probably at Nonantola’; V.E. 1006, ‘North Italian pre-Caroline minuscule […]. Written in Italy, probably at Nonantola’; V.E. 1357, ‘Italian pre-Caroline minuscule […]. Written in Italy, probably at Nonantola’; Add. 43460, ‘uncalligraphic minuscule with many cursive elements, resembling early Beneventan […]. Written in Italy, probably at Nonantola’.

\textsuperscript{103} Sess. 94, ‘not unlike Beneventan’, and Add. 43460, ‘resembling early Beneventan’.


\textsuperscript{105} According to Bischoff, ‘il tipo nonantolano raggiunge il culmine della su formazione nei primi decenni del nono secolo’; see Bischoff, ‘Manoscritti nonantolani’, p. 105.

\textsuperscript{106} In addition to \textit{CLA} see \textit{SB}, descriptions of Plates VII–X; Lowe, \textit{The Beneventan Script, passim}; Palma, ‘Nonantola e il Sud’, p. 82.
models continued to be used later. It is possible, according to Cencetti and Cavallo, that a spontaneous process of development from half-uncial and New Roman cursive, resulting in the creation of a new minuscule, was taking place independently in the south – as much as in other parts of Europe, e.g. Merovingian, Visigothic, Alemannic and Insular scripts – but the chronology and, more importantly, the extreme similarity between the scripts in the Langobardia Maior and Minor regions suggests an definite connection and influence. According to Bischoff, the Nonantolan script could be considered, if anything, as a prototype of the early Beneventan, and not a derivation.\footnote{Nonantolan ‘round script had perhaps become the prototype of the Beneventan in the eighth century’, B. Bischoff, \textit{Latin Palaeography: Antiquity and the Middle Ages}, trans. D. Ganz and D. Ó Cróinin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 115.}

It is rather unlikely that the Cassinese scriptorium – or any other southern Italian centre, for that matter – could have been responsible for the copying of the group of five manuscripts in minuscule which entered the abbey of Nonantola in the last quarter of the eighth century. It is also rather implausible that whatever script was in use at that time in Montecassino – doubtless already a type of minuscule – might have been exerting such authority to the extent that it permanently influenced the graphical undertakings of the northern abbey. It is left to his readers then to wonder why Palma would evade Lowe’s opinion – responsible for defining the canon and the most characteristic features of the Beneventan script – especially in view of the fact that these were Lowe’s deliberate and conscious attributions to a different, northern Italian \textit{Schriftprovinz}. Finally, Bischoff also seems not to question the Nonantolan origin of Add. 43460 and considers it an example of the early production of the scriptorium during Anselm’s abbacy (made ca. 800).\footnote{Bischoff, ‘Manoscritti nonantolani’, pp. 102–103; \textit{Katalog der Festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts} [= BKJ], 3 vols, ed. B. Bischoff (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2014), vol. 2, p. 103, n. 2407.}

The type of decoration in this group of manuscripts might be indicative of a southern Italian provenance, but at the same time it may also be regarded mainly as a continuation of the late antique style, common to many copying centres in Italy and especially to Ravenna.\footnote{Orofino’s analysis is also distorted by the use of Palma’s studies on Nonantolan minuscule as the basis for her arguments. See G. Orofino, ‘Da Montecassino a Nonantola: La tradizione illustrativa delle Institutiones di Cassiodoro’ in \textit{Il monachesimo italiano}, p. 607.} This is also true for the supposed relation between the Cassinese manuscript of the \textit{Institutiones}, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Patr. 61 (\textit{CL A VIII}, 1029; \textit{BK} I, 234a), and the Nonantolan Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine 660 – both, according to Orofino, copied from a common manuscript tradition, which would suggest that the Mazarine exemplar may have come from Montecassino as part of Anselm’s acquisition. However, all the figural repertory of these manuscripts in
minuscule copied in southern Italy did not influence the later decorative style in Nonantola. In any case, the idea of a young scriptorium that could not have produced decorations like those in Add. 43460, let alone copied manuscripts in Nonantola’s own particular type of script, is also rather problematic. For example, it is not implausible that an experienced illuminator might have reached the newly founded Nonantola or have been called there because of his expertise.

Cencetti stated very resolutely that this group of manuscripts was written in a type of script that may be consistent with the later practice at Nonantola. Cencetti’s study also provides the most compelling hypothesis about the origin of Nonantolan and Beneventan scripts: the resemblance between the earliest manuscripts attributed to the Nonantolan scriptorium and those surviving in early Beneventan hands is evidence of the prominent role of the Langobardia Maior in the formation of the Italian, ‘Lombard’, national script. In Cencetti’s view, such process, which might have resulted in the creation of a graphically ‘unified’ kingdom, was interrupted by the early Carolingian invasion in the north, which slowly replaced every Lombard structure just as Caroline canons gradually began to enter the manuscript production of northern Italian scriptoria. In the south, by contrast, the opposition of dukes and clergy to the Frankish court reinforced their rejection of Carolingian cultural and graphical ideals. This attitude towards the Frankish court allowed for an environment in which the local Beneventan script developed and endured for well over two centuries.

From after the Lombard destruction of Montecassino in 577 until the first decades of the eighth century, almost nothing is known about the abbey; it is safe to imagine that it must have been lying in a desolated state. It was only in 718, with the help of Petronax, that Montecassino revived and a slow reconstruction began. The cultural life resumed thanks to the Saxon Willibald in the 720s–730s, a period that may have favoured a revival of scholarly and copying activity. During the following decades, a series of very influential personalities came to the abbey which was, at that time, undoubtedly the most important centre in the Langobardia Minor: the Lombard king Ratchis († after 757), the Frank Carloman (751–771), Adalard of Corbie (751–827).

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112 Cencetti localises the provenance of all these manuscripts to Nonantola, although, thanks to Palma’s work, we know that it is unlikely that they were copied there (see p. 23 of this chapter).
114 See Lowe, The Beneventan Script, pp. 22–40, esp. 22–29. Lowe’s long discussion about the name of the script beings with a section on the ‘use and misuse’ of the term ‘Lombardic’. He dismisses the view that what we now refer to as Beneventan originated simply as one of the scripts employed in the Lombard Regnum and that only later was it canonised into the Beneventan script. Before BS, the term was widely used: for example, Gustav Scherrer described St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 349 as written ‘in einer der longobardischen ähnlichen Schrift’; see G. Scherrer, Verzeichniss der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek von St. Gallen (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhausen, 1875), p. 122.
and Sturm (ca. 705–779), disciple of Saint Boniface and founder and first abbot of the Benedictine monastery and abbey of Fulda. Anselm arrived in 756 and remained in Montecassino for some sixteen years, leaving only a few years before the arrival of another Lombard figure: Paul the Deacon (ca. 720s–799). Paul was born in the duchy of Friuli to a noble family and received an exceptionally good education, probably at the court of the Lombard king Ratchis in Pavia, learning the rudiments of Greek from a teacher named Flavian. It is probable that Paul was secretary to the Lombard king Desiderius, a successor of Ratchis, and when Pavia was taken by Charlemagne and the Lombard kingdom had fallen, he took refuge in Montecassino in 774. Paul pushed scholarly education by promoting the studying and copying of late antique texts; during this period he wrote his *Historia Langobardorum*, which is often regarded as a proud celebration of the Lombard past.

With Paul the Deacon, new life was brought to the production of texts and, in particular, to the copying of grammatical tracts, for example the abovementioned miscellany in Paris, lat. 7530, written at Montecassino between 779 and 797 and possibly compiled following Paul’s own didactic directions. It is in this context of cultural renaissance in Montecassino that Cencetti formulated his hypothesis not only that the Beneventan script was significantly influenced by northern minuscules but also that Paul himself may have been responsible for setting the graphical canon. This hypothesis, which has been rejected by recent scholarship – especially by Palma and other Cassinese palaeographers – should instead be re-examined and assessed in the light of a new reading of the surviving palaeographical and historiographical evidence.

Going back now to the case presented by Palma, the textual evidence showing that Sess. 590 was copied directly from Vat. Lat. 3375 – and that this constitutes ‘a direct proof that for centuries the MS. was read in South Italy’ – is insufficient to demonstrate that the Sessoriana manuscript was copied by a scribe trained in southern Italy, since a northern Italian hand may have simply copied those volumes in the south and soon after have taken them to Nonantola. Indeed, if we take into consideration every aspect of previous scholarship, a tantalising hypothesis arises. With the exception of Add. 43460, evidence suggests that the group of eighth-century manuscripts in pre-Caroline minuscule was copied in the south (Palma) in a type of script widely recognised as Nonantolan (Lowe, Bischoff, Cencetti) – or highly compatible with the later Nonantolan type. The presence in Montecassino, since the middle of the century, of highly influential figures educated in the north and connected with the Lombard court of Pavia – i.e. Rachis, Paul the Deacon, Anselm – and, finally, a graphical tradition in a transitional phase and not yet formed in

118 Cencetti, ‘Scriptoria e scrittura’, p. 90.
the south constituted fertile ground for the diffusion of a ‘Lombard’ script, possibly promoted as a way to consolidate the unity of the Regnum (Cencetti).

Anselm’s background as an upper-rank lay person certainly made him adept in cursive as well as minuscule scripts.119 My proposed reconstruction of the events is therefore that, during his period of exile, the highly literate Anselm may have had access to the remarkable collection of late antique texts in Montecassino and nearby southern centres. Unburdened from the administration and guidance of the northern abbey, Anselm may have begun copying volumes with the intention of augmenting the Nonantolan library with essential texts upon his return. In this enterprise, Anselm may have taken advantage of the presence of coadjutants in the well-organised scriptorium of Montecassino for the preparation of parchment and the assembly of the codices. In fact, apart from a degree of scientific caution, there is little that would invalidate this hypothesis, which would find its ultimate confirmation only if it were possible to conduct a comparison with an autograph of the Lombard abbot. Unfortunately, no Lombard charters containing Anselm’s subscription survive. The only alternative hypothesis is that he may have requested these copies to be made by a Cassinese scribe, who in turn may have been trained in the new type of minuscule that Paul the Deacon and Anselm promoted for the scriptorium’s activity.

Although we will probably never know what really happened and whether these manuscripts, now in Rome, were written by the hand of the Saint and founder of Nonantola, what is relevant here is that, since the earliest decades after its foundation, the primary concern of the Benedictine abbeys of Nonantola was the acquisition of books for the formation of a library. Nonantola would have had no interest in ‘importing’ or imitating any other script, let alone that of the southern Schriftprovinz since not only are there no records of any significant relationship between the two abbeys apart from Anselm’s period of exile, but also the perspective of the northern abbey was already well rounded thanks to exchanges with other very important monastic scriptoria in the Po valley and benefited from a more direct link with the Frankish court than Montecassino did. Moreover, Nonantola was clearly devoting much of its activity to the establishment of political, religious and cultural authority; the Lombard abbot Anselm had but to draw from the kingdom’s glorious recent past for the formation of Nonantolan and Lombard national identity.

The concept of a national script for the Lombard kingdom predates to a certain extent that

119 ‘Many lay people too of middle and upper rank were adept in this script [Italian cursive]. Their mastery extends from being able to write ordinary separated letters to practised cursive flowing scripts’, Bischoff, Latin Palaeography, p. 102. See also A. Petrucci, ‘Alfabetismo ed educazione grafica degli scribi altomedievali (saec. vii-x)’, in The Role of the Book in Medieval Culture, ed. P. Ganz (Turnhout, 1986), 1. pp. 109-32; and M. Everett, Literacy in Lombard Italy, c. 568–774 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 215.
of Caroline minuscule. In fact, it is possible to conceive that the Carolingian concept of a unifying script may have been influenced by the Lombard experience, which in turn echoed the legacy of Roman scripts such as capitalis, rustic capitalis and cursive scripts that can be found from the Egyptian desert up to the northern fringes of the empire. The same generative process that had happened a few centuries earlier for half-uncial script, ‘the clarifying modification of a state of cursive script by means of “calligraphic” execution’, was now repeated in new forms but with the same underlying purpose. Ultimately, this Lombard intention never bore fruit in the north because of the Frankish invasion, but the southern Italian graphic experience of the Beneventan script, with its enduring existence and distinctive appearance, may nonetheless give us an idea of how the politics of unification of the Lombard kingdom could have influenced the diffusion of such script throughout the Regnum.

1.2.4. The scriptorium and the beginning of manuscript production

It is unlikely that copying activity began as early as the time of the abbey’s foundation. Rather, during this preliminary phase, which may have lasted until Anselm’s return from exile in 772, Vigilantius’ acquisitions formed the primary corpus of what was to become one of the richest libraries south of the Alps and initiated the creation of a space devoted specifically to the storing and copying of texts. Towards the end of the eighth century there would already have been a designated space inside the monastery where, possibly only a few years later, at the turn of the ninth century, the production and copying of texts began. With the increasing number of monks, manuscript production was already active and organised in the last years of Anselm’s abbacy (ca. 800–803), but the surviving manuscripts of what could be considered the first phase of the scriptorium’s activity (see Table 1.2) can be more certainly ascribed to the first third of the ninth century, that is during the abbacy of Anselm’s successor Peter I (804–824). Nonantola was not merely enriching its bibliotheca with acquisitions and copying; it was in this period that the

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120 Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, p. 66.
121 In Lowe’s opinion ‘this is made manifest in the existence in the 9th century of North and Central Italian MSS. which are practically indistinguishable from the early South Italian products. Had the Caroline reform stopped at the Alps, all of Italy must have been written a more or less similar hand, resembling the early Beneventan. Had it […] swept over South Italy as well as North Italy, all Italian schools would have used the ruling of Caroline minuscule’. Lowe, *The Beneventan Script*, p. 40.
community began to forge one of its most distinctive traits: the Nonantolan community now had its own script, recognised by Lowe, Bischoff and Cencetti, among others, as the Nonantolan type. In Nonantola, precise cultural and graphical choices were made, drawn from the different options available in the library collection and choosing those that would best represent the community’s sense of belonging to the abbey and on which to establish Nonantola’s own tradition and identity.

Schiapparelli, in his study of ‘foreign influences’ on Italian scripts of the eighth and ninth centuries, depicts the northern part of the Italic peninsula as an area where the Roman tradition of uncial, half-uncial and new cursive met the most significant graphic experiments that were taking place north or west of the Alps. In Verona, for example, Schiapparelli notes a Visigothic influence on scriptorium production in the last third of the eighth century – e.g. Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS LV (CLA IV, 507) and MS XXXIII (CLA IV, 492). Certainly, the copy of Isidore’s Etymologiae now in Karlsruhe, Landesbibliothek, MS Augiensis LVII, is a product of a northern Italian copying centre – possibly Verona, according to Lowe – and is also in a script in which a certain Visigothic influence can be seen. The arrival in Verona of the seventh-century Mozarabic Sacramentary MS LXXXIX (89) (CLA IV, 515) – possibly via Sardinia and Pisa – may have played a role in the adoption of certain Spanish graphic features by Veronese scribes. However, it is also true that many elements that, according to Schiapparelli, would define such characteristics were also part of the set of letter shapes of the late antique Roman cursive, common to both Veronese and Spanish scribes – and also to scribes further afield – and it may instead be that this shared graphical culture forms the roots of this likeness. This similarity, however, does not necessarily result in a direct filiation; for example, just as the derivation of Beneventan from Visigothic script was completely dismissed by Lowe, we should also be looking at the weight of these supposed common elements in the much broader context of the graphical development from cursive to set scripts that took place on the continent in the course of the eighth century. We may, however, speak of an actual derivation in the case of the Insular influence on northern Italian scripts, as found primarily in Bobbio and Verona. Various codices of the early Bobbio library were written in Insular script, while others show only a certain

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122 There is no published monograph on the script, but there are two PhD dissertations: L. Avitabile, La minuscola Carolina a Nonantola (PhD diss., Sapienza University of Rome, 1965), and V. Longo, Lo scriptorium di Nonantola (secoli VIII–XII) (PhD diss., Sapienza University of Rome, 1999). Access to these texts is restricted, and the author has not been able to consult them.


124 See Lowe, The Beneventan Script, pp. 104–121, esp. 119. Due to the presence of many common elements in pre-Caroline minuscules, there are numerous cases of problematic provenances.
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<td>Gregory the Great, Heito of Reichenau</td>
<td>III, 5324–6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sess. 41</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Jerome, Athanasius, Antonius, Palladius of Helenopolis</td>
<td>III, 5327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.E. 1452</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Bede, Jerome</td>
<td>III, 5346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 66</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Cassianus</td>
<td>III, 5330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 23</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Augustine</td>
<td>III, 5319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 26</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Cassiodorus</td>
<td>III, 5320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 63</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Jerome, Dionysius Exiguus</td>
<td>III, 5329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vat. lat. 9882</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Isidore, Cesarius of Arles</td>
<td>III, 6943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.E. 1347</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Bede</td>
<td>III, 5343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.E. 1348</td>
<td>post-816–ca. 830</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Canones Concilii aquigranensis</td>
<td>III, 5344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 38</td>
<td>825–837</td>
<td>&quot; (ff. 1–55), N. Italy (ff. 56–139)</td>
<td>Augustine, Jerome</td>
<td>III, 5321–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 16</td>
<td>second quarter</td>
<td>Nonantola</td>
<td>Augustine</td>
<td>III, 5318</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sess. 70</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>III, 5331</td>
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<td>Sess. 74</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Gall 567</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot; (ff. 1–37)</td>
<td>Vita sancti S. I. papae, Legendum de invention s. crucis</td>
<td>III, 5787–93</td>
</tr>
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<td>Trin. B. 14, 3</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot; (front endleaves)</td>
<td>Ambrose, Expositio de psalm CXVIII</td>
<td>I, 837</td>
</tr>
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<td>Patr. 20</td>
<td>first half</td>
<td>&quot; (ff. 70–176)</td>
<td>Vita sancti S. Silvestri</td>
<td>I, 228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodmer 98</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Josephus</td>
<td>I, 960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bodmer 99</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>I, 961</td>
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<tr>
<td>Klag. 10/2</td>
<td>second third</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Lex romanorum visigorum</td>
<td>I, 1849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lat. 2292</td>
<td>third quarter</td>
<td>St Denis</td>
<td>Sacramentarium</td>
<td>III, 4158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 95</td>
<td>second half</td>
<td>Nonantola</td>
<td>Egbertus, Haltgarius, Alcuin, Eecupta ex libri liturgiæ</td>
<td>III, 5336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 96</td>
<td>first/second half</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Patristic and liturgical miscellany, antiphonarius</td>
<td>III, 5337–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pal. lat. 862</td>
<td>fourth quarter</td>
<td>(palimpsest ff. 68–108)</td>
<td>Treaty on computus, Gradual, calendar</td>
<td>III, 6564–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 71</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Jerome, Alcuin</td>
<td>III, 5332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sess. 76</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Paul the Deacon, Augustine, Gregory</td>
<td>III, 5333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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influence, especially in the et ligature or in the shapes for a, g, s, p, b and k: see for example Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Lat. 16 (CLA III, 391–397b), Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS D. 268 inf. (CLA III, 334), L.99 sup. (CLA III, 353), and Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, IV.A. 8. (CLA III, 404). Some manuscripts were brought to Bobbio by the Irish monk Dungal, although many survive only as palimpsests.\textsuperscript{125} The same influences between Insular scripts and local minuscule can be found in Verona, producing a particular type of calligraphic minuscule which is manifestly derived from the earlier Veronese cursive.\textsuperscript{126}

The most pervasive influence is that of the Merovingian script, certainly in border areas such as Novalesa, but also in other parts of Italy, in Ivrea for example, in the manuscript of the Biblioteca Capitolare, MS I (CLA III, 300), or even in Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS XL (CLA IV, 497), written at Luxeuil and in northern Italy by the ninth century.\textsuperscript{127} The presence of elements of Luxeuil minuscule can also be noted in the minuscule written in Verona, which thus features a remarkable mix of influences that are often properties of the work of a single scribe, elaborating a personal minuscule by drawing from the wealth of different scripts available. In this respect, during the eighth century, the Veronese scriptorium seems not to have undertaken any precise and rigorous calligraphic direction; it was a wealthy and vital copying centre, with great freedom but with little order. It would be only in the course of the first third of the following century, under archdeacon Pacificus (ca. 776–844), that Caroline minuscule models would start to be adopted in Verona.\textsuperscript{128} This replaced previous graphic experimentations of the scriptorium in favour of a new and disciplined approach to writing that possibly made Verona the first centre in Italy to welcome with approval the new graphic principles coming from the Frankish court.

Nonantola was also highly receptive to the various types of scripts that made their way into the rest of northern Italy. However, none of the manuscripts in uncial seem to have constituted a

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\textsuperscript{127} According to Lowe, Ivrea MS I contains an entry in Italian cursive of the eighth century on the last page (commentary to CLA III, 300), while Lowe notes in Verona XL ‘a marginal note by a Veronese hand on f. 9v; some additions and corrections perhaps by Pacificus of Verona († 846) on foll. 137v, 160 ff., 187v, etc.’ (commentary to CLA IV, 497).

model for early production in Nonantola, either for decoration or for script, possibly because they represented a tradition foreign to the newly founded monastery of St Sylvester or because such a majuscule script would have been too costly of parchment. It is rather implausible that an important monastic centre in the heart of the Langobardia Maior, such as Nonantola, would have been impermeable not only to scripts of the nearby monastic communities or episcopal sees (Bobbio, Verona, Ivrea, etc.) for the early phases of its manuscript production, but also to other influences coming from across the Alps. I would suggest that the graphic experiences that were already taking place throughout the northern Lombard kingdom constituted the basic graphic layer on which the Nonantolan minuscule was then developed.

The influence between scripts was not unidirectional. It has often been overlooked, for example, that in the early phases of Carolingian expansion many northern Italian manuscripts crossed the Alps and enriched libraries such as St Gall and Reichenau, also reaching southwestern Bavaria and Austrian centres. Traube was convinced that the northern Italian seventh- and eighth-century ‘quarter-uncial with ligatures’, a smaller type of half-uncial with cursive elements – i.e. the direct predecessor of the Nonantolan type – contributed substantially to the development of the Caroline canon. According to Bischoff, the presence of Italian pre-Caroline minuscule scripts – of which the Nonantolan type is an example – most certainly played a role in the formation of the Rhaetian script and the Alemannic style in St Gall and Reichenau. These two distinct styles emerged during the second half of the eighth century as the creation of Swiss scriptoria. In Lowe’s words, ‘the one [Alemannic] is what we come to recognize as Germanic, the other [Rhaetian] I am inclined to consider Italic’. Examples of Rhaetian minuscule, particularly from the area of the (modern) Graubünden canton, can be found in three manuscripts possibly copied in Chur at the time of Charlemagne: Monza Biblioteca Capitolare MS. a. 2 (4) (CLA III, 383), containing the Dialogues of Gregory the Great, and the Gelasian sacramentaries in St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MSS 348 and 359 (CLA VII, 936, 939). In the St Gall sacramentaries ‘the script is roundish, typical Rhaetian minuscule resembling Beneventan and Visigothic in its forms of a and t’, and the influence of Italic and Insular scripts may be observed in a group of fragments

130 L. Traube, Einleitung in die lateinische Philologie des Mittelalters, ed. P. Lehmann (Munich: Beck, 1911), p. 27. This is evident for example in St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 195 (CLA VII, 912) and MS 722 (CLA VII, 947).
132 CLA VII, p. ix.
now in Münster, especially the lectionary, Stiftsarchiv, XX. 48, n.1 (CLA VII, 889).\textsuperscript{133} The Rhaetian minuscule appears to be a script employed in the Alpine region connecting northern Italian scriptoria to Alemannic centres and was therefore influenced by both traditions.\textsuperscript{134} The complete adoption of Caroline models in Reichenau and St Gall took place between 820 and 830, that is, at the same time as the formation of monastic libraries under their respective abbots, Waldo (786–806) and Gozbert (816–837).\textsuperscript{135}

Characteristics of the early period of the Nonantolan script are a type of pre-Caroline minuscule with many cursive elements such as \( a \) as \( c + c \), ligatures \(+i\) (e.g. \( ri, ti, li \)) and \( e+\), high \( e \), descending \( l \), and \( t \) with a full downwards hook on the left cross-stroke. Gradually, the type of minuscule moved from a more cursive to a more set, regular and roundish module.\textsuperscript{136} In this first phase, it is also apparent that several hands would commonly contribute to the compilation of the same manuscript – often working on the same fascicle, e.g. in V.E. 1452 (BK III, 5346), Add. 43460 (BK I, II, 2407) and the front endleaves in Cambridge, Trinity College, B.14.3 (289) (BK I, 837). Indeed, the same practice can be observed in transalpine monasteries such as St Gall, where, because of the distinctive graphical discipline of the scriptorium at the turn of the tenth century, it eventually becomes almost impossible to distinguish between different hands. The circumstances that we can imagine are that certain important monastic scriptoria were putting a lot of effort into the graphical education of a generation of scribes, and the best and most economic way to train them was a collaborative production of individual manuscripts during which more experienced scribes may have tutored novices. The abbey also continued to acquire manuscripts from nearby centres during Peter I’s and Ansfrith’s abbacies, that is at least until the middle of the ninth century. In a famous letter to Amalarius of Metz, Peter specially requested \textit{codices ad aumen[mentum] [sic] et statum sanctae nostrae ecclesiae}, although these codices have never been identified among the surviving manuscripts.\textsuperscript{137} An example of these series of acquisitions by Nonantolan abbots is the second codicological unit of the composite manuscript Sess. 38 (ff. 65v–139r) (CMD I, Pl. I, iii), containing the inscription \textit{De adquisitio domini Ansfrith abbatis} in a type of northern Italian pre-Caroline minuscule written somewhere in the Po valley – possibly Ivrea, on the basis of its similarity to the evangelii Ivrea, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS XCIX –

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} CLA VII, p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{134} ‘Graubunden wohl am längsten römische Eigenart in Kultur und Sprache, Recht, Urkundenwesen und Verwaltung bewahrt’, Bruckner, \textit{Scriptoria Medii Aevi Helvetica}, p. 13.
\item \textsuperscript{135} See Bischoff, ‘Panorama der Handschriftenüberlieferung’, p. 244.
\item \textsuperscript{136} See, for example, Add. 43460 or Vercelli 148 for the early period, and Sess. 40 or Sess. 95 for a more set script.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Branchi, ‘Le origini della miniatura nonantolana’, p. 622; Zoboli, \textit{Il monastero}, p. 181.
\end{itemize}
although not in the Nonantolan scriptorium.\textsuperscript{138}

The golden period of Nonantolan minuscule is the first decades of the ninth century.\textsuperscript{139} An example of the canonised Nonantolan script is, according to Bischoff, Sess. 40 (BK III, 5324–6) (Fig. 1.9), containing the Dialogues of Gregory the Great and the \textit{Visio Wettini} by Heito of Reichenau. Here, the script is characterised by numerous ligatures, open \textit{a}, tall \textit{e} in two loops, the shaft of the \textit{r} descending below the bottom line, uncial \textit{d}, tall initial \textit{I}, open \textit{g}, dimorphism for \textit{c} and tall, double \textit{e} resembling the shape of \textit{f}, all executed in a very calligraphic and set minuscule. It is also possible to note in particular the decoration in Sess. 40 with illuminated initials in a typical Insular style. From the same period and comparable to both the script and insular influences in the decoration are Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, V.E. 1452 (BK III, 5346), Sess. 26 (BK III, 5320) and Sess. 66 (BK III, 5330); Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Patr. 20 (ff. 70–176; BK I, 228) (Fig. 1.10); and St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 567 (BK III, 5787–93) (Fig. 1.11).

The glory of the Nonantolan script type was limited to a short but important existence, since the earliest signs of a certain mutation in the scriptorium production may be found as early as the start of the second third of the ninth century (ca. 830).\textsuperscript{140} Bernhard Bischoff considers the Augustine V.E. 1357, possibly copied during Peter I’s abbacy (808–824), to be already in a phase of decline.\textsuperscript{141} A new approach to writing was aimed at increasing legibility for the largest number of readers by adopting the same graphic standards throughout the empire. It is possible to infer that constant pressures from the other side of the Alps and other northern Italian scriptoria gradually led Nonantolan scribes – many of whom came from and were possibly trained in transalpine centres – to reconsider the set of norms that had guided the first book production at Nonantola. To speak, like Bischoff, of a phase of decline before the second half of the ninth century is perhaps too severe if we look at other creations of the Nonantolan scriptorium such as the first codicological unit of Sess. 38 (BK III, 5321–2), Sess. 95 (BK III, 5336) (Fig. 1.12) or the Cassiodorus in Mazarine, MS 660 (Fig. 1.13).\textsuperscript{142}

\textsuperscript{139} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{140} ‘[…] il tipo di Nonantola entrò presto in una fase di incertezza, di semplificazione e in ultimo di decadenza’, \textit{ibid.}, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{141} For a description of the manuscript, see Branchi, \textit{Lo scriptorium}, pp. 168–170 and 306–309.
\textsuperscript{142} On the decoration of the Mazarine Cassiodorus, see Orofino, ‘Da Montecassino a Nonantola’, pp. 553–607.
Mirroring a period of stasis for the monastery in the second half of the century, which had by then lost much of its imperial support, is the relative lack of information and specimens for scriptorium production; there is no surviving record for acquisitions by any of the abbots of this period. However, the scriptorium was possibly still active enough to support the needs of the monastic community and it would perhaps be unrealistic to deny that manuscripts had been acquired or donated to the library during this period. Just a handful of manuscripts date from the second half of the ninth century, and few can be ascribed to the very last years of the century. The type of script is an ‘impoverished’ Nonantolan minuscule with very few ligatures and dimorphisms, especially for $a$ and $d$ (alternating the most typical late Nonantolan shapes) – e.g. $o + e$ form for $a$ and uncial $d$ – to standard Caroline (half-uncial) forms. These pre-Caroline forms would eventually linger on in the low-grade production of the scriptorium – usually compilations for personal use – as in two notated sources, the palimpsest Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 862 (ff. 68–108; BK III, 6564–5), and Sess. 96 (ff. 314–320), which is an example of the products of the scriptorium early in the following century.

1.2.5. The period of decline: towards a new script

There is no agreement about when Caroline minuscule models began to be adopted at Nonantola. Contacts with the Carolingian court were already very close indeed and it is certain that the exchange of texts between cenobia on both sides of the Alps was taking place as early as the first quarter of the ninth century and possibly even earlier.¹⁴³ However, tracing the moment

¹⁴³ See §§2.1.2–3. and §2.2.4 below.
when the new type of minuscule replaced the original Nonantolan script is not an easy task. We are confronted with contrasting data showing the presence of Caroline minuscule in the library very early on the one hand, and, on the other hand, with an apparent resistance by the scriptorium to adopt the new canon with examples produced in loco dating only to the early tenth century. For example, Sess. 16 (BK III, 5318) (Fig. 1.14) is the only extant manuscript in Caroline minuscule dating to the second quarter of the ninth century and is a testimony to the early presence of Caroline minuscule in Nonantola. However, according to Bischoff, Sess. 16 should not be fitted into a sequence of gradual graphical transformation and it should not be interpreted as contributing to, nor as the result of the stylistic choices of the Nonantolan scriptorium. Therefore, it is very likely that the manuscript was not copied in Nonantola but was rather acquired from some other, possibly transalpine, centre. Palma again argues for an earlier encounter with Caroline minuscule, and thus instead considers Sess. 16 the first example of the

Fig. 1.14. Sess. 16, f. 3.

adoption of this type of script. In his study of the manuscript Vatican, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Misc., Arm. XI, 19 (Fig. 1.15), also known as the Vatican Liber Diurnus (hereafter V),
Palma concluded that the arrival of Caroline minuscule in the Nonantolan scriptorium should be ascribed to the time of Ansfrith’s abbacy (825–837), and that the monastery’s manuscript production would have subsequently abandoned the type of minuscule previously employed at Nonantola—the compilation of V representing the first attempt at imitating such script.\(^{144}\) Palma’s hypothesis, however, requires an attentive critique of the methodology he employed.

The range of evidence provided for Palma’s argument that V was copied at Nonantola, though undoubtedly wide, avails itself of few strictly palaeographical considerations. The main palaeographical point is the supposed origin of some interlinear corrections by a hand writing in a type of early medieval minuscule bookhand (‘minuscola libraria altomedievale’), which, according to Palma, may be close to the Nonantolan type of the first half of the ninth century.\(^{145}\) Furthermore, his observations on the ‘quality’ of these corrections exposed a direct correlation to the exemplar of V, since they do not seem to belong to any of the other branches of its textual tradition.\(^{146}\) In other words, Palma’s hypothesis is that the corrector had access to the same exemplar from which the manuscript in question was copied, and it is likely therefore that he was operating in the same centre, writing in the local type of book hand, i.e. Nonantolan.

The first argument against Palma’s reading of events is that the main hand of V is hardly comparable to the type of minuscule used in Nonantola during the second quarter of the ninth century. This fact has already been remarked by Bischoff, who did not consider V to be a product of the abbey’s scriptorium; the script, a type of early Caroline minuscule with occasional cursive elements, such as ligatures and open a, does not display the characteristics of the Nonantolan script type used during Ansfrith’s abbacy. Bischoff dismisses Palma’s attribution in rather explicit terms: ‘non posso credere che la scrittura del Liber Diurnus Vaticano sia di origine nonantolana […]’. Minuscola robusta, essa non contiene nessuna delle tipiche legature e–e con la r–lunga, e d’altra parte l’unica forma della g col tratto superiore orizzontale, che è caratteristica per il Liber Diurnus, è del tutto assente nello stile di Nonantola.\(^{147}\) At that time, although already in a phase of transition and gradually abandoning the characteristic features of the local minuscule, Nonantola was still far from embracing Caroline shapes of the type featured in V.

Palma’s assertion that the corrector of V is writing in Nonantolan minuscule is also questionable: similar types of script are also found in books localisable to other northern Italian centres such as Verona, Bobbio, Ivrea and Vercelli, among others.\(^{148}\) In fact, a very similar script can also be found in central Italy in the mid-ninth century, e.g. Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Reg.


\(^{145}\) ‘[…] una simile tipizzazione è ben nota e localizzata a Nonantola’ [italics added], ibid., p. 306.

\(^{146}\) Ibid., p. 304.

\(^{147}\) Bischoff, ‘Manoscritti nonantolani’, p. 108.

\(^{148}\) See for example the script in Ivrea, Biblioteca capitolare, MS XCIX, in ibid., pp. 109–110 (reproductions of ff. 131r, 132v).
Lat. 1997, possibly copied in Abruzzo.\(^{149}\) Palma’s opinion about \(V\) having been corrected by a Nonantolan hand is supported by Bischoff, but even if we acknowledge some relationship between the corrector’s hand in \(V\) and the Nonantolan script of the second quarter of the ninth century (or even earlier), it does not necessarily follow that the corrector was operating in Nonantola, as he may have been trained there and later moved to another centre.\(^{150}\) In fact, there would have been other northern Italian centres in which Caroline minuscule was already employed in manuscript production and that may have produced \(V\), e.g. Verona. Another criticism is that the type of correction found here does not necessarily indicate that the corrector had access to the same exemplar, since he may have used another copy of the *Liber Diurnus* from the same tradition, and to which he had access in the centre in which he was operating (as Palma himself admits).\(^{151}\)

The last point is that the format and quality of parchment of \(V\) is very different from the type usually employed in Nonantola; codicologically, the book production of the first half of the ninth century features little variation and makes use of rather constant criteria in determining both the dimension, ruling (writing-block, number of lines) and quality of the parchment.\(^{152}\) Palma states that a plausible justification for this anomaly is that the content of \(V\), the text of the *Liber Diurnus*, which is concerned with ecclesiastical formulae used in the papal chancery, may have been considered less important than other patristic or liturgical texts and therefore a lesser quality of parchment was employed.\(^{153}\) If this was true, we would be left wondering why the scribe of \(V\) chose to write in a different, new and innovative script, which was to become the dominant model later in the century, instead of using the more common and typical Nonantolan minuscule, similar to that of the corrector, for such an ‘unimportant’ text. In fact, around the same time, the text of the *Lex romana visigobarum* in a fragment in Klagenfurt, Bibliothek des Kärntner Geschichtsverein, MS 10/2 (BK I, 1849), was copied, according to Bischoff, in an impoverished (‘abgeschwächter’) Nonantolan minuscule. That is dated to the same period (or to the second third of the century) and may be considered an example of a text that may have been

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\(^{149}\) See P. Supino Martini, ‘Per lo studio delle scritture altomedievali italiane: La collezione canonica chietina (Vat. Reg. lat. 1997)’, *Scrittura e civiltà* 1 (1977), p. 133–154. Some of the graphic features and letter shapes are so close to the Nonantolan type and the proto-Beneventan that they have led many scholars to believe in a mutual influence. Instead, it is possible that this central Italian manuscript is a product of the process of creating a national script for the Lombard kingdom.


\(^{151}\) ‘Sebbene metodologicamente non si possa escludere in senso assoluto che il testo di \(V\) sia stato verificato su di un modello diverso dal suo antigrafo ma appartenente allo stesso ramo della tradizione’, Palma, ‘L’origine del codice Vaticano’, p. 304.


even more important but was copied in a smaller format and provided with less decoration.\textsuperscript{154} The Visigothic code was introduced into northern Italy in the ninth century for the use of the Romans in Lombardy. The chief value of the code was as a source of Roman law including the first five books of the \textit{Codex Theodosianus} and five books of the \textit{Sententiae Receptae} of Julius Paulus; until the discovery of a manuscript in the chapter library in Verona, which contained the greater part of the \textit{Institutiones} of Gaius, this was the only work in which any portion of the institutional writings of that great jurist had come down to us. The code had the effect of preserving the traditions of Roman law in Aquitaine and Gallia Narbonensis, thus reinforcing their sense of enduring continuity, which was broken in the Frankish north.\textsuperscript{155}

It appears that Palma eventually revised his considerations in his anthology of Nonantolan manuscripts published for the \textit{Archivio Paleografico Italiano}. The sequence of tables shows the changes in script throughout four centuries of the abbey scriptorium, i.e. ninth to twelfth centuries. The shift that concerns us is evident in two successive plates reproducing two folios from Sess. 70 (f.155r) and Sess. 76 (f. 48r), respectively (Fig. 1.16, 1.17).\textsuperscript{156} Even to the less expert eye, the two manuscripts feature two very different scripts: one is written in a script which represents a transitional phase of the older Nonantolan type gradually encompassing Caroline elements, the other in a well-formed Caroline minuscule with no stylistic signs of cursive but occasional reminiscences of the older type in the shapes for \textit{ae} and in \textit{e}'s protruding tongue. Palma dates Sess. 70 to the middle of the ninth century, while Sess. 76 should be dated some fifty years later, to the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century. The \textit{Catalogus abbatum nonantolanorum} informs us, as described above (§1.1.4), that in 899 the abbey was devastated by a Hungarian invasion and a great fire caused the loss of many manuscripts. As a result, the monastery was abandoned for some time – possibly at least a decade – and it is reasonable to imagine that during this period the copying activity of the scriptorium ceased completely. One is left wondering, then, whether Palma considers the destruction of the abbey to be an event that did not stop manuscript production, as his dating of Sess. 76 to around the year 900 seems to suggest.\textsuperscript{157} When the scriptorium’s activity resumed in the second half of the tenth century, no

\textsuperscript{154} Palma and Morelli, ‘Indagine’, pp. 82–83 and 93. The fragment’s dimensions from BK are ca. 15 × ca. 11 cm and do not compare with Nonantola, which seems instead to average 23 × 16 cm, so it is in an anomalous format and more similar to a Veronese production in its number of lines.

\textsuperscript{155} This is also referred to as the Breviary of Alaric (\textit{Breviarium Alaricarum}). For a description and bibliography see \textit{Medieval Hibernia: An Encyclopaedia}, ed. H. M. Gerli (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 103.

\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Archivio paleografico italiano}, vol. 8 (\textit{Frammenti diversi – Centri scrittori}), fasc. 74 (Nonantola) (Rome: Istituto di Paleografia dell’Università di Roma, 1982), commentary to Pl. 46–47.

\textsuperscript{157} See Palma, \textit{Archivio paleografico}, commentary to Pl. 47. We have already discussed the prudence required when dealing with the eleventh-century \textit{Catalogus}. However, Palma seems to take the word of the \textit{Catalogus} when he argues in favour of a provenance of some manuscripts from the south, i.e. Anselm’s acquisition, though he seems to ignore the catalogue’s mention of the destruction of the abbey in his dating of Sess. 76.
traces of the earlier Nonantolan type survived, this having been replaced by Caroline minuscule.

1.2.6. Texts and liturgical manuscripts in the Nonantolan library

From the ninth-century monastic library approximately ninety-two titles survive. The vast majority of separate works are patristic: the most numerous among these are the works of Jerome and Cyprian, while the rest of the texts comprise works of Cassiodorus, Isidore, Gregory, Ambrose, Cassian, Bede and Fulgentius, as well as less circulated authors such as Eugippus and Eucherius.\(^{158}\) Given the hazards of survival, it is not possible to assess whether the library was as rich in texts that could be defined as ‘secular’ or classical.\(^{159}\) Very few of these survive from the early medieval collection: such books may have been located in a different armarium or space in the abbey and may have suffered disproportionately in the 899 fire or due to later dispersal.

Nonantola was not just a place for learning and political administration; it was primarily a place


\(^{159}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 172.
for worship. It is striking, however, that almost no liturgical manuscripts from the ninth century have survived. There is almost no doubt that the collection also housed liturgical manuscripts essential for everyday liturgical practice. Among the extant thirty-seven complete manuscripts and fragments made at eighth- and ninth-century Nonantola, there is no Sacramentary, Missal, Benedictional, Psalter or Gospel.

One possible explanation for this lack of material is that liturgical manuscripts were perhaps kept away from the volumes of the *bibliotheca*, in a different part of the monastery. This part of the abbey, in turn, may have been particularly affected by the fire of 899, leaving almost no traces of the liturgical library. We may have two pieces of evidence for this. In Sess. 77, an early ninth-century Nonantolan hand writes an inscription mentioning that the manuscript was to be kept in the *primo armario*.160 Certainly, *armarium* at that time could mean anything from a wooden cabinet to a bookcase to even a niche in the wall, possibly closed by a wooden door. And it would not have been unlikely to find a small room, perhaps attached to the monastic scriptorium, containing various *armaria* that eventually protected the books from the fire and the heat. The second piece of evidence is that the only surviving Sacramentary from ninth-century Nonantola is a book made elsewhere: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 2292 (*BK* III, 4158). This manuscript was written and illuminated at Saint Denis for Charles the Bald, who presented it in 876 to John, bishop of Arezzo, who in turn shortly after donated it to Nonantola.161 Given that this extraordinary manuscript was lavishly decorated and beautifully written, it is not difficult to imagine that it therefore may have escaped the fire because it was kept safe in one *armarium* as part of the abbey’s treasure. It is only during the eleventh century ‘renaissance’ of the Benedictine abbey that it can be shown that copying activity resumed at Nonantola, accompanying a resumption of liturgical practice.

1.2.7. The eleventh-century library, the medieval catalogues and the dispersal

The earliest surviving list of books from the library in Nonantola refers to the *adquisitiones* of abbot Rudolf I (1002–1035) and it is contained in a copy of Eusebius’s *Historia ecclesiastica* in Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. lat. 2359, before the relevant fascicle was detached; it is now in Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2248.162 A monk of Nonantola, Petrus Ardengus, was responsible for this compilation, as can be inferred from the incipit: *Isti sunt libri qui sunt adquisiti tempore domini Rodulfi abbatis primi, per petrum monachum Ardengum in Nonantulensi*

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160 See above, p. 12.
cenobio. The fact that Rudolf is mentioned as *primus* may be an indication that Petrus was writing at the time of Rudolf’s successor Rudolf II (1035–1053).\(^{163}\) Thirty-nine codices appear in this list, among which nine are liturgical: two antiphoners, one missal, four homiliaries, one evangelialy and one epistolary.\(^{164}\) Thanks to the works of Gullotta and Ruysschaert, eleven of the thirty-nine entries have been identified as surviving volumes.\(^{165}\)

The earliest surviving record of the community’s holdings rather than a list of acquisitions, and which may therefore be described as a catalogue, is preserved in Sess. 31 (ff. 62v–63) and dates to 1166. Written by a single hand, the inventory divides the sixty-one volumes into four different sections, organised hierarchically by author: the first mentions the works of Augustine, the second has twenty-two works/texts by different authors such as Jerome, Isidore and Ambrose, and the third describes eight works by Gregory or on him – such as the Gregorian *excerpta* gathered by Paternius and the *Vita* written by John the Deacon. The last and fourth section is dedicated to Bede. This catalogue probably referred to only a part of the monastic library, given that only twelve manuscripts out of the eleventh-century list are mentioned here, while seventeen are absent but reappear in later catalogues. The total number of entries is also considerably less than fifteenth-century inventories and it is possible that the 1166 inventory may be referring to only a section or to a single *armarium* of the *bibliotheca*.\(^{166}\)

Three other catalogues were compiled in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first dates to 1331 and is still in the Archivio Abbaziale in Nonantola. First edited by Gullotta, this inventory accounts for both the books and the treasure of the abbey; eighty-nine volumes are mentioned in the list, ordered by author.\(^{167}\) More than a century later, another inventory, made between April 1464 and January 1465, mentions 258 volumes. For every codex the author indicates the incipit and explicit, the dimensions (*magnus, parvus, mediocris*), the type of script (*littera magna, littera minuta, bona littera, moderne littere, cursive littere*), the quality of the parchment and type of binding (*ligatus assidibus, clavis revelatis vetusti sed sine clausuris, coperto de corio albo*, etc.), as well as other qualities.

\(^{163}\) Ibid.

\(^{164}\) See A. Moderini, *La notazione neumatica di Nonantola*, 2 vols (Cremona: Athenaeum Cremonense, 1970), p. 43. The acquisition of two antiphonaries for the eleventh-century abbey is curious and would be worth investigating. However, this is beyond the scope of the present study.

\(^{165}\) See G. Gullotta, *Gli antichi cataloghi e i codici della Abbazia di Nonantola* (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1955) [*Studi e Testi* 182], and J. Ruysschaert, *Les manuscrits de l’Abbaye de Nonantola* (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1955). A reconstruction of the musical material in the medieval catalogues is offered by Moderini, *La notazione*, pp. 43–50. According to the Italian scholar, there are only nine surviving volumes, noteworthy among which is the presence of Sess. 96 – one of the earliest notated sources – which would first appear in the 1166 catalogue as well as later ones in 1331, 1464 and 1464–1490 (see *ibid.*, p. 50).

\(^{166}\) Branchi, *Lo scriptorium*, p. 111.

\(^{167}\) Gullotta, *Gli antichi cataloghi*, pp. 71–239. See also Moderini, *La notazione*, p. 44.
Finally, two other inventories were composed during the same century but without as much attention to detail as the 1464 catalogue.

The manuscript collection of the Nonantolan monastery was transported to Rome by Ilarione Rancati in the mid-seventeenth century and became part of the library of the Cistercian monastery of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme; at that time, the collection was a total of 590 volumes. In 1810, after the suppression of Santa Croce, this library was transferred to the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana and there it remained until 1817, when it was transferred again to the monastery of San Bernardo alle Terme. From there the manuscripts were stolen by the antiquarian bookseller Petrucci and sold in Rome to the English collector Thomas Phillips via Thomas Payne and Henry Foss in 1833. After the dispersal of Phillips’ library and a series of acquisitions and losses, some of the remaining manuscripts are now in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Rome.

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168 Branchi, Lo scriptorium, p. 112. Often liturgical manuscripts are described as having *assidibus tarlatis* or as *destructus ab humido a latere superiori* (see *ibid.*).


170 Branchi, *Lo scriptorium*, p. 117.
Chapter 2
The earliest music manuscripts from Nonantola

2.1. Representing tradition – crafting identity

When considering the early diffusion of music writing, it is of primary importance to understand the geographical dissemination, the routes of propagation and the institutional network that favoured such a proliferation throughout late Carolingian Europe. The identification of patterns of diffusion, and of the layers of their realisation, derives from classifying and chronologically arranging surviving manuscript sources to the highest degree of accuracy. In the initial phase of the creation of music books, during the middle years of the ninth century, scribes, those in charge of the liturgy and trained singers – often coexisting within the same figure, the cantor – would have found themselves in the challenging position of having to group together and assemble a large body of material, possibly availing themselves only of previous, often partial attempts. Unfortunately, uncertainty over this particular phase prevents a full understanding of the forms in which early notated material was originally conceived, compiled and circulated.

Historiography has so far had to deal with a void left by the relentless process of ‘decay’ of historical evidence through losses and neglect. But behind the material, almost archaeological, face of such an enquiry lies an insight into the entire intellectual operation undertaken by these early medieval scribes. Far from being a uniform reaction to necessity and demand – the latter often more institutionalized than effective – these responses varied greatly, revealing a much more complex and blurred picture than is suggested by the idea of a monolithic reforming campaign, such as that emerging from the acta of the Carolingian court. As Susan Rankin states, ‘nor, given the extreme variation of content and presentation […] could it be argued that there has been a systematic response in the form of books copied following the Admonitio generalis’. Differences in the choice and number of texts, their versions and readings,

173 It has been estimated that a plausible ratio of surviving medieval liturgical manuscripts is 1:10. For music manuscripts, however, the ratio is 1:1000; see B. Stäblein, Schriftbild der einstimigen Musik (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik VEB, 1975), p. 102.
and, finally, their presentation and layout account for a scenario in which agreement had not yet been reached and was rather to be constructed gradually. More than with some abstract concept of uniformity of liturgical practice, the main concern was with the quality of the written text, aimed at a communal understanding of the written liturgical word. These early specimens originated, at least initially, more from the prime concerns of single institutions and choices of influential individuals than as the direct offspring of a centralised undertaking. A general level of uniformity in the modes of written transmission was eventually achieved before the second half of the ninth century. The end results – if such a description may be employed – and the consensus reached in the compilation of liturgical material revealed a process of constant exchange among institutions: individual attempts became ultimately a collective enterprise favoured by a large and vital network of political and ecclesiastical relationships.

While lists of chants are present in manuscripts from the late eighth century, liturgical chant now became tangible and visible in all its forms. About a dozen unnotated Gregorian antiphoners survive from between the late eighth century and the late ninth. Yet this new dimension was not only about the reification of the musical repertory, as embedded in liturgy and ritual, but also about transmission through its representation, as the meeting point of oral tradition with the realm of writing or, in other words, concerning the much-discussed interaction between orality and literacy. This intersection has been the focus of musicological investigations since the early 1980s. Having its roots in anthropology (Jack Goody) and linguistics, the question of how a transmission based on orality shaped the formation of the Gregorian chant repertory has been explored by Leo Treitler. More recently, A. M. Busse Berger explored the role of memory in both oral and written transmission, already investigated by M. J. Carruthers. This major challenge was not just conceptual and focused on a better arrangement of the complex and rich body of music: it was mostly related to the practice – or practicalities – of writing and to its new limitations generated by the materiality of the written text. In order to achieve this objective, scribes had then an additional factor to consider, namely the presence of musical notation. 

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175 Ibid., p. 58.
176 For a comparative edition of the texts from the earliest mass chant books, see Antiphonale Missarum sextuplex; ed. R.-J. Hesbert (Brussels: Vromant & Co., 1935). See also the forthcoming edition of the earliestgraduals by D. DiCenso (The Henry Bradshaw Society).
ability and range of skills involved in preparing a chant book were exceptional. For example, extreme care was taken in the placement of separate syllables, allowing space for accommodating musical melismas. This operation required extremely careful measurement of such spacing, entailing the necessity to provide different layers of information – text, music, rubrics – while ensuring their easy and accessible navigation. The variety of attitudes to the reading of the text reflected the multilayered nature of such compilations, and the presence of neumes, for example, provided an even clearer visual means to direct the singer to good pronunciation of the chant text. As Rankin states, ‘from a Carolingian perspective, the singing of chant was not an isolated exercise, but belonged to a wider field of liturgical and intellectual endeavor, in the service of individual spiritual development’. The existence of fully notated chant books can only be attested from the last decades of the ninth century. Among them, the manuscripts Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 239, dating from the last quarter of the century, and the Cantatorium St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 359, copied in the late ninth century or the early tenth, were elevated by early scholarship on Gregorian chant as almost totemic symbols for the first phase of the production of large, comprehensive and elaborate musical compilations in the Latin west.

The present study is not about the prehistory – in Kenneth Levy’s words – of written chant transmission, but rather about the first phase of development of music writing and music book production at a particular centre, the northern Italian monastery of Nonantola. Levy also argues that musical notation may have been used in Europe as early as the late eighth century. This implies that the invention of ways of writing music – in Levy’s theory, all originating from a single notational type, i.e. Palaeofrankish – was ineluctably bound up with Carolingian reforms. There is, however, no clear evidence for such a claim and the picture that has been emerging is of a less direct connection with Charlemagne’s court. As Rankin puts it, ‘the historical conception that Gregorian chant had been more or less fully formulated by the early ninth century appears untenable’. If we consider the early notated sources from Carolingian Europe as a turning point between a before, i.e. the dynamics that led to the invention of musical notation and the development of techniques for musical compilations, and an after, i.e. when notational conventions and canons for book production were perfected and spread, it is precisely with the latter phase that this chapter is concerned. As the picture emerging from the previous chapter suggests, during the course of the ninth century the abbey of St Sylvester was a major political and ecclesiastical centre in close and constant communication with the central Carolingian court.

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179 These manuscripts have been known and studied since the beginning of semiological studies of notation. For a complete facsimile and index of Laon 239, see PM 10; for St Gall 359, see PM, second series, vol. 2.
in Aachen, as well as other important institutions such as St Gall and Trier; at the time when Amalarius of Metz was in communication with Abbot Peter I, he was bishop of Trier.\textsuperscript{181} The monastic library was one of the richest in Europe, and energetic copying activity was augmented by the continuous exchange of books from both sides of the Alps, via Alpine passes and regions such as Rhaetia.\textsuperscript{182} Nonantola, as much as other more central institutions, clearly possessed all the conditions for being considered an active participant in the process of codification of liturgical compilations.

The very concepts of a ‘centre’ and a ‘periphery’ are problematic. If in the early Carolingian period the dynamics of geopolitical interest chiefly followed military expansions – hence an east–west trajectory crossing the north–south one – the cultural and institutional divide was still very much between the Frankish world and the Lombard Italic peninsula. This was due to the persistence of a very strong sense of a Lombard frontier from the Alps southwards, which was reflected and maintained also at institutional and administrative levels. Before the empire had reached a more defined shape and stable organisation, however, these impulses to expansion had already been altered and driving forces directed more towards establishing internal institutional networks. This also meant a strengthening of cultural exchanges in transverse and intersecting trajectories, and, particularly after the later \textit{ordinatio imperii} (817), relationships along the north–south route became even more firmly consolidated. In June 774, after a siege of several weeks, Charlemagne captured Pavia and had himself crowned king of the Lombards. Pavia was then the capital city of the Lombard kingdom and an important cultural centre, the site of a school that attracted scholars from as far away as the British Isles. An important result of this victory was that scholars associated with the Lombard schools began to make their way north to the Frankish kingdom. Lombard scholars had been at the Frankish court before, during the reign of Pippin, but now their presence amounted to a cultural movement. Among those who made the journey were the grammarian Peter of Pisa and the chronicler Paul the Deacon. Most stayed only briefly at the court before returning south or finding a position elsewhere, but their travels suggest a possible conduit through which knowledge could have made its way into the Frankish kingdom from Italy and vice versa.

From the late eighth century and for most of the ninth, Nonantola was arguably the last important intellectual community that one would have encountered on the way to Rome from the north. From the ninth-century monastic library approximately ninety-two titles survive. The

\textsuperscript{181} For the networks of relationships between Nonantola and Alemannic abbeys, see above, §1.1.3.
\textsuperscript{182} N. Lozovsky, ‘Roman Geography and Ethnography in Carolingian Europe’, \textit{Speculum} 81/2 (2006), pp. 325–364. Austria was, according to the early medieval geographical classification, the eastern portion of the Langobardia Maior, the north-central part of the Lombard Kingdom, extending from the river Adda to Friuli.
vast majority of separate works are patristic: the most numerous amongst these are the works of Jerome and Cyprian, while the rest of the texts comprise works of Cassiodorus, Isidore, Gregory, Ambrose, Cassian, Bede and Fulgentius, as well as less circulated authors such as Eugippus and Eucherius. However, the library seems to have been particularly limited in texts that could be defined as ‘secular’ and had hardly any that could be described as classical. Nonantola was not just a place for learning and political administration; it was primarily a place for worship. It is striking, however, that almost no liturgical manuscripts from the ninth century have survived. A look at the manuscripts from what survives of the Carolingian monastic library in the Benedictine abbey reveals that the vast majority of volumes are not liturgical stricto sensu. The collection would almost certainly have also included liturgical manuscripts essential for everyday liturgical practice. Among the extant thirty-seven complete manuscripts and fragments surviving from eighth- and ninth-century Nonantola, there is no Sacramentary, Missal, Benedictional, Psalter or Gospel. From the catalogus abbatum we know that Nonantola was struck in 899 by the Hungarian invasion, the invaders killing many monks (occiderunt monachos) and the community suffering a huge loss of manuscripts (codices multos concremaverunt). For the main question of the present research, it is important to try to understand precisely what these lost codices were and whether we can assess the quantity of such losses.

Two hypotheses may be formulated in this regard. One provides a possible explanation for the lack of material: liturgical manuscripts may have been kept separately from the bibliotheca in a part of the abbey that was burnt in 899, as discussed above in §1.2.6. The other hypothesis is that books for the liturgy were entirely replaced in the course of the following two centuries, either for reasons of wear or out of an interest in acquiring and producing new, up-to-date material. This may be even more plausible in the case of music manuscripts, not only because the notation changed considerably with the introduction of the musical staff in the late eleventh century, but also because the repertory was constantly enriched through the production of tropes and sequences that required comprehensive compilations.

One testimony to such a process is the manuscript Geneva, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. 177, a palimpsest of an early eleventh-century Nonantolan antiphoner, unbound, erased and reused in northern Italy in the early twelfth century in order to compile a copy of a medical handbook by Gariopontus of Salerno. Another manuscript that went through a similar process is the palimpsest in Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 862, of which the parchment

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183 For an essential account of the texts in the ninth-century Nonantolan library, see Pollard, Literary Culture in Ninth-Century Northern Italy, pp. 161–247.
184 Ibid., p. 172.
185 See above, §1.2.
186 See above, §1.1.4.
was reused in the early twelfth century – in the same area as Bodmer 177 – to transmit Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinarium*: this will be studied in detail below. Indeed, it is precisely in this period, at the turn of the twelfth century, during the second golden age of this northern Italian abbey, that some of the most important surviving music manuscripts were compiled. Exceptional examples of this phase are the famous *Cantatorium*, now in the Abbey Museum, and the tropers Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 1741, Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, ms. 2824, and Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale, Sessoriano 62. It is not unlikely that these compilations were copies of older Nonantolan notated books that needed to be replaced by new volumes, their content reorganised and adapted to a new type of notation which required a complete rearrangement of the layout. It was only during the eleventh century ‘renaissance’ of the Benedictine abbey that copying activity resumed at Nonantola, accompanying a resumption of liturgical practice; by the end of the century Nonantola also had a flourishing production and a large repertory of tropes and sequences that required the compilation of volumes separate from the rest of the gradual.

The already wide interlinear space exploited by adiastematic neumes is here expanded in order to accommodate the new system of parallel lines, normally associated with the reforms of Guido d’Arezzo. Consequently, the number of notated lines per page diminished, meaning that a single chant would now occupy at least double the previous writing area. The balance between the requirement for more parchment and the need to maintain a reasonable size for the volumes – necessary for easy consultation – led to a separation of liturgical material into different books. What previously would have been collected into a single book was now arranged into separate compilations, as the *Cantatorium* and the Casanatense troper suggest.

The increased demand for primary material and resources was evidently well within the means of a monastic scriptorium, which could take advantage of the support of a wealthy institution that not only valued such enterprises for direct liturgical use but also, and more importantly, wished to increase its prestige and strengthen its sense of identity within contemporary ecclesiastical and political dynamics. In this respect, it is noteworthy that Nonantola was very reluctant to adopt other types of musical notation, despite being doubtless the only major institution to employ such a notational canon in the Italian peninsula. Notwithstanding the graphical challenges involved, the adaptation of the characteristic features of the abbey’s musical signs to the newly

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187 The *Cantatorium* is sine numero. On this manuscript in particular, see G. Baroffio, *Appunti di viaggio – Travel Notes: Cantatorium Abbazia di Nonantola* (Nonantola: Comune di Nonantola, 2002), study and facsimile.


189 The production of the previous generation of music books in Nonantola is witnessed only by fragments now in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, coming from an original Nonantolan antiphoner (containing also the sequence *Benedicta sit*), as well as the Bodmer palimpsest. See above, §1.3.
introduced diastematic arrangement was carried out successfully. We might argue, therefore, that the abbey’s particular type of musical notation may also have been perceived as an identity trait and maintained in order to better define the abbey’s sense of belonging to a long-standing, independent and powerful institution.

Finally, it is possible that the loss of liturgical manuscripts resulting from a combination of these factors was compounded by the dispersal of volumes during the long period of decline in the first half of the tenth century. The monks who fled the abbey in 899, following Abbot Leopard, may have found temporary refuge in nearby centres and taken with them these essential instruments for the liturgical practice of the host institution, which itself was perhaps not interested in preserving such material. So, how does this picture match up with the surviving music manuscripts? How can we reconstruct a scenario with such a paucity of information? And, more importantly, what can the observation of these phenomena tell us about the first phase of the creation of canons for the compilation of musical and liturgical manuscripts?

2.1.1. Surviving notated sources: addenda

The first comprehensive list of manuscripts and fragments containing Nonantolan notation was compiled by Ave Moderini in 1970. Since then, a number of fragments have emerged in libraries and archives both in Italy and abroad. Although most of the sources belong to a period later than the one studied here, compilation of the inventory below is necessary for the sake of completeness. Most of the entries represent newly discovered material, and in many cases no previous studies of the musical and liturgical content exist. The following list is intended as an inventory of additions to those covered by Moderini, for which a basic description and bibliography is provided here.

- **BOMBIANA**, Archivio Parrocchiale, s.n.: two leaves from a late eleventh-century antiphoner with Nonantolan neumes on a staff

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- **Brixen**, Archiv des Priestenseminars, s.n.: four palimpsest bifolia containing an early twelfth-century gradual in Nonantolan notation of the type usually associated with the abbey of Torcello (Venice)\textsuperscript{192}

- **Fanano**, Archivio Parrocchiale, covers for the Libro dei matrimoni (1594–1782) and the Libro delle cresime (1611–1772): four folios from a late eleventh- or early twelfth-century Nonantolan antiphoner\textsuperscript{193}

- **Geneva**, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer, MS 177: in this manuscript several folios, especially in the second half of the volume, are palimpsests of an early eleventh-century Nonantolan antiphoner\textsuperscript{194}

- **Lodi**, Archivio storico, Filze notarili: one fragment of a late eleventh-century antiphoner\textsuperscript{195}

- **Monza**, Biblioteca Capitolare, a-25/37, rear endleaf; c-1/61, ff. 205–218; h-1/116, \textit{passim}; h-9/164, ff. 194: fragments of a late tenth-century gradual with staffless Nonantolan notation\textsuperscript{196}

- **Munich**, Universitätsbibliothek, 2° Cod. ms. 126: strips of parchment in the binding from one or more bifolia containing the antiphons for the week of Pentecost, written by a twelfth-century northern Italian hand and notated in Nonantolan neumes\textsuperscript{197}

- **Nonantola**, Archivio Storico Abbaziale, Framm. Cod. Pergam. 22: two folios from an early twelfth-century gradual\textsuperscript{198}

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\textsuperscript{192} I am very grateful to Dr Giulia Gabrielli (Brixen) for having brought these fragments to my attention. For a similar notation, see Stäblein, \textit{Schriftbild}, pp. 124–125. The \textit{scriptio superior} is a late-twelfth-century notated gradual, possibly from the Veneto.

\textsuperscript{193} The fragments contain the Offices for St Cecilia, St Clemens and St Andrew. I am very grateful to Dr Stefania Roncroffi (Reggio Emilia) for having brought them to my attention. See S. Roncroffi, ‘Frammenti in notazione nonantolana nell’archivio storico parrocchiale di Fanano’ in \textit{Celesti sirene: Musica e monachesimo dal Medioevo all’Ottocento: Atti del II seminario internazionale di studi, San Severo di Puglia 11–13 ottobre 2013}, ed. A. Bonsante and R. M. Pasquandrea (Barletta: Cafagna Editore, 2015), pp. 123–138.

\textsuperscript{194} For a description, see E. Pellegrin, \textit{Manuscris latins de la Bodmeriana} (Cologny-Genève: Fondation Martin Bodmer, 1982), pp. 420–422. I am very grateful to Dominique Gatté (Strasbourg) for having brought this manuscript to my attention.

\textsuperscript{195} I am very grateful to Gionata Brusa (Vercelli-Würzburg) for having brought this fragment to my attention.


\textsuperscript{198} \textit{ILJ} 16233.
- **Nonantola**, Archivio Storico Comunale, Framm. lit. 30: one fragmentary leaf from a late eleventh-century trope sequentiary in Nonantolan notation


- **Philadelphia**, Free Library, Lewis E 15: front endleaf, Missal, ca. 1100

- **Princeton**, Mendel Music Library, MS 138.70: one bifolio from an early twelfth-century antiphoner.

- **Vercelli**, Biblioteca Capitolare, CLVI: an eleventh-century missal, possibly copied in Bergamo, with musical additions in Nonantolan neumes

- **Vienna**, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 765 + cod. 1050: these two fragments, one strip of parchment and one folio from the same original bifolio and later re-used as binding material for two separate volumes, contain part of the chants for the Mass on Trinity Sunday and three series of Post-Pentecost antiphons (Sundays I–III); written in the first half of the eleventh century and containing staffless Nonantolan neumes, these are the earliest extant examples of a Nonantolan antiphoner

- **Rome**, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Sessoriano 66, f. 1r, 168v, 169r–v: pen trials and some notated chants in Nonantolan neumes by two or more hands dating to the late tenth century or the early eleventh

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201 **ILI** 19775.

202 The fragment has been recently acquired (2016) by Princeton University, Mendel Music Library. It includes antiphons and responsories for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (May 3).

203 **ILI** 27722. Notated chants are for Trinity Sunday, the Office for St Michael and in dedicatione ecclesiae. See G. Brusa, ‘La notazione nonantolana a Vercelli’, Rivista internazionale di musica sacra 30 (2009), pp. 121–123.

204 As this is a recent discovery, there is no literature on these fragments. Liturgical and musicological investigations will be necessary in order to ascertain the extent to which Nonantolan notation advanced graphically in the early eleventh century.

205 On f. 168v, Psalm 17 Liberator meus (perhaps in the same hand as Ecce vir prudent; see above, §1.1.4); on f. 169r, Dierum noctuque vigilae (unidentified, notated possibly by a later hand); on f. 169v, chants for the Mass and Office for St Gregory.
A chronology of the oldest surviving music manuscripts has never actually been attempted. Moderini lists only three items as dating to before the year 1000: five palimpsest fascicles in Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 862; one notated fascicle in Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sessoriano 96; and the *membra disiecta* of a gradual now divided between Monza and Milan. Of these, the last group of fragments is as much studied as its provenance is debated. There is very little evidence that the original gradual was copied in Nonantola, and Verona has been proposed as one of the possible copying centres. However, it is hard to understand why the hypothesis of compilation in Monza itself has been rejected, especially since the Chapter library preserves at least two other testimonies to the use of Nonantolan neumes: the marginalia in the sacramentary MS f. 1/101, dating to the mid-tenth century, and the ritual MS b 15/128, dating possibly to the early years of the eleventh century. In her study of the *membra disiecta*, Kitty Messina does not mention the fact that these manuscripts may have been compilations by *advenae* hands, nor does she reflect on the possibility of a local, Monzese development of Nonantolan canons. So far, the chronology of the notated sources in Monza shows that we have traces of the presence of notation of the Nonantolan kind in the tenth century, and only in a second phase does the notation in Monza become Germanic. In addition, it is generally agreed that the script of the *membra disiecta* could date closer to 1000 and thus situate them at the opposite end of the spectrum we are considering. How Nonantolan notation reached Monza may possibly be explained through the presence of monks trained in the Benedictine monastery who found refuge in Monza after the destruction of the abbey in 899, or perhaps in a second period, during the following phase of decline in the first half of the tenth century, thus creating a local version of the Nonantolan canon. Moreover, on first analysis this type seems to differ from the traces of Nonantolan notation found in Veronese manuscripts that appear in the eleventh century but that match the surviving sources for which a Nonantolan

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206 The incipit of the sequence (or hymn?) *Laus tibi deus Pater* is notated in German neumes, while the responsory *Ecce vir prudens qui edificavi* is notated in Nonantolan neumes.

207 For the complete list of fragments in Monza, see Messina, ‘La tradizione liturgica’, pp. 149–169. The endleaves in Milan are in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, S 37 sup.


209 The manuscripts that contain Germanic neumes in Monza are c 12/75 (antiphonary, eleventh century), c 13/76 (gradual, eleventh century) and the annotation in b 20/136, f. 135v. See R. Dalmonte, *Catalogo musicale del Duomo di Monza* (Bologna: Forni, 1969), respectively pp. 17–20, 10–12 and 36.
origin is certain, such as the fragments in Vienna or the Bodmer palimpsest, more closely than they do the Monza fragments.

The notated fascicles in Pal. lat. 862 and Sessoriano 96 may, on the other hand, provide a starting point for an investigation into the earliest phase of the compilation of liturgical books in the abbey of Nonantola. As will be explained in the following paragraphs, consideration of aspects of the presentation of the separate types of texts and the organisation of liturgical material will provide an insight into Nonantolan strategies for preparing good chant books. At the same time, choices for the compilation of musically notated books and their bearing on ritual should be seen in the light not only of a production which was certainly intended to suit the needs of the monastic community, but also of the part it played in the consolidation of a sense of self-awareness in that same community.
2.2. Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Pal. lat. 862

Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 862, is a composite manuscript made up of four codicological units. The first three units are paper fascicles, written some time during the fifteenth century, while the fourth and last unit is a parchment palimpsest. This last unit contains a scriptio superior by a twelfth-century northern Italian hand, writing Sallust’s Bellum Catilinarium, while the lower layer contains the following:

- a text on computus
- a calendar
- a table for the calculation of movable feasts
- several folios containing Nonantolan musical notation

The palimpsest folios of Pal. lat. 862 were already known to Bannister, who included them in his Monumenti Vaticani di paleografia musicale, proposing the tenth century as a possible date for the scriptio inferior. Moderini simply reports – almost literally – Bannister’s description, while at the same time stating that no traces of notation are visible. Possibly on account of its difficult legibility, Pal. lat. 862 (hereafter referring only to the last, notated, codicological unit) has been almost entirely neglected by musicologists and no study of its musical, liturgical and notational content has yet been made. The recent publication of the third and last volume of Bernhard Bischoff’s Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts contains a very interesting observation. Not only does he attribute to Nonantola the scriptio inferior of the Vatican palimpsest, but the date he proposes for the notated folios is ‘IX–X sec.’, which, in the context of the Katalog, may be interpreted as meaning ‘end of the ninth century or beginning of the tenth’. Bischoff adduces very little evidence in support of the dating, and while this may be considered a

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210 In the present study I refer to a codicological unit in cases where continuity of hand and/or page layout preparation (e.g. pricking, ruling), and/or of the quality of the parchment throughout a unit, differentiate the fascicle(s) from the rest of the volume, or at least from a substantial part of the actual bound volume. For example, while a fascicle may have been assembled from folios of scrap parchment, or even palimpsests, thus presenting different rulings and layouts, a continuity of hand (or of content) may suggest that it can be regarded as a codicological unit. I intend this definition not to be all-encompassing but merely to serve as a working criterion, since every case will be assessed individually.


213 Ibid. Moderini cannot have seen the original, but only a poor-quality reproduction, since she argues that ‘dopo un accurato esame […] non siamo riusciti a scorgere traccia di notazione nonantolana’: La notazione, p. 55. Series of Nonantolan neumes are in fact clearly discernible even to the untrained eye and without ultraviolet light.

limitation of the Katalog, it nevertheless invites us to analyse the script of the Vatican folios with particular attention. It goes without saying that the accurate dating of the text hand is crucial in assessing the place of the music manuscript within the chronology of the Nonantolan scriptorium’s production. Even if Bischoff’s dating does not differ considerably from previous estimates (which have seen the tenth century as a likely period for the compilation), the possibility of the original music manuscript’s having been written and notated in the very late ninth century, rather than later, would alter considerably not only the history of Nonantolan notation but also the broader context of music writing in late Carolingian Europe. Were its early date to be confirmed, Pal. lat. 862 could be regarded as the oldest surviving example of a notated music manuscript from Nonantola and among the few early notated liturgical sources from Italy, as well as in Europe. Not only would it shed light on this formative period in the history of music, but also it would corroborate the hypothesis that, among monastic centres south of the Alps, Nonantola was the most likely to have been a place where the production of notated music books was already under way in the second half of the ninth century.\footnote{For a study of an early tenth-century fragment of a gradual from Bobbio, see G. Varelli, ‘The Early Transmission of Chant in Northern Italy: The Evidence of Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, B 48 sup., ff. 141–142’, Études grégoriennes 40 (2013), pp. 253–282. For further bibliography on this subject, see §2.1 above.}

All the different dates proposed for the compilation of the musical palimpsest in Pal. lat. 862 seem to range from the late ninth century to the middle of the tenth. This provides us with a time span of a maximum of twenty-five years before 900, as \textit{terminus post quem}, and fifty years after the turn of the tenth century, as \textit{terminus ante quem}. Such a wide frame of reference is of great significance for the purposes of this study, since it encompasses two different phases in time, with very different characters, namely the late ninth-century emergence of musical compilations and the early tenth-century consolidation of such canons and techniques. Is it possible then to propose a more precise dating? The answer would be affirmative if we were to take into consideration all the historiographical tools that we should employ in circumscribing a plausible chronological arch. First of all, study of the abbey’s history is of help in defining towards which of the two chronological \textit{termini} our attention should be directed. As mentioned above, the destruction of the monastery and the fire in the abbey’s library not only caused an inestimable loss of manuscripts but also led to the abandoning of the monastery of St Sylvester for at least a decade.\footnote{See above, §1.1.4.} It is not known precisely when the monks of Nonantola returned to their home community and resumed copying activity in the monastic scriptorium. It is possible to assume, however, that a stable and organised manuscript production was not resumed for a few decades, all efforts having been directed towards the reconstruction of the devastated buildings.\footnote{See above, §1.2.5.}
phase certainly lasted until well into the tenth century, for which we have but a few surviving manuscripts, some received by other institutions and some written at Nonantola and datable to the end of the century. With this in mind, if we were to attempt a more circumscribed chronological placement within the time frame proposed by Bischoff, we should conclude that the most plausible period for the compilation of the gradual in Pal. lat. 826 was before the Hungarian invasion and thus towards the end of the ninth century— that is, closer to the terminus post quem of the Katalog rather than in the first twenty-five years of the following century. These considerations must, however, be supported by close observation of the morphology of the script.

2.2.1. The date of Pal. lat. 862

Analysis of the visible traces of text script reveals a strong correspondence with the ninth-century Nonantolan type of minuscule before the definitive adoption of Caroline canons. Some features are typical of a transitional phase that scholars have securely placed in the second half of the ninth century: certain elements of cursiveness tend to persist in northern Italy until at least the eleventh century, but only for documentary hands or individual scripts in informal contexts. The ligatures es, en and er, which stand out so clearly if preceded by t, as in -tes and -ten (Figure 2.1), and the tall e with the protruding horizontal stroke at the same height as the top end of the minims of t and n are typical features of the pre-Caroline Nonantolan minuscule that coexist alongside Caroline elements such as the uncial a, often no longer in the form of a+c—with at least one visible exception on f. 91v, ‘fracta’—and the straight-back d (Figure 2.2a–c), as opposed to uncial d. The size of the script is 1.5 to 2 millimetres for the height of the minim. An example of this phase of the Nonantolan script is in manuscript Rome, Sess. 74, dated to the second half of the ninth century (Figure 2.3). Other manuscripts dating rather to the tenth century feature a well-formed Caroline minuscule, completely replacing earlier shapes.

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218 Branchi, Lo scriptorium, p. 49.
221 BK 3, 5331; Branchi, Lo scriptorium, p. 178.
222 Palma, Archivio paleografico, commentary to Figure 45.
The difficult legibility of the scriptio inferior does not allow us to conclude with any certainty whether a single hand was responsible for the notated sections of Pal. lat. 862. However, certain graphic constants demonstrate a homogeneity of style and graphic education such that, even admitting the possibility of interventions by one or more different hands in addition to the main one, these hands would belong not only to the same scriptorium – in this case, undoubtedly Nonantola – but also to a circumscribed chronological period. The surviving decoration in Pal. lat. 862 can also be compared with the ninth-century decorative style in use at Nonantola. In particular, the interlace pattern, which reached northern Italy possibly from Insular manuscripts via Irish foundations such as St Gall and Bobbio, is typical of
manuscript production in Carolingian Nonantola. The colours are orange and green and relate more closely to the transalpine models of Alemannic abbeys such as St Gall than to the Italian decorative traditions of the ninth century. It is possible to argue that the high-grade production at Nonantola might have welcomed the new transalpine models of Caroline minuscule before individuals’ informal hands did, which continued instead to employ a range of letter shapes more akin to those forming their graphic education background. Thus, if we conceive Pal. lat. 862 as differing from the aesthetic canons employed for the high-grade production of the scriptorium, but at the same time not merely serving for personal use, we could legitimately infer the responsibility of a hand educated in the second half of the ninth century, and writing in a relatively informal script, and we could thus cautiously estimate a dating to before the year 900.

2.2.2. A codicological ‘dig’

The conditions of the palimpsest, its poor legibility and the folios’ almost chaotic reuse and positioning for the composition of Pal. lat. 862 render the reconstruction of the original contents an extremely complex codicological challenge. The use of a UV lamp, along with the latest digital image restoration techniques, have exposed and allowed the reading of only those areas that escaped heavy erasure. The fascicles measure ± 145 × 198 mm. The manuscript was probably investigated in the late nineteenth century or the early twentieth – or as late as during Bannister’s exploration of the Roman libraries – since it is possible to see on some folios the effect of reagents such as gallnuts, ammonium sulphide or tannin solution applied for exposing the scriptio inferior. These techniques, while probably useful at the time, have irremediably damaged the palimpsest in some areas, leaving large dark stains. Furthermore, the original script has been scraped off inconsistently, thus leaving visible traces on some folios alongside completely erased ones. The presence of pricking holes and dry-point ruling not matching that of the palimpsest reveals that the fascicles were re-rulled for the twelfth-century compilation. The folios have also been rearranged considerably in the composition of the new fascicles, so that orientation of the later script is very often opposite to, or crossing, that of the scriptio inferior.

The following reconstruction of the palimpsest folios is based on the few visible traces left on the pages. In the description below, the five gatherings of the manuscript in its present state are designated by the letters A–E, while every bifolio is represented by a roman numeral (i–iv/v). The contents, both liturgical and computistical, of Pal. lat. 862 will be discussed in the following chapter (§3.1).

223 Branchi, Io scriptorium, p. 46.
**Fascicle A (ff. 68r–75v: Figure 2.4)**

i. Ff. 68r–v, 75r–v is the outermost bifolio of Fasc. A. The legibility of the scriptio inferior is extremely low on the entire bifolio, and f. 75 is practically illegible. On f. 68v a few traces of notation are visible: the fragments of text script are sufficient to identify the Alleluia verse *Diffusa est gratia* and the offertory *Offerentur regi* for the Mass for St Lucy. The shape of the few detectable letters is consistent with the text hand of other notated sections in the palimpsest, and it is probable that the bifolio once formed part of the same Nonantolan gradual.

ii. Ff. 69r–v, 74r–v is now the second inner bifolio of Fasc. A. The legibility of the notated text is moderately low in the centre of the folios, while in the margins certain notated areas can be read. The bifolio has been overwritten and bound upside-down, so that f. 69r corresponds now to the recto of the left folio from the original bifolio.

![Figure 2.4. Composition of Fasc. A, Pal. lat. 862, ff. 68–75.](image)

* [non mus.]

From scarce traces of text on f. 74v, it is possible to identify a troped Gloria (Figure 2.5). The combined use of UV light, during direct consultation in the Vatican library, and the digital enhancement of the palimpsest images have made it possible to identify this particular trope. The left margin of f. 74v offers a few glimpses of the original page, having been saved from heavy erasure: while the Gloria text is more visible, only a few words from the trope are legible. These traces, highlighted in bold, proved enough for the identification of the trope *Pax sempterna* (the
text of the Gloria is indicated in roman type, the trope in italics, and the legible words or letters are in bold):\textsuperscript{224}

\begin{quote}
\textbf{Gloria in excelsis Deo}
Et pax in terra homini bone voluntatis.
\textbf{Pax sempiterna, Christus, illecit. Gloria tibi, pater excelse.}
Laudamus te,
\textit{Hymnum canentes bodie quem terris angeli fuderunt Christo nascente.}
Benedicimus te,
\textit{Natus est nobis bodie salvator in trinite semper colendus.}
Adoramus te,
\textit{Quem vagientem inter angusti antra praesepis angelorum coetus laudat excultans.}
Glorificamus te,
\textit{Caius a sede luci bencdita caliginose orbis refulsi.}
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloria tuam,
Domine, deus, rex electus, Deus pater omnipotens,
Domine fili unigenite, Iesu Christe.
Domine, deus, agnus dei, filius patris,
Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram
\textit{Ultra mortali bodie indatum carme precanum}
Qui sedes ad dexteram patris, miserere nobis.
\textbf{O ineffabilis rex et admirable is, ex virgine matre bodie predisti mondoque subvenisti.}
\textbf{Quoniam} tu solus sanctus, tu solus dominus, tu solus altissimus,
\textit{Regnum tuum solidum permanebit indivisum in concussum sine fine perenne}
\textit{Te adorant et conlaudant simul omnes virtutes angelice}
\textit{Et nos supplie collaudamus tuum nomen}
\textit{Quad permanebit in eternum}
Iesu Christe, cum sancto spiritu in gloria dei patris. Amen.
\end{quote}

A comparison between the space occupied by the text of the Ordinary chant and troped sections with the arrangement in the Nonantolan troper Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 1741 (hereafter Casanatense 1741) further confirms the identification of \textit{Pax sempiterna} included in the gradual of Pal. lat. 862.\textsuperscript{225}

\textsuperscript{224} The text of the Gloria is indicated in roman type, the trope in italics, and the legible words or letters are in bold. See \textit{Corpus troporum XII: Tropes du Gloria}, ed. G. Iversen (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2014), vol. 1, pp. 263–276.

As explained above, f. 74v is part of a bifolio, starting – following the orientation of the palimpsest text – on f. 69v and finishing on f. 74r. Since a section of the Gloria occupies the entirety of f. 74v, and thus the original recto, it is possible to infer that the continuation would have been on f. 74r. If, as it seems, Pal. lat. 826 transmitted the full Nonantolan closing prosula to the verse *Regnum tuum*, the remainder of the troped Gloria would take up roughly the upper half of f. 74r, leading to the expectation that the gradual *Viderunt omnes* would appear at the bottom of the same page. The legibility, however, is gravely limited here by damage caused by erasure, and it is not possible to identify the content, despite some faint traces of notation, mostly in the margins, of f. 74r.

A few traces emerging from a close reading of the palimpsest seem to constitute clear evidence for reconstructing the placement of the bifolio in the original gathering. About half way down f. 69r, a capital P is visible, decorated in a simple fashion with orange ink. Above and
below it, a few letters emerge from the palimpsest which, considering the actual liturgical context, may be identified with a fair degree of certainty. These are the incipit *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, the *littera notabilior* P to mark the start of what we know can identify as the trope *Pax sempiterna*, and finally the second section of the Gloria, *propter magnam gloriam*. The notated Gloria continues then on f. 74v; hence we can conclude that the bifolio ff. 69–74 was placed at the centre of its gathering from the original gradual.

**iii.** The bifolio ff. 70, 73 in Fasc. A was created, possibly at the time of the copying of the Sallust’s *Catilinarium* in the twelfth century, by joining two folios with a strip of parchment. Both leaves are almost completely illegible by may come from the section on *computus*.

**iv.** Ff. 71r–v, 72r–v is the innermost bifolio of Fasc. A. In the lower margin of f. 71v – corresponding to the upper margin of the palimpsest folio – passages are visible from the canticle *Sicut cervus* for Holy Saturday, reading as follows:

*S<riet ur<p>on<tes a<qua<rum ita< des<iderat anim< a mea ad te<br>Deus sit< iv<um quando veni<am et a<pp<e ante faciem<br>Dei mei fuer<ui>unt mihi <lacrim< e meae panes die ac nocte> dum di<citur mihi per<br>singulos dies ubi est Deus> tuus.*

This canticle is followed by a lengthy rubric in red ink, now illegible. It may be possible to reconstruct hypothetically the content of this rubric by comparison with the eleventh-century Bolognese manuscript Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, 123 (hereafter, RoA 123) where the canticle is followed by two *orationes*, in turn followed by litanies, after which the *cantor* would have sung the Gloria which was then followed by the Alleluia (ff. 107v–108r). This is why on f. 71r – the verso of the original folio – there can be read the Alleluia verse *Confitemini Domino*, fragments of the processional antiphon *Stetit angelus ad sepoolchrum* and other notated sections, these last ones being very hard to read, even with the aid of UV light. For *Stetit angelus*, the following passages are legible:

*S<tetit an<gelus ad s<epulchrum domini stola claritatis> coope<rtus videntes eum<br>mulieres nimio terrore perterritae astiterunt a longe tunc locutus est angelus et dixit<br>eis nolite metuere dico vobis quia illum quem qu<e<ritis mor<tuu>m i<am <vivit et<br>vita> hominum cum eo su<rexit alleluia>.*

From this analysis we may note that the organisation of the original folio may have been very similar to that of the gradual St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 339, pp. 105–106.

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228 See *Early Medieval Chants from Nonantola, Part III: Processional Chants*, n. 46, p. 50.
Finally, the rest of the bifolio contains traces of notation, but the small legible areas are insufficient for attempting a complete identification beyond the provenance and typology of the notated original. The alternating lengthy rubrics and notated sections may be enough to infer that this came from a section of the original book containing the liturgy for Holy Saturday.

**Fascicle B** (ff. 76r–84v: Figure 2.6)

i. Ff. 76r–v, 84r–v is a bifolio, possibly coming from the computistical manuscript is almost completely illegible.

ii. Ff. 77r–v, 83r–v is the second bifolio of Fasc. B and is the clearest and most legible of the entire palimpsest in Pal. lat. 862. Close reading with a UV lamp and digital restoration have made it possible to identify a series of chants for the first, third and fourth Sundays of Advent. Given its liturgical content, it is possible to conclude that this bifolio was originally part of the same notated Nonantolan gradual as the folios in Fasc. A and, in particular, of the first original fascicle. Graduals, as book types, always began with the introit of the first Sunday of Advent *Ad te levavi*, in contrast to the Sacramentaries, which begin with the liturgy for Christmas. The only initial visible in the margin of f. 83v is the capital *P* from the Introit *Prope est tu*, of which the decorative style is typical of the northern Italian manuscript production of the ninth century: had the *Ad te levavi* initial been preserved, it would have been important for understanding possible influences on decoration and layout. In the margin, to the left of the initial, it is possible to read *T<onus> iii*, added by a later hand – possibly eleventh-century – than that responsible for writing the text. The addition clearly refers to the mode of the introit *Prope est tu*. This note reveals not only that music theory was known at Nonantola and that the scribe who consulted this book was an informed and trained singer, but also that music theory and the modal classification of chants possibly served as an additional and complementary type of notation to assist in recalling the melodies from memory.229

iii. Ff. 78r–v, 81r–v: the bifolio contains no traces of notation and may have belonged to the palimpsest section on *computus*.

iv. F. 79r–v, 80r–v: this bifolio is composed of two separate folios later brought together, possibly during the making of Pal. lat. 862. On f. 79 the text is written in closer lines than the musical folios and may, thus, come from the computistical text. F. 80, bound upside-down, contains faint traces of notation. In the lower margin of the recto is visible *<…> qui est verus deus in secula seculorum. B<enedicat…> et custodiat nos ab <…>*, while on the verso *<Benedicat nos Deus, Deus> noster benedicat nos deus et metuant eum omnes fines terre*. The interlinear and horizontal

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space suggest that these texts were to be notated, but no notation can be seen. The first fragment of text has not been identified, while the second may be the offertory *Benedicat nos Deus* for Trinity Sunday.

v. f. 82r–v: this folio is illegible, but contains faint traces of notation.

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**Fascicle C** (ff. 85r–92v)

This gathering is almost entirely a palimpsest of the computistical section. F. 91, instead, is the only notated section and belongs to the same Nonantolan gradual as the other musical folios in Pal. lat. 862. The upper half of the palimpsest at f. 91r is mostly illegible, but traces of notation are nevertheless visible. The lower half contains a notated *Kyrie*, added possibly by a later hand, and it may show that the manuscript was used in the early eleventh century, after which it was eventually dismembered. The different script of this later hand confirms, by comparison, the character of ‘antiquity’ of the main hand. On the verso of f. 91v are transmitted the two antiphons *Adoramus crucem* and *Dum fabricator mundi*.\(^{230}\) In this case there is no musical notation, yet the ample interlinear space clearly suggests that the texts were written out in such a way as to accommodate Nonantolan musical signs.

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\(^{230}\) For *Adoramus cruem* see *Early Medieval Chants from Nonantola, Part III: Processional Chants*, n. 41, p. 47. *Dum fabricator mundi* is not Borders’ edition.
**Fascicle D** (ff. 93r–100v)

This gathering does not contain any musical notation. It contains a palimpsest calendar and a *computus* table for the calculation of movable feasts (f. 99v). According to Bischoff, this section was very likely written in Nonantola at the same time as the main gradual.\(^{231}\) The presence of this section, alongside the *computus* texts and the notated gradual, may be revealing of the original use and purpose of the manuscript, as I will explain below.\(^{232}\)

**Fascicle E** (ff. 101r–108v)

In this gathering, contains mostly a section on *computus*, while only f. 102r is notated. The recto transmits a series of processional antiphons for the Adoration of the Cross on Good Friday: *Per signum sanctae et venerandae cruces*, *Veni et videte omnes populi* and *Ego sum alpha et O(mega)*. In the upper half of f. 102v can be seen the Greek Trisagion (*Agyos O Theos*) for the same festivity and, after a long, illegible rubric, the notated antiphon *Ecce lignum crucis*, with an illegible psalm verse. The antiphon is preceded by a pen drawing representing Christ on the cross.\(^{233}\) This necessarily implies that the folio has been placed in the reverse order and what was the original verso is now the recto, the procession for the Adoration of the Cross starting on f. 102v.

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\(^{231}\) *BK III*, p. 417.

\(^{232}\) See §3.1.

\(^{233}\) For a description see below, §3.1, esp. Figure 3.1–3.
2.3. Rome, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Sess. 96

The volume designated by the shelfmark Sessoriano 96 gets its name from the fact that it was once part of the Sessoriana library of the Roman Cistercian monastery of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, where it arrived during the seventeenth century; it is now housed in the Italian national library in Rome. Sessoriano 96 is an *in quarto* composite volume made up of four codicological units. The first unit (ff. 1–204) contains Jerome’s commentaries on the Letters *ad Galatas* – incomplete at the beginning; the first four fascicles are now part of Sessoriano 39 (ff. 50–70) – *ad Ephesos*, *ad Titum* and *ad Phylemonem*. Twenty-six blessings and invocations in leonine hexameters and twelve rhythmic invocations to St Michael have been added on the last folio of this unit by a twelfth-century hand. The second unit (ff. 205–308) contains ecclesiastical texts such as excerpts from the Bible and homilies by Paulinus of Nola, Caesarius of Arles, Isidore and Jerome. The same hand writing the blessing and invocations at the end of the first unit added rhythmic and prose blessings in alphabetical order and leonine hexameters (ff. 306r–308v). This may imply that these units were already bound together in the early twelfth century. The third unit (ff. 309–313) contains two further anonymous homilies. The present study will focus on the fourth and last unit (ff. 319–320), hereafter referred to simply as Sess. 96, containing the chants for the Office and Mass for the feast of St Benedict of Nursia, notated in Nonantolan neumes.

The volume was bound in its present form between 1331 and 1464 – that is, some time between the dates of compilation of the two medieval catalogues of the Nonantolan library. It is possible that the musical fascicle was at that time structurally independent, and thus that it was incorporated into the main volume during a process of reordering of the abbey’s library. As will be explained below, it seems unlikely that Sess. 96 once belonged to a larger compilation and more probable that it may have originated as an autonomous booklet, or *libellus*. Although it has been known to musicologists since the publication of the second volume of the *Paléographie musicale* in 1891, so far no in-depth musicological or palaeographical study has ever been devoted to this source. The most recent study to deal – even if not specifically – with the notation in

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234 See above, §1.2.7.
238 On the catalogues, see above, §1.2.7.
239 *PM* 2, Plate 11. On the historiography of Nonantolan notation, see above, ‘Introduction’.
Sess. 96 is Nino Albarosa’s 1979 article. Initially conceived as a review of Ave Moderini’s 1970 two-volume monograph *La notazione di Nonantola*, Albarosa’s text was such a detailed critique of Moderini’s work that it eventually became a study in its own right, and the most comprehensive examination of Nonantolan notation to date.

In the same way as for Pal. lat. 862, the main issue with previous scholarship on Sess. 96 that concerns us lies in the datings proposed for the Nonantolan fascicle. A tradition following the date set by the Solesmes editors of *Paléographie musicale* places the compilation at the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth. As early as 1913, however, a different date was suggested by Henry Mariott Bannister in his *Monumenti Vaticani di paleografia musicale*. He shifted the *Paléographie musicale* date back by a century, to the tenth century, ‘possibly the second half’. He did not provide any explanation for his proposed dating, other than describing Lowe’s estimate as ‘troppo presto’ and the *Paléographie musicale*’s date as ‘troppo tardi’. Lowe had written about Sess. 96 in his *Studia paleographica*, but it is very clear from his ‘The manuscript evidence’ – indeed, not a ‘catalogo *stricto sensu*’ – that he was basing his considerations only on photographic reproductions. Since Sess. 96 is a composite manuscript assembled for the most part from four units, three of which have consistently been dated to the ninth century, it is impossible to know which particular section of the manuscript Lowe had observed. The musical section in Sess. 96 (ff. 314r–319v) occupies about 1.6 per cent of the entire manuscript volume, and it is highly probable that this was not included in Lowe’s dating. Furthermore, Lowe cites *In, huius* and *adiuincit* as examples of words written with tall I, but these are absent from the section examined here. Moderini simply cites other scholars’ assessments, favouring Lowe’s dating of the manuscript to the ninth century.

The most recent description of the manuscript is by Maria Pia Branchi in *Lo scriptorium e la biblioteca di Nonantola*. Published in 2011, the book is a study of manuscript production in the Nonantolan scriptorium, with a particular focus on decoration and illumination. In fact, Branchi does not clearly state any definite dating for the script and seems to ignore Moderini’s dating of it to the ninth century, arguing instead that the notation was added at a later stage. This hypothesis is contradicted by a series of internal elements, which suggest, rather, not only that the compilation was conceived for accommodating musical notation from the outset, but also that

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241 *PM* 2, Plate 11.
243 This is revealed by the presence of an asterisk beside the relevant entry. See Lowe, *Studia paleographica*, pp. 29–49.
244 Lowe, *Studia paleographica*, p. 45.
this notation was added very soon after the chants were written, and possibly by the very same hand that was responsible for the writing of the chant texts. No palaeographer has yet studied the script of Sess. 96 in particular, while studies of the manuscript – notably by Lowe and Bischoff – have focused on other units, especially the early ninth-century Jerome.\(^{247}\) Therefore, the significantly contrasting datings proposed in the musicological literature – palaeographically rather approximate – urge a closer and more in-depth analysis of the script in order to determine a more precise time span within which to situate the compilation of the manuscript. In the context of the present study, a correct assessment of the role of Sess. 96 is of pivotal importance, both for a better understanding of the various phases of music manuscript production at Nonantola and for placing the musical fascicle in the broader notational context by comparing the neumatic content with other sources of similar date and format.

2.3.1. The date of Sess. 96

The script of Sess. 96 can be defined as a variety of Caroline minuscule with the presence of some cursive elements. The height of the minim is 1.5 to 2 millimetres. There are many cases in which letter shapes typical for ninth-century Nonantolan minuscule can be found. For example, this is evident in the dimorphism for a cursive (from New Roman cursive) / Caroline (from uncial) and d Caroline (from uncial). The \(\sigma+c\) shape for a is present in Nonantolan manuscripts from the second third of the ninth century onwards, replacing the ‘old’ \(\epsilon+c\) open a of the early type (see Figure 2.7: gratias, vita). It is difficult to assess why the scribe chose deliberately to employ the cursive shape for a on thirteen occasions in the chant texts; the vast majority of cases follow Caroline models. There also seems to be no apparent association between the pre-Caroline shape and particular words in the text such as apparat (f. 314r) and capuani (f. 315r). Uncial d, m and n are found mainly in rubrics for which a type of uncial is preferred as display script, as well as for the text of the prayers, while litterae notabiliores are in Roman capitalis. The tall \(e\), sometimes in two loops with a characteristic protruding ‘tongue’, is also typical of ninth-century Nonantolan script. If we compare its shape with that in Pal. lat. 862 we notice that the latter features an even more pronounced two-loop \(e\). Moreover, the hand in Sess. 96 usually connects the letter \(e\)’s protruding ‘tongue’ stroke to the top of the following minim as in em / en, but also with other letters such as er, et, ec. However, the scribe of Sess. 96 appears to be less consistent in such graphic feature than the hand of the Vatican palimpsest gradual, which tendency is also to write the letter \(e\) significantly close to the following consonant, thus resulting in a ligature. These features not only indicate a close relationship between the two hands, but

\(^{247}\) Bischoff, ‘Manoscritti nonantolani’, p. 124.
they confirm also that the scribe of Sess. 96 referred to a later style, much more influenced by the gradual adoption of Caroline minuscule models at the turn of the tenth century. Other features are his tendency to use ligatures, in particular \(ti\) and \(ri\), as can be seen in Figure 2.8. Even if these cases are relatively rare they can reveal much about the scribe’s graphic training; his choices indicate not only to which script he was most accustomed, but also the one he considered appropriate for this particular compilation. Word separation is generally hesitant, allowing always a certain margin for the accommodation of musical notation, while in some cases the horizontal space is almost non-existent, producing an effect of *scriptio continua*. It is clear that the attitude towards word separation is entirely dependent on the writing of music, spacing being dictated primarily by the notation.

Figure 2.7. Detail of the script in Sess. 96, f. 315r.

Figure 2.8. Ligatures \(ti\) and \(ri\) in Sess. 96, f. 317r.

Figure 2.9. Interlinear addition, Sess. 96, f. 317v.

This corroborates the idea that, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, in the Nonantolan approach to music writing, text was an essential part of the notation itself. This dependence is due to the graphic characteristics of these neumes, which cannot be written without the support of the chant texts. For this reason abbreviations are also generally minimal. Furthermore, not only do these procedures for the correct arrangement of the text syllables reveal that the
manuscript was prepared for musical notation from the beginning, but definite proof is provided by the presence of an interlinear addition on f. 317v. The hand responsible for writing the text corrects the mistaken spelling of the word *derium*, instead of *desiderium*, by adding *-side-* above the missing syllables (Figure 2.9). The same shade of the ink for both the correction and the notation, together with the same letter shapes, confirms that the musical notation was entered soon after the writing of the chant texts and that it was doubtless undertaken by the same scribe.

Placing the type of script used by the hand of Sess. 96 within the manuscript production of the Nonantolan scriptorium is not at all straightforward. No other manuscript by the same hand survives, nor can a similar ratio of pre-Caroline and Caroline shapes be found in any surviving material: so little survives from the first half of the tenth century in particular. In light of what has been said about the history of the script at Nonantola in this chapter and in Chapter 1, however, it is possible to propose some criteria for defining a possible start and end date for the compilation. Firstly, in the Nonantolan type the Caroline shape for *a* is extremely rare in manuscripts dating to the first half of the ninth century, when cursive *c+c* and *o+c* shapes are prevalent in the graphic canon. A very similar example of the dimorphism in Sess. 96 is rather the script in another Nonantolan manuscript, Sess. 95, a miscellany of ecclesiastical and liturgical texts that has been dated on palaeographical grounds to the second half of the ninth century.\(^{248}\) Here the ratio is, in fact, reversed by comparison with Sess.96 – i.e. a few instances of Caroline *a* against a prevalent cursive *o+c* shape – but it is one of the earliest examples of Caroline shapes. An even greater incidence of Caroline shapes can be found in Sess. 70, dating to the third quarter of the century.

Analysis of the decoration in Sess. 96 (see Figure 2.10) seems to confirm the proposed date. According to Branchi, initials ‘repeat the most common decorative repertory of the first half of the ninth century’.\(^{249}\) This is visible in the initial *F* of the responsory *Fuit vir vite venerabilis* on f. 314r, rather large in size and extending down six lines of notated text, and also in the initial *F* opening the series of antiphons on f. 316v, this time in a smaller size and with a different decorative pattern, descending five lines. The other decorated initial in the chant text is the *G* for the introit *Gaudeamus omnes* on f. 318v, the closeness of which to ninth-century models is even more revealing. The initial *O* that opens the prayer *Omnipotens sempiterne deus* for the Mass for St Benedict on f. 319v is in the same hand, and bears a remarkable resemblance to a comparable initial in Sess. 95. Also worthy of note are the interlaced patterns – of indubitable Insular influence, especially in Sess. 95 – for both *F* and *O*, and the writing of rubrics in the margins, as


\(^{249}\) *Ibid.*, p. 190. The same view is put forward by the art historian Fabrizio Crivello (University of Turin), who dates the decoration to ‘3–4/4 IX sec.’ (private communication).
opposed to incorporating them in the text, as is more common in Carolingian liturgical manuscripts. As mentioned above, Sess. 95 shares with Sess. 96 a tendency towards Caroline minuscule models, but with a large component of Nonantolan shapes – which tend instead to be no more than relics of the hand responsible for the musical fascicle.

In conclusion, we can legitimately establish that the script of Sess. 96 is not typical of either (a) the late eleventh or early twelfth century, as suggested by Paléographie musicale and later scholarship, or (b) the second half of the tenth, as suggested by Bannister. Instead, the hand responsible was certainly accustomed to pre-Caroline models, while adopting a more defined Caroline script. We can restrict the chronology to the beginning of the tenth century, i.e. 910s, a period when, after the destruction of the abbey by the Hungarians in 899, the resumption of liturgical practice required the production of new texts and volumes. The Sess. 96 gathering may have been copied during this phase, originating from the need for a copy of the complete Office and Mass for St Benedict. The Benedictine Nonantola then stood once again on its own feet, with its roots well established in ninth-century liturgical and musical experience.

2.3.2. The codicology of Sess. 96

The gathering is composed of four parchment bifolios and is bound as the last unit of the volume Rome, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Sessoriano 96. The dimensions are ± 160–166 × 244–252 mm and the quality of the parchment is rather poor. Pricking holes are visible,

A very similar interlaced pattern is used in the decoration of Pal. lat. 862 (e.g. the capital P on f. 83v).
suggesting that the edges have never been trimmed. The text is written in one single column measuring 121 × 187 mm. The interlinear space is ± 12 mm, and the distance between ten lines is 150 mm. The ruling is dry-point and only partially visible. The rather light traces of ruling caused, in some cases, a mismatch of the text and the space set by the page layout. The number of lines for the notated section is seventeen, with the exception of f. 319r, numbering fifteen. By the middle of the gathering, the ruling becomes faint and the scribe adopted a much more flexible approach for the laying out of text, making the musical notation with its graphic necessities prevail over the correct alignment of text lines, as well as over consistency in their number. The ink is light brown and rubrics are placed in the margins. As we have seen, the practice of use the external space for writing rubrics is not uncommon in ninth-century Nonantolan manuscript production. However, in almost every case when this happened there would have been already some space left for their insertion in the main column. This often suggests that rubrics are added provisionally in the margin, to be later incorporated into the text line, normally with a different colour, e.g. red. Whether this was the original intention for the compilation of Sess. 96, which never took place, it is hard to establish. It is evident, however, from their close placement to the text and from their marked graphic presence, that there was no intention to make them less intrusive. It is plausible that the scribe was following two well-established practices: the Nonantolan rubrics in the margins (e.g. Sess. 95) and their insertion into the main body of text, possibly after other models he was accustomed to from the monastic library’s collection. It is also conceivable that he may have been experimenting with new and innovative solutions or, on the other hand, following an exemplar – or its recollection.

The gathering has lost one folio, as is visible by the remaining stub between f. 319 and f. 320. This lacuna was already present at the time of foliation on the top right corner of all rectos, since the series is uninterrupted. The composition of the present gathering can be seen in Figure 2.11.
Below is the detailed description of the content of every folio, including later additions or marginalia. A transcription is provided here, while the study of the musical and liturgical content will be part of the following chapter.

**F. 314** contains the text and music for the series of responsories for matins for the Office of St Benedict. The rubric in the top right corner reads: R<e>S<porsoria> in nat<alis> | s<an>c<i> t benedic|ti.

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<R> Fuit | vir vite venerabilis gracia benedictus | et nomine ab ipso puericiae sue tempore cor gerens senilem etatem quip | <pe> moribus transiens nulli animum voluptati dedit

Vr Recessit igitur scie nter | nescius et sapienter indoctus

<R> Domine non | aspicias peccata mea sed fidem huius | hominis qui rogat resuscitari filium suum | et redde in hoc corpusculo animam quam | abstulisti et completa oracione revixit | et sanum reddidit patri suo

Vr Et regrediente anima ita corpusculum omne contremuit ut sub oculis omnium qui aderant | vivus apparat et sanum

<R> Initio consilio ve | nenum vino miscuere quo accepto signavit | sicque confractum est hac si pro signo lapidem | [dedisset]
```
In the top margin of f. 314r, a hand that corresponds in appearance to the script written at Nonantola in the late ninth century writes *benedicti abba* in a very dark brown ink, now very faint. The question is why would someone write this next to the rubric, which clearly states what feast this series of responsories belongs to? What may seem like a superfluous question may, on the contrary, be very revealing about the history of this gathering. It is possible to formulate three main hypotheses. The first is that of a *probatio pennae*: a later hand, in order to try the cut of a *pen*, wrote the saint’s name and his office as abbot in the margin. The second is that this annotation was added later, possibly during a phase of re-ordering: the gathering may have been loose and was classified according to its content or, alternatively, as an indication for the binding into a composite volume. The third, and most tantalising, is that this was added before the compilation phase by someone who was in charge of the project and coordinated the *compilatio* of the fascicle. The librarian, or the *cantor* in charge of the management of liturgical books, may have chosen to include this indication for the scribe for its destination as some sort of *libellum* dedicated to St Benedict. This in turn may have been part of a series of materials related to specific feasts. It is impossible to determine which of the above hypotheses is the correct one. However, the hand of the annotation displays characteristics of an earlier phase of minuscule script at Nonantola than that of main chant scribe of Sess. 96 – see, for example, the shape of the *e* in two loops in *benedicti* – which makes the hypothesis of a preliminary organisation more plausible, giving us a possible glimpse of the dynamics of the scriptorium in Nonantola in the early tenth century.

**Ff. 314v–315v** contain the continuation of the series of responsories.

[R] <…> dedisset

Vr Intellexit protinus vir dei quia po | tum mortis haberet invase quod portare non
po | tuit signum vite. Ac [sic] si pro

<R> Quidam rusticus de | functi corpus filii in ulnis ferens or | bitatus luctu estuans ad
monasterium ve | nit benedictum patrem quesivit mox ut as | pexit clamare cepit redde
filium meum | redde filium meum.

Vr Vir autem domini | in hac voce subsistit dicens numquid ego filium | tuum
abstuli cui | ille mortuus est veni resuscit| ta eum. Redde

<R> Domine non aspicias peccata | mea sed fidem huius hominis qui rogat
resuscit | tari filium suum et redde in hoc corpusculo | animam quam abstulisti et

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251 It may also read *benedict* + the abbreviation ; for *-us*, but the difficult legibility does not allow us to determine this with absolute certainty.
completa oracio ne revixit et sanum reddidit patri suo.

**Vr** Et regediente anima ita corpusculum omne contremuit ut sub oculis omnium qui aderant vi [vus]

[f. 315r]

[Vr] <vi>vus appareret Et sanum

<R> Pater sanctus dum intenta oculorum aciem in splendore coru sce lucis habere videretur vidit germa ni anima capuani episcopi in spera [si] nea ab angelis in celum deferri.

**Vr** Fac tumque est ut reverentissimum virum ger manum episcopum his qui missus fuerat iam defunctum repperit. In spera [si]

<R> Cumque sanctus benedictus in cellam consideret elevatis sursum oculis vidit sororis sue animam de corpore eius egressa in columbe spe cie celi secreta penetraret

**Vr** Qui tan te eius glorie congaudens omnipotenti deo tias reddidit eiusque obitum fratibus denu ciavit. In columbe.

<R> Eodem vero anno quo de hac vita erat exiturus quibusdiscipulis secum conversantibus quibus a longe manentibus sanctissimi obitus denunciavit diem.

**Vr** Presentibus indicens ut audita per silentium tegerent absentibus indicans quale eius signum fie ret quando eius anima de corpore exiret sanctissimi

<R> Intempesta noctis horavit beatus benedictus fusam lucem desuper cunctas noctis tenebras effugasset tantoque splendore clareae ut diem vinceret lux illa.

**Vr** Omnis eciam mundus velud sub uno solis radio collectus est ante eius oculos adductus est tantoque

<R> Erat vultu placido canis decoratus ange licis tantaque circa eum caritas excree rat ut in terris positus in celestibus habi taret

**Vr** Vir autem domini benedictus ple nus spiritu sancto fuit ut in terra.

<R> Ante sextum vero exitus sui diem aperiri sibi sepulturam iu bet qui mox correptus febribus agri cepit

_F. 316r:_ f. after the responsory _O beati viri Benedicti_, the rubric _An<tiphonae> in_ vig<iliam> signals the start of the series of antiphons.

[R] <...> dolore fatigari usque ad mortem.
Vr | Cumque per dies languor ingravesceret. Agri. |

<R> Sexto namque die portari se in oratorio a discipulis fecit ibique exitum suum domi nis sacramentis munivit atque in ter discipulorum manus exalavit |

<Vr> Erectis in celum manibus stetit et ultimum spiritum inter verba oracionis efflavit. atque. |

<R> O beati viri Benedicti sancta preconia o ines timabilis dileccio caritatis qui dum seculi pompa contempsit eterne vite con iunctus est. 

Vr Cui vivere Christus fuit et mori lucrum. con iunctus est |

an<tiphonae> in vig<iliam> s<an>c<ti> bene dicti ad vesp<eras>. |

<AN> Recessit igitur scienter nescius et sapienter in doctus

SUPER VEN<ITE> Preoccupemus faciem domini | in confessione sanctorum. 

<Ps> Venite exultemus domino iubilemus |

F. 316v f. starts the series of antiphons for the Matins that continue until f. 317v.

<AN> Fuit vir vite venerabilis | gracia Benedictus |

Ps \Beatus vir/

<AN> Nurpscie provincie | hortus Rome liberalibus litterarum studiis traditus a parentibus fuerat

Ps Quarc | fremuentur.

AN Relicta domo rebus que patri so li deo servire sancte conversacionis habi tum quesivit.

Ps Cum invocarem.

\AN/ Ab ipso pueri cie sue tempore corgerens senilem etatem quippe moribus transiens nulli animum dedit voluptati.

Ps Verba mea.

AN Dum in hac ter ra esset quod temporaliter libere uti potuis set iam quasi aridum mundum cum flore dispe xit.

Ps Domine dominus noster.

AN Conpassus nutricis pres tari sibi capisterium petit quo casu accidente fractum est.

Ps In domino confido.

AN Electus a fra tribus invitus obtinuit quod scieret scivit se illorum moribus convenire non posse.
Ps Domine quis | habitabit.

F. 316v contains two marginalia by two different hands. The earliest seems to be the annotation in the bottom margin. This series of characters are a type of secret writing. In this system the vowels are replaced by a nearby consonant in alphabetical order. For example, $e$ will be replaced by $f$, but $a$ may also be replaced by $d$ (instead of $b$), etc. It is possible, therefore, to read the inscription bfdtx xkr as Beatus vir, the incipit of Psalm 1, and usually seen at the opening of any Psalter. It is with this verse that the matins of the Office of St Benedict starts, after the antiphon Fuit vir vitae, and thus it is written at the top of f. 316v. The later hand may have been inspired to write these very words by using a type of script that he may have just learnt. To the left of this there is also another marginalia, which has been erased and is illegible but appears to be in secret writing.

The second annotation in the margin is the Alleluia $<$V$>$ Eripe me de inimicis $<$meis$>$. The hand is late tenth-century and employs a type of notation that we may define as hybrid. The Nonantolan approach of connecting musical graphs with letters in the text is here imitated – rather unsuccessfully – by a scribe who was evidently trained in a different centre and in a different type of musical notation. Frankish neume shapes, such as the pes and torculus resupinus, are here merged into what appears to be an attempt at learning the Nonantolan way of writing music. It is also possible that this hand was that of a German monk, trained in some transalpine abbey, who reached the Benedictine monastery of St Sylvester some time in the late tenth century, that is during the Ottonian period. Finally, the association with the feast of St Benedict is dubious. The Alleluia Eripe me is usually sung for the Post-Pentecostal Sundays, that is, much later in the liturgical year than the feast of St Benedict, celebrated on 21 March.\footnote{The Alleluia Eripe me is not featured in the Nonantolan twelfth-century Cantatorium.} In addition, there is no Alleluia for this feast: being celebrated in Lent, the Mass required the singing of a tract, in this case Desiderium animae.

Ff. 317r–318r

AN Cumque sibi conspiceret illicita non lice | ret asueta relinqueret quo nati sunt de eius | morte tractare.

Ps Domine in virtute.

AN Puer | quidam parvulus elephantino morbo percussus ad | dei hominem est adductus pristinam sanitatem | recepta incolomem remeavit ad propria.

Ps | Domini est terra.
AN Orabat sanctus benedictus domine ne aspicias peccata mea sed fidem huius hominis qui rogat resuscitari filium suum et sub oculis omnium viventem puerum reddidit patri suo.
Ps Exaudi deus deprecationem.
AN Tantam gratiam dei virtus divina contulerat ut sub uno solis radio omnem mundum collectum conspicaret.
Ps Exaudi Deus orationes cum tribulationem.
AN Cumque in specu posito submitti panem diabolu/s/m conspiceret iactavit lapidem et tintinabulum fregit.
Ps Te decet hymnus.

Ant<iphona> sup<er> can<ticum>

[f. 317v]

[AN] Vix obtinui apud deum omnipotentem ut ex hoc loco mihi animae cederetur.

Antiphonae ad matutinum
AN Hic itaque cum iam relictis litterarum studiis petere deserta decre visset nutrix que hunc arcius amabat secuta est.
Ps Dominus regnavit decorem.
AN Predicta nutrit triangul ad purgandum triticum ad vicini mulieribus praestari sibi capisterium pecassum accidente fractum est.
Ps Jubi late Deo.
AN Qui dum heremum pergeret romam monachum obviavit cuius cum ide/rium cognovisset et secretum tenuit et adiutorium in pendit.
Ps Deus deus meus de te.
AN Inito consilio venenum vino miscuere quo accepto in the margin quo obla to signavit sicque confractum est ac si pro signo lapidem dedisset.
Ps Benedicite omnia.
AN Be ne dictus dei famulus magnus fecit miraculum primum in parte.

[f. 318r]

[AN] divisum reiunxit capisterium.
Ps Laudate dominum de celis.
In evang<elium> [AN] Pater sanctus dum intenta oculorum acie in splendore corusce lucis habere videretur vidi germani animam capuani episcopi in spera sic ignea ab angelis in caelum deferri et in saecula saeculum amen.
Antiphonas ad vesp<eras>
AN Beatus Benedictus per spiritum sanctum | indagine prenoscens que ventura sunt omnia. | et in secula seculorum amen.

Ps Dicit Dominus.

AN Exitus sue anime | et sancte scolastice et germani episcopi vidit per | sanctum spiritum. et in secula saeculorum amen.

Ps Confitebor |

<AN> Aqua de montis vertice ferrum profundi gurgite | et placidum de flumine traxit perpensile.

Ps Beatus vir. | et in saecula saeculorum amen.

<AN> Frater Maure curre velociter | quia puer placidus in amnem mergitur.

Ps Lau | date pueri dominum. et in saecula saeculorum amen.

An<tiphona> ad mag<nificat>

Ho | die sanctus Benedictus per viam orientis tra | mite videntibus discipulis celum tetendit ho | <die>

Ff. 318v–319r

After the remainder of the Magnificat antiphon, a rubric introduces the chants for the Mass of St Benedict.

[AN] <ho>die erctis manibus inter verba oracionis mi | gravit hodie in gloria ab angelis susceput est. | et in saecula saeculorum amen. |

XII kal<endias> aprel<is> [sic] nat<alis> s<an>c<es>i benedicti

<Int> Gaudeamus omnes | in domino diem festum celebran | tes sub honore benedicti abbatis de cu | ius sollemnitate gaudent angeli et | conlaudant filium dei

Ps Eructuavit | cor meum verbum bonum dico ego opera | mea regi

R<ESPONSORIUM> G<RADUALE> Domine prevenisti eum | in benedictionibus dulcedinis posuisti | in capite eius coronam de lapide preciosum

[Vr] Vitam petiit et tri | buisti eis longitudinem | dierum in seculum seculi

TRAC<TUS> | Desiderium anume eius tribuis | ti ei et voluntatem labiorum eius |

[f. 319r]

non fraudasti eum

Vr | Quoniam prevenisti eum in benedictione dulcedinis

Vr | Posuisti super caput eius coronam de lapide preciosum |

OF<FERTORIUM> Oracio mea munda est et ideo peto | ut detur locus voci mee in
celo | quia ibi est iudex meus et conscius | meus in eternum ascendet | ad dominum deprecacio mea |

**Vr** Probavit me dominus si | cut aurum vias eius custodi | at et a preceptis eius non |

**AD C<COMMUNIO>** Qui vult venire post | me abneget semetipsum et tollat | [cruem suam et sequatur me]

On the lower margins of ff. 318v–319r a later hand copied, possibly around the year 1000, a re-
elaboration of Chapter XXXVII of the *Vita Benedicti* from the Dialogues of Gregory the Great
(*PL* LXVI, p. 202): *Hec est via qua dilectus Domini Benedictus celum ascendit atque ad terris via recta ab ei cella usque tendebatur in celum.*

**F. 319v**

The top of f. 319v is occupied by the end of the communio *Qui vult venire*, which concludes the
series of chants for the Mass for St Benedict, while the rest of the folio contains the Mass prayers.253

<…> crucem suam et sequatur me.

**xii k<a>l<endas> apri<lis> nat<alis> s<an>c<t>i benedicti abb<atis>**

Omnipotens sempiterne deus qui per glo | riosa beati benedicti abbatis | exempla
humilitatis nobis triumpha | le iter ostendisti. da quesumus ut viam tibi pla | citeae
oboeclentiae per quam ipse inlesus | incessit nos preclaris eius meritissine | errore
subsequamur. per dominum. Alia |

Intercessio nos quesumus domine beati benedic | ti abbatis commendet. ut quod
nostris meri | tis non valemus. eius patrocinio ass | equamur. Per.

Sacris al | taribus domine hostias super positas. sanctus be | nectus quis in salutem
nobis prove | nire deposcat. per.

Vere dignum. usque per christum dominum nostrum. Honorandi patris | benedicti
caelebrantes diem. in quo hoc | triste seculum deserens. ad celestis patriae |

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253 The first and second prayers correspond to the relative position in Séries II² and II⁶ from R. Grégoire,
‘Prières liturgiques médiévales en l’honneur de saint Benoît, de sainte Scolastique et de saint Maur’,
*Studia Anselmiana* 54 (1965), pp. 1–85. Some other prayers are also found in these lists, with minor textual
variants. However, none of Grégoire’s series matches the one in Sess. 96.
The text on f. 320 is incomplete at the beginning, due to the absence of the folio on which the series of blessings would have started.

F. 320r

<...>cutus. simulque omnium sanctorum mereatur opti|nere consorcium. Per dominum. ALIA | Deus qui tuorum corda fidelium per elemosinam dixisti posse mundari patris quesumus hu|iis consortio sacramento. famulo tuo. il. | ut ad conscientie sue fructum non gra|vare studeat miseros sed iuvare. per dominum. |

BENEDICTIO PANIS NOVI Benedic domine creaturam | istam panis novi sicut benedixisti quinque | panes in deserto. ut panis eiusdem habun|dans alium tum gustantes. ut qui ex eo acce|pe | rint accipient tam corporis quam anime | sanitatem. Per <Iesum Christum> dominum <nostrum. Amen>

BENEDICTIO VINI Domine omnipotens Christe qui ex quinque panes | et duos pisces quinque milia homi|num sacciasti. et in Chana Galilaeae ex a | qua vinum fecisti. qui es vitis vera mul|tiplica super servos tuos misericordiam pieta|tis tue. quemadmodum fecisti cum patri|bus nostris in tua misericordia sperantibus. et be |nedicere et *| sanctificare digneris hanc | * Sign of the cross

In the upper margin of f. 320r a late tenth-century hand writes an *Ite missa est* trope. 


F. 320v

creaturam vi<n>i quam ad substantiam servo | rum tuorum <tri>buisti ut ubicumque in hae cre|aturum fusum fuerit. vel a quolibet pota | tum divini benedictionis tua opulencia | repleatur ut accipientibus ex ea cum | gratiarum actione sanctificetur in viscero|bus eorum. salvator mundi qui vis et regnet cum patre in unitate spiriti sancti deus per omnia secula seculorum amen

BENEDICTIO LACTIS ET MELLIS | Benedic domine et has creatura fontis | lactis. et mellis. et pota famulos | tuos de hoc fonte perenni quod est spiritus | veritatis. et nutrit eos de hoc melle | et lacte tu enim domine promisisti patribus | nostris Abrahe. Isaac. et Iacob. dicens. Introducam vos in terram fluentem | lac et mel. conius\n|ge domine famulos | spiritui sancto. sicut coniunctum est hoc lac | et mel in Christo Ihesu domino nostro. per quem hec | omnia domine qui vis et regnat in secula seculorum.

254 For a discussion of the hand and trope see below, §3.2.1.
On f. 320v a later hand, possibly of the early eleventh century, writes six antiphons incipits for the Office for St John the Baptist.

A. <Pro eo> quod non cre<di>disti A. Ex utero senectutis A. Ipse praeibit ante
il|<lum> A. Ioannes est nomen eius A. Puer qui natus est nobis V. Ecce dedi verba mea

A. Ingresso | <Zacharia templum domini>

This account of the musical gathering in Sess. 96 shows that, during the early decades of the tenth century, musical and liturgical practice in Nonantola was finally resuming after the destruction of the abbey in 899. The monastery was being repopulated and new books were being compiled in order to fill the lacunae left by the fire. As explained above, it is possible that mainly liturgical books were affected by the fire, since very few of these survive from the ninth century. With the remarkable exception of Pal. lat. 862, possibly kept at that time in a different location in the hands of the abbey’s cantor, the community lost missals, antiphonaries and graduals. The liturgy for St Benedict, of central importance for a Benedictine abbey such as Nonantola, was thus reconstructed by a single individual in the compilation of Sess. 96 by assembling material which would normally be transmitted in different books. There is no certainty that the scribe responsible for this operation recalled from memory the entire liturgy for both the Office and the Mass, the latter also including the prayers on f. 319v. However, various textual elements such as spelling mistakes and misinterpretations, the lack of a coherent and well-planned organisation of the material in the writing space, and the very nature of this ‘miscellaneous’ compilation – featuring the Office alongside Mass chants, prayers and blessings – would make the hypotheses of writing from memory, maybe even ex novo, or from different corrupted exemplars, more likely than that of copying from a single exemplar. Finally, the observation of the marginal annotations show that the book was still in use until the early eleventh century and these very traces reveal the presence at Nonantola of active individuals from different backgrounds and provenances, confirming that the abbey of St Sylvester was less isolated towards the end of the tenth century, resuming its ties with transalpine communities. Sess. 96 tells us the history of the Benedictine abbey in a period which has remained hitherto rather obscure, but that now proves decisive for our understanding of the forms in which liturgical and musical life was expressed and organised during the phase preceding the eleventh-century ‘renaissance’.

Chapter 3

The liturgy in Pal. lat. 826 and Sess. 96

3.1. A book for a cantor?

The state of the palimpsest folios in Pal. lat. 862 does not allow to determine with absolute certainty whether the leaves came from one or more original Nonantolan manuscripts. However, the codicological and palaeographical features of the Vatican palimpsest would seem to reveal a certain unity and coherence in the compilation. In particular, all main text hands write in a type of Nonantolan minuscule typical of the production of the abbey’s scriptorium in the second half of the ninth century and the presence of rubrics and of a decorative apparatus and layout showing a certain degree of formality, that would seem to place its compilation between low- and high-grade standards of the scriptorium. If compared with other manuscripts produced at Nonantola during the second half of the ninth century, it becomes clear that the palimpsest folios of Pal. lat. 862 may be considered as originally intended for the liturgy and used as a reference tool for everyday practice, rather than being for mere display or kept locked in an armarium. In this scenario, indulging in decoration may be seen as a way to provide the volume with status, not only as an authoritative collection of chants, but also as an aesthetically valuable instrumentum liturgicum: indeed, in medieval liturgical books the two aspects were often interdependent. Moreover, it is striking that the –seemingly miscellaneous– content is found coexisting also in other liturgical manuscripts, especially of the early eleventh century, as it will be shown below. In the present chapter I will explore the possibility that the Vatican palimpsest leaves came from one, miscellaneous volume and that the manuscript may have been initially intended for the personal use of the abbey’s cantor, a figure whose role in the musical activity of the monastic community has remained still largely unexplored, while at the same time produced in such a fashion that it could last as a reference tool and serve future generations of cantores.256

Given its date of compilation in the last decades of the ninth century, the original gradual in Pal. lat. 862 was quite possibly a book in which early forms of music layout and solutions for the compilation of liturgical books were experimented with. It is conceivable that the scribe was following earlier exemplars, not necessarily musical or liturgical, but also that he was simply drawing on his experience as a reader and user of books, as well as on his acquaintance with

techniques for manuscript production. It is also plausible that texts originally circulated in sections, in the form of libelli, their content then being organised in a coherent and liturgically ordered way. The selection of material and its strict liturgical placement were prerogatives of the figure in charge of the liturgy and were subject to his knowledge and skills.

Ways of approaching the rational organisation of knowledge in written artefacts probably stem from as early as the Late Antique period, with the shift from roll to codex and the compilation of the first pre-Carolingian miscellanies. These principles shaped the forms and techniques of manuscript production for a large part of the Latin Middle Ages. It is clear, however, that these principles were already at work in Carolingian liturgical texts, as may be seen in their complex, almost architectural structures built from different layers of information: the rational organisation of ritual was reflected in the arrangement of texts and in compilation procedures. Such arrangement and procedures, dependent on a profound knowledge of the various times and spaces of the liturgy, could only have been applied by someone possessing all the required understanding and skills: the abbey’s cantor. Such a figure was not yet institutionalised in the ninth century as it would be in the following three centuries when the cantor ‘supervised all aspects of music-making, he was in charge of the library and the scriptorium and he oversaw and directed the celebration of liturgy’.

257 Fassler’s hypothesis is that, with the transition from an orally transmitted liturgy to a predominantly written one, ‘the librarian slowly acquired more and more responsibilities because of the increasing dependence upon written materials in monastic liturgical and musical practice.’ 258 Although there is no direct evidence for such a figure at Nonantola in the ninth century, it may not be implausible to think that an individual with those responsibilities did occupy a place in the abbey’s hierarchy already at that early date. Later, in the mid-eleventh century, we find the Nonantolan cantor Stephen (Stephanus) in Verona. 259 In charge of the liturgy, he compiled the carpsum – a type of ordinal, a manual for the liturgical activity of the secular cathedral – now in Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XCIV (89). The Nonantolan notation of the tonary at the end of the carpsum and some marginal additions with chant incipits to the sacramentary Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, LXXXVI (81), are also in his hand.

More important for our discussion is the possibility that it was the cantor who ordered the copying of certain books, answering the needs of liturgical practice, and who designed their content and formatting. 260 The governing principle which the Nonantolan cantor followed for the

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258 Ibid., p. 46.
259 See L’orazionale dell’arcidiacono Pacifico e il carpsum del cantore Stefano: studi e testi sulla liturgia del duomo di Verona dal IX all’XI sec. (Spicilegium Fribrurgense, 21), ed. G. G. Meersseman, E. Adda and J. Deshusses (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1974), esp. pp. 67–120. See also Codices Liturgici Latin Antiquiores (Spicilegium Frbrurgense subsidia, 1), s, ed. K. Gamber (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1968), n. 1535.
260 Fassler, ‘The Office of the Cantor’, p. 44.
compilation of the Vatican palimpsest was thus the liturgical year and its main subdivisions (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Post-Pentecost), down to each Mass and its proper ritual, with texts, chants and readings being chosen for particular feast days. Another important aspect of this particular phase was the choosing of the type of scripts (minuscule, uncial, capitals or rustic capitals), rubrics (mainly their *mise-en-texte* and formulae) and decoration (interlaced or coloured initials, drawings). The early liturgical book at Nonantola may thus be seen as a representative of a larger picture, that of the exploration in late Carolingian Europe of effective solutions for the making not only of tools for liturgical practice but also of repositories of the community’s musical heritage and identity. Pal. lat. 862 was without doubt intended as a model for future graphic achievements at the Benedictine abbey, and was certainly not originally intended as something to be written in haste for the resumption of liturgical practice.

Despite the complex codicological case analysed in Chapter 2, it is possible to reconstruct the liturgy of the Vatican palimpsest. The surviving folios come from only two sections of the original manuscript and contain the chants for Advent and the Easter Triduum (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). That the only surviving sections come from what are arguably the most important times in the liturgical year is striking. It may be hypothesised that the material for the rest of the year was re-used at an even earlier stage, leaving these sections aside on account of their particular importance, even though traces of chants for Trinity Sunday seem to survive on f. 80. In particular, parts of the first and second Sundays of Advent are found on f. 77. As explained above, this folio must have been part of the first fascicle of the original gradual, coming just after the introit *Ad te levavi*, which was not preserved. The chants for the Mass for St Lucy occupy f. 68, while the third and fourth Sundays of Advent are found on f. 83. For the Mass for Christmas Day, the only visible chant is the Gloria trope *Pax sempiterna*. The hypothesis that this very bifolio, before its re-use in the early twelfth century, may have been used as an exemplar for at least one of the Nonantolan tropers at the time of their compilation in the late eleventh century is tantalising.

The liturgy for the Easter Triduum is also incomplete, but at least some chants are visible and representative of each day. For example, after the Trisagion on f. 102v – for which Pal. lat. 862 is now the earliest Italian source – come the processional antiphons for the *Adoratio Sanctae Crucis* on Good Friday, continuing on f. 91.263

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261 See above, §2.2.3 (Fasc. B).
262 See above, §2.2.4.
263 ‘In northern Italian gospel processions evidence of the Trisagion is altogether lacking, although the text was known in Italy by the eleventh century’: J. Borders, ‘The Northern Italian antiphons ante evangelium and the Gallican connection’, *Journal of Musicological Research* 8 (1988), p. 42.
Table 3.1. Chants for Advent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dom I</th>
<th>Off. <em>Ad te Domine levavi</em></th>
<th>f. 77r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Com. <em>Dominus dabit benignitatem</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dom II</td>
<td>Int. <em>Populus Sion</em></td>
<td>f. 77v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gr. <em>Ex Sion</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vrs. <em>Letatus sum</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vrs. <em>Stantes erant</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Off. <em>Deus tu convertes</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V. <em>Benedicisti Domine terram tuam</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Lucy</td>
<td>Off. <em>Offerentur regi</em></td>
<td>f. 68v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V. <em>Diffusa est gratia</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dom III</td>
<td>Int. <em>Rorate celi</em></td>
<td>f. 83r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gr. <em>Tollete portas</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V. <em>Quis ascendet</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Off. <em>Consolamini</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V. <em>Tunc aperientur</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V. <em>Audite itaque</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Com. <em>Ecce virgo conipiet</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dom IV</td>
<td>Int. <em>Prope es tu Domine</em></td>
<td>f. 83v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>Gloria <em>Pax sempiterna Christus illuxit</em></td>
<td>f. 74v</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2. Chants for the Easter Triduum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Friday</th>
<th><em>Agyos O Theos</em></th>
<th>f. 102v</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <em>Ecce lignum crucis</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <em>Adoramus cruxem</em></td>
<td>f. 91v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <em>Dum fabricator mundi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <em>Per signum sanctae crucis</em></td>
<td>f. 102r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <em>Venite et videte omnes populi</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <em>Ego sum alpha et omega</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Saturday</td>
<td><em>Sicut cervus</em></td>
<td>f. 71v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All.</td>
<td>f. 71r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vrs. <em>Confitemini Domino</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>A. <em>Stetit angelus ad sepulchrum</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The canticle *Sicut cervus* and the Alleluia *Confitemini Domino* are sung on Holy Saturday, while the only trace of chants for Easter Day is the antiphon *Stetit angelus ad sepulchrum*, and there is no apparent evidence of the presence of the trope *Quem queritis*.

The musical and liturgical content is only one aspect of the palimpsest folios in Pal. lat. 862, and a broader look at the rest of the material is necessary for a full comprehension of the use and destination of the original manuscript (or manuscripts). As outlined above, other sections of the Vatican palimpsest contain different texts, namely a treatise on *computus*, a calendar, and a table for the calculation of movable feasts (f. 99v). From readable areas in the margins of some folios it is possible to identify some sections of the *computus* text and the incipits of various *argumenta*, such as *Si vis scire* … (especially on f. 87). There are many concordances with the canonical selection of texts on *computus* (Bede, Isidore, Alcuin), but none is a perfect match. For example, the incipit *Si vis scire per singulos annos* …, visible in the top margin of f. 104r, is present in only one of a series of treatises on *computus* in a ninth-century manuscript from Montecassino, Archivio della Badia, cod. 3 (alias Cod. Cass. 3). The rest of f. 104r is unreadable, making even this concordance difficult to determine fully, though this possible connection with the southern Italian abbey would be worth exploring in depth. As will be shown below for RoA 123, it is possible that, rather than being a copy of a single text, the computistical content of Pal. lat. 862 was a selection of different texts assembled, presumably in Nonantola, during the late ninth century. The presence of this compilation of texts on time-reckoning, alongside annotations and glosses, especially in the palimpsest calendar section of Pal. lat. 862, reveals an interest in the reading and study of texts as well as in their practical use in the managing of the liturgical and community calendar. In Italy calendars had been used since the early ninth century, the earliest being contained in the Veronese manuscript Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Phillipps 1831 (ff. 1r–6r), and dating to 800–10. Because of the poor legibility of the calendar in Pal. lat. 862 it is not possible to determine exactly to which of the typologies set by Borst in *Der karolingische Reichskalender* (e.g. Rheinfränkische, Italienische, Westfränkische, etc.) it may belong. The organisation and reckoning of time were not only part of the responsibilities of the abbey’s *cantor*

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264 See §2.2.2.
but also more broadly related to reflections on and interests in computistical methods, following a scholarly tradition from the Late Antique to the Carolingian period, via the writings on time of Isidore of Seville, Bede and Alcuin. As already suggested by the study of extant manuscripts from its ninth-century monastic library, Nonantola was a place with a thriving intellectual life, which included, and shaped, its approach to worship.

The surviving manuscript that is closest to Pal. lat. 862, in terms of both its area of origin and its content, is Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 123 (hereafter RoA 123), made in Bologna in the early eleventh century. This volume contains a table for the calculation of movable feasts, a compilation of treatises on computus (ff. 5r–12v), the mnemonic rhythmus Anni domini notantur (ff. 12v–14v), an incomplete anonymous commentary on rhythmus (Explanacionem de versi de anni Domini, ff. 14–16v), and a musical section consisting of a gradual and a troper (ff. 18r–265v). RoA 123 was certainly compiled in Bologna, possibly before 1039 – judging by the computus table – at the time of Bishop Alfred (Adalfridus, Alfredus) (1031–1055). Its musical notation is the foremost example of so-called Bolognese notation, named after its main diffusion in Bologna and nearby areas, which spread also to other parts of central Italy.

RoA 123 is one of the most important witnesses to liturgical, musical and artistic creativity not only in eleventh-century Bologna but also in the whole of the northern part of the Italian peninsula. Its careful compilation and the choice of chants and texts, rubrics and illuminations reveal the level of sophistication that had been reached in Bologna by the turn of the millennium.

Pal. lat. 862 has various points of contact with RoA 123, not only in terms of its contents. For example, the page design for the opening of the Adoratio sanctae Crucis procession in Pal. lat. 862 (f. 102v) shows striking similarities with that in RoA 123 (f. 101r). The most evident common feature is the presence, in both manuscripts, of an illustration of Christ on the cross (Figures 3.1–3.3). The pen drawing that emerged through the digital restoration of the palimpsest folio reveals the remarkable similarity of iconography and decoration in the two manuscripts – for example, the initial of the antiphon Ecce lignum crucis. The parallel with Angelica 123 is also important, since processional antiphons are inserted in the gradual and not recorded in a separate book. Apart from the absence of Mary, St John the Evangelist, St Longinus and Steven (Stephamto [sic]) from Pal. lat. 862, the organisation of the page, with the series of processional antiphons starting after the illustration, is noteworthy. The fact that space has been left in Pal. lat. 862 to accommodate the pen drawing shows that this insertion, as in RoA 123, was originally planned as

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part of the compilation, rather than being a later addition. However, the execution of the illustration in Pal. lat. 862 is relatively simple and unsophisticated, even by contemporary standards. It also looks as though the space was slightly miscalculated, since the base of the cross intrudes into the space left for the notation of the antiphon. It is difficult to determine the exact sequence of compilation. It is possible that the text of the antiphon was written first, followed by the oversized illustration and, in a final phase, the musical notation. If the drawing had preceded the writing of the antiphon, the scribe would probably have left enough space for the correct placement of the musical notation, thus causing no overlapping. The organisation of the page and the presence of the illustration for the opening of the Adoratio sanctae Crucis, features found only in these two manuscripts, would seem to lead to the hypothesis that some kind of relationship may have actually existed between the tradition of book production the compilers of Pal. lat. 862 and RoA 123 were referring to, especially since no other contemporary examples of this form of presentation have been found. Such a relationship may derive not from contact with a common exemplar but from a shared set of practices or conventions circulating in Aemilia and characterising the manuscript production of these centres.

The other, non-musical sections of the Vatican and Angelica manuscripts also possess similar features. The florilegium of computistical texts in RoA 123 is divided into 145 chapters of various lengths, in prose, hexameters and rhythmic verses. The main textual sources – direct or indirect, and often reported verbatim – are Bede’s De temporum ratione and De natura rerum, Isidore’s Etymologiae, the Opus excerptum by Pacificus of Verona and probably also Rabanus Maurus’s De computus.\(^{269}\) Neither the possible authorship of this selection nor the exact place of composition have yet been established. The presence of Pacificus’s Opus excerptum and the rhythmus Anni Domini notantur, also attributed to Pacificus, as well as the excerpts from Bede and Isidore indicate a relationship between this collection and that in the manuscript Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. lat. 5330, which has been entirely attributed to Pacificus.\(^{270}\)

\(^{269}\) L. Robertini, ‘Un nuovo testimone del rito mnemotecnico Anni Domini notantur, attribuito a pacifico di Verona’ in Codex Angelicus 123, p. 36.

Figure 3.4. Pal. lat. 862, f. 89v (detail).

Figure 3.5. Pal. lat. 862, f. 89v, digitally enhanced

Figure 3.6. RoA 123, f. 14v (detail).
In the case of RoA 123, however, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that the *florilegium* may have been either compiled in its production centre especially for this very occasion, or copied from an earlier Bolognese exemplar, which may have been written any time after the first circulation of Pacificus’s works in the late ninth century.²⁷¹ This consideration would add Verona to the centres that played an important role not only in early medieval northern Italian liturgical manuscript production – as one might expect – but also, and more importantly, in the formation of the intellectual and scientific milieu in tenth- and early eleventh-century Bologna. For the purposes of the present study it is important to observe extratextual elements that may reveal the forms in which these texts – or indeed selections of texts – were transmitted within the contexts of liturgical manuscripts. The presentation and *mise-en-texte* of the *computus* texts in Pal. lat. 862 and RoA 123 are intriguingly similar. Figures 3.4–3.6 show the same passage of text in the digitally restored Pal. lat. 862 and in RoA 123. Every instruction for time-reckoning starts on a new line and is marked by a *littera notabilior* in both manuscripts, almost always *S* (e.g. *Si vis invenire ... Si nosse vi s...*). This is visible in the margins of a few folios of Pal. lat. 862 as much as in the respective folios of RoA 123. The presence of the rhythmus *Anno Domini notantur* in Pal. lat 862 is difficult to assess on the basis of initials alone, even if in the margins of some folios (ff. 84, 89) it is possible to see a sequence of *litterae notabiliores* similar to those for the rhythmus in RoA 123. Once again, the extremely poor condition of the palimpsest prevents further investigation.

It is conceivable that these similarities in the organisation and presentation of the liturgical and musical material, as well as that of the computistical apparatus, are not coincidental. The most likely explanation is that Pal. lat. 862 and RoA 123 were examples of a specific book typology, the equivalent of a modern-day handbook, for the use of the abbey’s *cantor*. Such a book is characterised by what may appear to be miscellaneous content, albeit coherently structured and often compiled as a single project, if not by a single hand. Collaborative compilations of this type of material at this early date are rare, and especially difficult to determine for Pal. lat 862 because of its physical condition. The presence of different hands in Pal. lat. 862 is to be attributed to its continuous liturgical use, at least until the early eleventh century. The project was certainly perceived as whole and homogeneous, however, primarily because of its ultimate purpose: all the different sections were representative of the range of

²⁷¹ On Pacificus, see C. Leonardi, ‘Von Pacificus zu Rather: Zur Veroneser Kulturgeschichte im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert’, *Deutsches Archiv* 41 (1985), pp. 390–417. See also La Rocca, *Pacifico di Verona*. The importance of Pacificus in the Carolingian intellectual world is considerable. For example, it has been possible to prove the existence of a pre-astrolabic instrument in the Latin West, the *horologium nocturnum*, as the oldest star clock, with which invention Pacificus has been credited on the basis of textual evidence from his epitaph (Inc. *Spera coeli quater*). See J. Wiesenbach, ‘Pacificus von Verona als Erfinder einer Sternenuhr’ in *Science in Western and Eastern Civilization in Carolingian Times*, ed. P. L. Butzer and D. Lohrmann (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1993).
functions and roles embedded in a single institutional figure.\textsuperscript{272} An example of a book with similar content is St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 338 (1050–1060), a collection of liturgical materials containing computational texts and tables, a breviary with incipits of the spoken and chanted texts for the Mass for the principal feast days of saints, a notated gradual and a sacramentary. A manuscript from Le Puy-en-Velay (ca. 1100) also contains a ritual and a pontifical, a notated missal, a collection of treatises on \textit{computus} and a calendar.\textsuperscript{273} An example of a cantor’s interventions in a chant book, on the other hand, is the Mainz troper Lo 19768. A tantalising hypothesis, which now appears to be increasingly well supported, emerges from the following new interpretation of the historical value of RoA 123: the manuscript may have been a copy of a Bolognese exemplar of an earlier book type circulating in the Po valley during the course of the tenth century, in which essential features that had been established since the late ninth century were finally consolidated. What may seem like a tautological explanation rather confirms that the ecclesiastical – and possibly also political – context for the compilation of RoA 123 led to the commissioning of a book with forms and functions firmly rooted in the Bolognese liturgical tradition, while being enriched both by means of a remarkable decorative apparatus and by the inclusion of the complete institutional repertory of tropes and sequences. The ecclesiastical events in the monastic school of St Stephen, the building of the new Romanesque cathedral, the impulse towards the cultivation of canonic and cultural values within the environment of the cathedral church, and finally the reorganising of the chapter all took place in the late tenth century under the Ottonian emperors. It is thus legitimate to suggest that the compilation of RoA 123 under the Germanic Bishop Alfred was an integral part of these enterprises.\textsuperscript{274} In the chapter organisation in Bologna, in addition to the archipresbiter and the archidiaconus, a prominent role was that of the \textit{presbiter-cantor}.\textsuperscript{275} An impression of the importance of this figure within the ecclesiastical hierarchy is provided by the initial \textit{A} of the rhythmus \textit{Anno Domini notantur}: here the \textit{presbiter-cantor} – or, possibly, the \textit{scholasticus} – is represented in the act of \textit{calculus} as the left hand shows, and possibly leaning on the \textit{baculus cantoralis} as a symbolic representation of an insignia of power (Figure 3.7).\textsuperscript{276}


\textsuperscript{273} The manuscript was recently sold by the Austrian auction house Dorotheum, and it is currently in a private collection.

\textsuperscript{274} Gherardi, ‘Il codice’, pp. 57–58.

\textsuperscript{275} According to Gherardi, the name \textit{Iohannes} appears in a Bolognese episcopal diploma from 1045: \textit{ibid.}, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{276} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 21.
The decorative apparatus in RoA 123 has been attributed to a team of illuminators – possibly also from nearby centres – rather than to a single person. Nevertheless, some of the illuminations may certainly be attributed to one of the artists – for example, that of the rhythmus (f. 12v), the missio apostolorum (f. 115r) or the Ascension (f. 125v). The realism of facial physiognomy achieved in these illuminations is remarkable and may even tempt us to identify the figure of the initial A as the Bolognese cantor himself.

The extent to which there was a direct relationship between the two manuscripts is likely to remain undetermined. While it is unlikely that Pal. lat. 862 was the model – or the exemplar – for RoA 123, the very close connections that have been described here testify to a trans-institutional network of relationships between Nonantola and Bologna. This may have chiefly concerned liturgy: a set of customs and conventions shared by important centres in the Po valley created a common approach to ideas about the use and functions of written liturgical and musical books. The contacts between the Nonantolan and Bolognese liturgical traditions have already been revealed in Ro A123. Not only do they share a large repertory of tropes, but also the presence of the chants for the Mass for SS. Senesius and Theopontius, celebrated solemnly in Nonantola on 21 May, is especially revealing. The saints’ relics, translated from Treviso at the time of Peter III (fl. 907–913), were particularly venerated also for their temporary translatio from the abbey of Nonantola to the territories of Bologna and Modena during the plague of 1006 under Abbot Rudolf.277 In RoA 123 the nat. SS. Senesii et Theopontii is not organically inserted into the gradual, but added at the end of the manuscript (ff. 265r–265v). The introit trope Cuncti fideles is also found in two Nonantolan tropers, Casanatense 1741 (ff. 86v–87v) and Bo 2824 (f. 55v).

277 Ibid., p. 61.
The addition of this particularly Nonantolan festivity led Gherardi and then Ropa to consider that, for the proper texts of these chants, the scribe of RoA 123 was copying – or borrowing – from a Nonantolan source.\(^{278}\)

In conclusion, the study of Pal. lat. 862 has shown that, at the time of its compilation in the late ninth century, models for the gradual were already available and circulating throughout the late Carolingian empire, thus including the territories south of the Alps. These models, however, were chiefly perceived as guides, their content and formatting being adapted each time to the needs and customs of particular communities. The case of Nonantola revealed itself as a particularly important one for the history of music writing: not only is Pal. lat. 862 the oldest surviving notated gradual–troper from Nonantola, but it is also one of the earliest music manuscripts made in the entire peninsula and in Carolingian Europe. The influence of the Benedictine abbey on nearby centres such as Bologna, Mantua, Verona and Modena may also have been achieved through the circulation of books such as Pal. lat. 862. It was primarily one of the most important ‘tools’ in the hands of the cantor for the conduct of liturgical practice at Nonantola, but it also contributed to shape the identity of the Po valley as an ‘unità culturale e musicologica’ – to put it in Ropa’s words – connected to, in constant exchange with, and part of the same broader picture as the most influential transalpine centres.

3.2. A trope and its early transmission

The most important textual clue for the origin of the Pal. lat. 862 palimpsest is the presence of the Gloria trope for the Christmas Mass, *Pax sempiterna*, on f. 74v. This particular trope was widely disseminated and is found in manuscripts from many parts of Europe, with the significant exception of Aquitaine, and with only a very late presence in southern Italy.\(^{279}\) It has been unanimously considered to be of East Frankish origin, rather than West, and, more precisely, northern Italian: in the words of Blume, ‘the form of the trope may point to an Italian origin, where it also had its widest diffusion’.\(^{280}\) This is due to the fact that the text of *Pax sempiterna* is in a particular rhythmic metre, the Adonic, derived from the Sapphic stanza; most of the tropes following this pattern, among them *Cives superni* and *Laudat in excelsis*, had achieved international circulation and have been found to be of Italian origin.\(^{281}\) The absence of this trope in most southern Italian manuscripts has led some scholars to assume that the original version may have emerged in the north of the peninsula.\(^{282}\) Further, in the study by Klaus Rönnau, *Die Tropen zum Gloria in excelsis Deo*, centred mainly on Aquitanian sources, not only is the absence of this particular trope from the early southern French transmission clear, but Rönnau also concluded that, as far as its origin is concerned, ‘against St Martial stands the sources’ provenance, against St Gall their neumatic style’.\(^{283}\) This last argument is taken further by Marie-Noël Colette, who argued that this trope does not correspond to the normal presentation of the St Gall tropes and does not feature any melisma.\(^{284}\) Furthermore, Colette states that the neumes of St Gall 484,


\(^{280}\) ‘Die Form des Tropus lässt einen Ursprung in Italien vermute, woselbst er auch die weiteste Verbreitung hatte’, *AH* 47, p. 222. Other sources containing this trope are listed in *ibid*.


\(^{282}\) ‘The incipit for *Pax sempiterna* is not found among Gloria intonations in south Italian altar books’, *BTC* II, vol. 2, p. 29.


compared with Falconer’s transcriptions from Monza, St-Evron and Nevers, reveal a different melody and tradition. These manuscripts are respectively Monza, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS c.13/76; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 10508, f. 23v; and Nouvelles acquisitions latines 1235, f. 185r.

Another reason for arguing against a direct relationship between the transalpine and the Italian transmission for this particular trope is the order and number of verses. Gloria tropes consist of a series of verses that introduce the different phrases of the Gloria, their function being to render the text Proper for a specific feast. In the case of Pax sempiterna the text is entirely centred on the theme of the Nativity. Christ is referred to as pax sempiterna, lux benedicta, and rex admirabilis. Intertextual references include those to the Gospel of Luke, read for the first two Masses of Christmas. The particular passages that form the textual source for the trope are quia natus est nobis bodie salvator […] invenietis infantem pannis involutum et positum in praesepio (Luke 1, 11–12) and et subito facta est cum angelo multitudine militiae caelestis laudantium Deum et dicentium / gloria in altissimis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bona voluntatis (Luke 2, 11–14). Internal references are also present, such as the juxtaposition between pax in terra (temporal > earthly) in the Gloria, and pax sempiterna (eternal > heavenly) in the trope. The word bodie is also repeated here four times, connecting Pax sempiterna with the tradition of Hodie tropes for Christmas Day. Other themes are the praise of angels for the ‘birth of the Lord’ (hymnum canentes bodie quem terris angeli fuderunt), the ‘Saviour born for us’ (natus est nobis bodie salvator), the ‘adoration before the manger’ (quem vagientem inter angusti antra praesepis angelorum coetum laudat exultans), the ‘Incarnate Word’ (ultro mortali bodie indutum carne precamur), the ‘light illuminating the darkness of the world’ (cuius a sede lux benedicta caliginoso orbi refulsit) and the ‘King born of the Virgin Mary’ (O ineffabilis rex et admirabilis, ex virgine matre bodie prodisti mundoque subvenisti). For these reasons, Pax sempiterna has been considered as a ‘Proper trope in the Ordinary’. Table 3.3 is a comparative transcription of the traces of the trope text in Pal. lat. 862 and the version in the eleventh-century Nonantolan tropæ Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, 1741 (hereafter, Casanatense 1741). If we consider the possibility that the version in Casanatense 1741, albeit later, may represent a likely testament to the original setting of Pal. lat. 862, then it may serve as a comparison.

(Bern: Peter Lang, 2010). See also S. Rankin, ‘From Tuotilo to the First Manuscripts’ in Recherches nouvelles, pp. 395–413, esp. 401–408.


286 See ibid., p. 167.

287 On the transmission of Hodie tropes, see J. Llewellyn, Hodie-tropes in Northern Italy: Studies in the Composition, Transmission and Reception of a Medieval Chant Type, 2 vols (PhD diss., University of Basel, 2010), esp. §§1 and 3.

Table 3.3. Comparative transcription: trope text in Pal. lat. 862 and Casanatense 1741

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pal. lat. 862, f. 74v</th>
<th>Casanatense 1741, ff. 19v–21r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gloria … voluntatis</td>
<td>Pax sempiterna Christus illocit gloria tibi pater ecclesie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laudamus te</td>
<td>Hymnnum canentes bodie quem terris angeli fuderunt Christo nascente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benedicimus te</td>
<td>Natus est nobis bodie salvator in trinitate semper solendas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoramus te</td>
<td>Quem vagiement inter angusti antra praecepis angelorum coetus laudat ecclesians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratiamus te</td>
<td>Cuius a sede luc benedicta caliginoso orbì refusit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miserere nobis … nobis</td>
<td>Ultra mortali bodie indatum carne precamur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoniam … altissimus</td>
<td>Regnum tuum solidum permanebit individusm sine concussum fine perenne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hicsu Christe … Amen</td>
<td>Te adorant et collaudant simul omnes virtutes angelice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The close correspondence is clear in the order of verses, in their placement within the Gloria text and, more importantly, in the presence of the Regnum tuum prosula. As in the Nonantolan troper Casanatense 1741, the version in Pal. lat. 826 features at the end of the trope a prosula for the verse Regnum tuum. This final verse became a widespread wandering verse and gave rise to a substantial repertory of prosulas, present as an addition at the end of the earliest Gloria chants in the repertories in West Frankish as well as East Frankish manuscripts. The earliest source until now for the Regnum verse is Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 1240, a manuscript from St Martial, datable to 933–936.289 The verse and its prosulas were often the ornamental climax to any Gloria trope that included them: they express the Maiestas Domini, where Jesus appears as King.290 From the few legible traces of text (highlighted here in bold), it is possible to identify the prosula in Pal. lat. 862 as:

Regnum tuum solidum
permanebit individusm inconcussum sine fine perenne

---

Te adorant et **collaudant** simul omnes virtutes angelice
Et nos supplices collaudamus tuum nomen

*Qui permanebit in eternum*.^{291}

According to *Corpus Troporum*, the prosula appears in this form in only three other Italian manuscripts, two of which – the earliest – are late eleventh-century tropers from Nonantola: Casanatense 1741 and Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sess. 62.^{292} Moreover, Iversen considers the *Regnum tuum solidum – permanebit indivisum* prosula as belonging to a tradition other than that of Aquitaine, for example, and being instead typical of northern Italian manuscripts.^{293} This very close concordance not only confirms the Nonantolan provenance of Pal. lat. 862 but may also indicate that there is a certain likelihood that the prosula originated in the very same centre.

Table 3.4 compares the trope in the earliest notated sources from Italy and East Francia. These comprise two East Frankish tenth-century tropers and three northern Italian manuscripts, in order of date:

- **St Gall**, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 484 [SG 484], pp. 214–215 (St Gall, second quarter of the tenth century)
- **London**, British Library, Add. 19768 [Lo 19768], p. 47 (Mainz, end of the tenth century)
- **Vatican**, Biblioteca Apostolica, Reg. lat. 1553 [Reg. lat. 1553], f. 4r (marginalia in Messine notation of the Como type, around 1000)
- **Verona**, Biblioteca Capitolare, CVII (105) [Vr 107], ff. 35v–37v (Mantua, first quarter of the eleventh century)
- **Rome**, Biblioteca Angelica, 123 [RoA 123], ff. 191v–192v (Bologna, ca. 1036)

The comparison reveals a few noteworthy differences. For example, there is a discrepancy with the St Gall transmission in the order of verses: 3–4–5 in Nonantola correspond to 4–5–3 in St Gall. Among the sources in *Corpus Troporum*, it is interesting to note that the same variant in the order of verses is found only in the Novalesa troper Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 222, which in turn appears to have a strong textual relationship with the later French tradition; these, however, have the same more common arrangement of verses as Nonantola. The sequence and the placement of verses in the Gloria text is different not only from the other East Frankish manuscript from Mainz, but also from other northern Italian sources such as Reg. lat. 1553, Vr 107 and RoA 123.

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Table 3.4. Comparison of the trope in the earliest notated East Frankish and North Italic sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SG 484, pp. 214–15</th>
<th>Lo 19768, p. 47</th>
<th>Reg. lat. 1553, f. 4r</th>
<th>Vr 107, ff. 35v–37v</th>
<th>RoA 123, ff. 191v–192v</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gloria – voluntatis</strong></td>
<td>Gloria in excelsis deo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pax sempiterna Christi illuxit gloria tibi pater excels</td>
<td>Pax sempiterna Christus illuxit gloria tibi pater excels</td>
<td>Pax sempiterna Christus illuxit gloria tibi pater excels</td>
<td>Pax sempiterna Christus iluxit gloria tibi pater excels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laudamus te</strong></td>
<td>Et in terra pax hominibus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ymnnum canentes bodic quem terris angeli fuderunt Christo nascente</td>
<td>Ymnnum canentes bodic quem terris fuderunt Christo nascente</td>
<td>Ymnnum canentes bodic quem terris angeli fuderunt Christo nascente</td>
<td>Ymnnum canentes bodic quem terris angeli fuderunt Christo nascente</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benedicimus te</strong></td>
<td>Bone voluntatis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuinis a sede loci benedicta caliginos orbi refulait</td>
<td>Natus est nobis bodie salvator in trinitate semper onundus</td>
<td>Natus est nobis bodie salvator in trinitate semper orandus</td>
<td>Natus est nobis bodie salvator qui in trinitate semper orandus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoramus te</strong></td>
<td>Laudamus te</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natus est nobis bodie salvator in trinitate semper orandus</td>
<td>Quem vagientem inter angusti antra praecepis angelerum coetus laudat excultus</td>
<td>Quem vagientem inter angusti antra praecepis angelerum coetus laudat excultus</td>
<td>Quem vagientem inter angusti antra praecepis angelerum coetus laudat excultus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Glorificamus te</strong></td>
<td>Glorificamus te</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quem vagientem inter angusti antra praecepis angelerum coetus laudat excultus</td>
<td>Ultro mortalis bodie indutum carne proemur</td>
<td>Ultro mortalis bodie indutum carne proemur</td>
<td>Cuinis a sede loci benedicta caliginos orbi refulait</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gratias – mundi</strong></td>
<td>Glorificamus – Iesu Christe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ultro mortalis bodie indutum carne proemur</td>
<td>Cuinis a sede loci benedicta caliginos orbi refulait</td>
<td>Cuinis a sede loci benedicta caliginos orbi refulait</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miserere – nobis</strong></td>
<td>Glorificamus te</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deus pater – nostram</td>
<td>Cum sancto spiritu – Amen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O ineffabilis rex et admirabilis ec virgine matre bodie predisti mundaque subvenisti</td>
<td>O ineffabilis rex et admirabilis ec virgine matre bodie predisti mundque subvenisti</td>
<td>O ineffabilis rex et admirabilis ec virgine matre bodie predisti mundo quem subvenisti</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoniam – Amen</td>
<td>Domine fili – Christe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qui sedes – Amen</td>
<td>Domine deus – altissimus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gratias – altissimus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regina hum + prosula permanebit invidissim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iesu Christe – Amen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Determining what the original order might have been on textual grounds alone is challenging, particularly because, in most cases, these changes do not produce any alteration of the meaning of the verse sequence. The narrative remains logical and intelligible, so that the verses may be considered almost interchangeable. As far as the tenth-century manuscripts from the Germanic area are concerned, this different arrangement, which must have emerged as early as the first decades of the same century, may account for an early oral transmission of the trope to these centres. From these features alone we may infer that if a direct relationship, by means of written exemplars, had existed between the East Frankish and northern Italian traditions, not only would the original order have remained more constant, but the textual variants would also have been less significant, unless of course a change had been made deliberately. Considering the plausible Italian origin of the trope, it may therefore be possible to conceive of an initial movement from northern Italy to the northern abbeys, where it was eventually modified.

Moving on from these reflections to the early transmission of *Pax sempiterna*, another feature is worthy of note in its corroboration of the origin of Pal. lat. 862. Although the earliest form is difficult to determine, according to Falconer it is possible that *Pax sempiterna Christus* originally consisted of ‘a kernel of six or seven verses that was altered and extended in the course of its history’: the presence of the *Cuius a sede* and *Cives superni* verse, for example, would account for the particular stage of the trope’s transmission. However, because of the difficult legibility of Pal. lat. 862 it is impossible to determine the presence of these particular verses. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 show the absence of the verse *Cives superni* from both the Nonantolan troper Casanatense 1741 and the St Gall branch of the tradition. It may be conceived that this group of troopers represents the oldest layers of *Pax sempiterna*, while at the same time belonging to and generating different traditions. It is clear from observation of the different phases of the trope’s transmission that as the eleventh century approaches, the relationship between northern Italian and transalpine sources is altered significantly. In the latter stages of the dissemination of *Pax sempiterna*, then, the initial ‘wave’, which may have brought the trope across the Alps, is reversed. Some centres feature points of contact at this time with East Frankish traditions that were embedded within the Mantuan, Ravennate and Bolognese transmissions. A final southbound diffusion eventually started probably from central Italy, reaching Benevento in the early twelfth

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century. *Pax sempiterna* appears only in the gradual–troper–sequentiary Benevento, Biblioteca Capitolare, 35 (ff. 185r–186r), dating to the first half of the twelfth century.\(^{297}\)

In Italy, the trope does not appear with its music until the early years of the following century. Before the present study, the most important source for *Pax sempiterna* was considered to be the gradual–troper–sequentiary RoA 123, ff. 191v–192r.\(^{298}\) The majority of the Italian sources for tropes and *prosa* are, in fact, graduals, where these chants are often copied within the Mass formularies. This is also the case for Pal. lat. 862, which is the earliest manuscript featuring a trope integrated into the gradual before the middle of the tenth century at the earliest. Of a similar date to RoA 123 is also the famous troper–sequentiary Vr 107 copied in Mantua, possibly at the monastery of St Rufinus.\(^{299}\) Remarkably, however, this compilation has its highest number of concordances with the Nonantolan repertory as found in three Nonantolan tropers – Casanatense 1741; Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sess. 62; and Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS 2824, copied in the Benedictine abbey in the late eleventh century or the early twelfth.\(^{300}\)

Another early notated source for *Pax sempiterna* is the series of marginal additions to the manuscript Reg. lat. 1553.\(^{301}\) These marginalia, notated in Messine notation of the Como type, date from the early eleventh century.\(^{302}\) Due to the dispersal of the earliest manuscripts, it is impossible to determine exactly why Italy, despite being one of the earliest regions to witness the

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\(^{299}\) On the repertory of introit tropes, see M. Locanto, ‘Il manoscritto Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, CVII (100) e il suo repertorio di tropi d’introito’, *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra* 24 (2003), pp. 39–110. While the Mantuan provenance seems to be the most plausible, the association of this with San Benedetto Polirone is as common as it is dubious. As I have explained elsewhere, the idea that a newly founded centre (1007) would have produced such a monumental collection is problematic. See G. Varelli, ‘Liturgia e musica a Polirone: Le testimonianze manoscritte nei codici della Biblioteca Teresiana di Mantova’, *Rivista internazionale di musica sacra* 32 (2011), pp. 157–192. The more plausible hypothesis of a provenance from the Mantuan monastery of San Rufinus is formulated by Ropa in ‘Liturgia, cultura e tradizione’. An example of decoration is the initial of the very trope *Pax sempiterna Chritus* in B. Stäblein, *Schriftbild der einstimmigen Musik* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, VEB, 1975), p. 129. The manuscript is reproduced online: http://www.paolamasin.it/capitolare/codici/CVII(105)/index.html (accessed 4 June 2015).


\(^{301}\) Falconer, ‘Early Versions’, p. 19. The manuscript is in BK 3, 6783, where the main hand is dated to the second quarter of the ninth century. Like vol. 2, this volume was edited posthumously and thus it is often the case that no additional information is provided. In this case, for example, no origin is suggested and the presence of neumes is not mentioned except by citing the entry in Bannister’s *Monumenti*, n. 272, Pl. 55b.

diffusion of tropes, remained apparently reluctant to organise this repertory and to transmit its music in chant books. It has often been assumed that the direction of travel in the transmission of tropes was predominantly southbound, rather than also reaching transalpine regions from Italy. What Planchart called the ‘northern bias of modern scholarship’ – which he charged with being ‘content with the study of ultramontane sources’ – produced a historiographical narrative that has shaped our understanding of the early phases of the diffusion of this repertory. Planchart’s 1985 critique, still carrying a certain weight today, was expressed as following: ‘Scholars who fully accepted the Carolingian view of the origins of the Gregorian repertory were content with the study of ultramontane sources […]. Some, in fact, found the existence of local non-Gregorian plainsong traditions in Benevento and Milan […] as something of an embarrassment that had to be argued away in terms of its possible significance […] in the case of the trope repertories this northern bias of modern scholarship has a measure of historical justification in terms not only of the surviving sources but also of what little is known about the origins and early development of the trope’. Rather than suggesting that previous achievements in the study of tropes were problematic or wrong, Planchart argued that a full understanding of the phenomenon would be achieved only by broadening the study of this repertory to encompass Italian sources. Wulf Arlt, on the other hand, clearly draws his conclusions from the lack of evidence for a northbound transmission, the vast majority of early sources having been compiled in the centre of the Carolingian empire. An example of a trope that originated in the north but was adopted in the Italian peninsula is that of *Quem queritis*. Evidences of the close relationships between St Gall and Nonantola are the rhythmic litanic *preces* of Bishop Hartmann († 925), successor of Salomo III and one of Notker’s pupils. Hartmann was trained during what was arguably the most prolific period in the early phases of the Alemannic abbey’s musical and poetic activity, some fifty years that saw the production of Notker’s *Liber hymnorum* and the *Cantatorium* SG 359, and during which important figures such as Tuotilo and Ratpert enriched the prestige of the monastic community. Hartmann’s *Humili preces*, as transmitted in SG 381 (pp. 29–35), is found in the eleventh-century Nonantolan tropers Casanatense 1714 (ff. 1r–4v) and Sess. 62 (ff. 74r–77r).

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305 Ibid., pp. 11–12.
307 On the trope, see S. K. Rankin, ‘Quem queritis en voyage in Italy’ in *Itinerari e stratificazioni*, pp. 177–207.
308 On Tuotilo, see Rankin, ‘From Tuotilo to the first Manuscripts’. See also Branchi, *Lo scriptorium*, p. 226.
However, we cannot exclude the possibility that these chants had already reached Nonantola by the late ninth century, or shortly after Hartmann’s lifetime, and were then adapted to the uses of Nonantola by the replacement of saints’ and patrons’ names. Yet in the case of Pax sempiterna, the direction of travel appears to have been reversed.

There seems to be a body of evidence suggesting an early, possibly ninth-century production of tropes in northern Italy, in which Nonantola played an active role. The different versions of the music and text of the Gloria trope Pax sempiterna and the different modes of transmission make it possible to conceive of the oral transmission of a repertory that was still in its relatively early stages of diffusion, not adopted everywhere at the same time or following the same forms. Early tropes possibly travelled within individuals’ memories more than in written forms. Even though there is no concrete evidence for considering the origins of Pax sempiterna to have been in Italy, or even for Nonantola’s precise role in the early transmission of this Gloria trope, what Pal. lat. 862 shows is that tropes were sung in northern Italy as early as the late ninth century, and were already incorporated into music books such as graduals. Pal. lat. 862 is the earliest musical source for this trope and testifies to a written transmission of trope melodies before the compilations of the tenth-century Frankish tropers. Moreover, the presence of the Regnum tuum prosula, possibly written at Nonantola, indicates that new verses were composed and that liturgy was constantly enriched in the Benedictine abbey. The Italian peninsula was far more than a ‘conservative backwater’ where tropes were concerned.310 What is clear is that Nonantola was creative, innovative and vital, as an important and well-connected centre should be.311 And this, in turn, supports the idea that creativity was also expressed in the design and development of an institutional type of musical notation. The narrative, therefore, of northern Italy as a ‘reception’ area, musically, notationally as well as liturgically, must now certainly be questioned.

311 For compositions of new poetic texts, see Vecchi, ‘Metri e ritmi’, pp. 220–257.
3.3. Reconstructing the liturgy in Sess. 96

3.3.1. The Office

The presentation of the chants for the Office for St Benedict in Sess. 96 is, as far as liturgical manuscripts are concerned, relatively unusual. Instead of the responsories and antiphons being arranged following the order prescribed by the Office hours, these are written out separately. Within these two series, however, the chants are ordered following the monastic cursus. It is possible, therefore, to reconstruct the original Nonantolan Office for St Benedict, a particularly rich one, which featured two vespers. Surprisingly, there is a paucity of studies on this particular Office; a full edition is beyond the purpose of the present enquiry. Moreover, no complete Nonantolan antiphoner survives, and it is thus impossible to verify the tradition of this Office by relying only on sources from the Benedictine abbey. However, a preliminary investigation may be undertaken by comparing the Office in Sess. 96 with the manuscripts of Hesbert’s Corpus antiphonalium officii (Table 3.5a–f). The absence of relevant correspondences between the Nonantolan Office and the Corpus sources suggests that the choice of texts and their sequence in Sess. 96 was chiefly a product of the Benedictine abbey. One exception is the first nocturn, for which the series of antiphon psalm versicles appears to be relatively stable in Sess. 96, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 17296 (D = Saint-Denis), lat. 12584 (F = Saint-Maur-les-Fossés) and London, British Museum, Add. 30850 (S = Silos). D and F also share with Sess. 96 the first and third responsories *Fuit vir vitae* and *Inito consilio venenum*. For D, in particular, the correspondences extend also to the second nocturn, especially for the first three responsories *Domine non aspicias*, *Pater sanctus* and *Cumque sanctus*. Although these features are noteworthy, a possible connection between the Sessoriana gathering and the West Frankish sources edited in the Corpus antiphonalium officii is hard to determine, particularly given the gap of almost two centuries that separates the Nonantolan manuscript from D and F. Finally, the East Frankish manuscripts St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MSS 390–391 (H = Hartker’s antiphoner), and Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, Rh. 28 (R = Rheinau), seem to differ considerably in the choice of chants from Sess. 96.

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Table 3.5a. Comparison of the Office in Sess. 96 with the manuscripts in CAO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sess. 96</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>R</th>
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<th>S</th>
<th>L</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vespers</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Recessit igitur scienter</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Matins</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Preoccupemus faciem domini</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ps. Venite exultemus]</td>
<td></td>
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Table 3.5b. Comparison of the Office in Sess. 96 with the manuscripts in CAO

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<th>S</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First nocturn</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Fuit vir vite venerabilis</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Batus vir</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Nurrpse clionicie</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Quare fremuerunt</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Relshita domo rebus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Car in voicrem</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Ab ipso puercie sue</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Verba mea</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Dum in hac terra esse</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Domine dominus mister</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Compassus nutricis</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. In domino confido</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Fuit vir vite venerabilis</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Roscstit igitur</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Domine non aspicias</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Et regredienti anima</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Inito consilio venenum</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Intellecti proinus</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Quindam rusticus defuncti</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Vir autem domini</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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Table 3.5c. Comparison of the Office in Sess. 96 with the manuscripts in CAO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sess. 96</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>L</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second nocturn</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Electus a fratribus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Domine quis habitabit</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Cumque sibi conspiceret</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Domine in virtute</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Puer quidam parvulus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Domini est terra</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Orabat santus Benedictus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Exaudi Deus deprecationem</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Tantam graciem Dei virtus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Exaudi Deus orationem</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Cumque in specu positio</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ps. Te deot hymnus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Domine non aspicias</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Et regrediente anima</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Pater sanctus dum intenta</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Facunque est</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Cumque sanctus Benedictus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Qui tante eius glorie</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Eodem vero anno</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vr. Prsentibus indicens</td>
<td>-</td>
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### Table 3.5d

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<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third nocturn</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Vix obtinuit</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
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<td>[THREE CANTICLES]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Intempesta noctis</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VR. Omnis etiam mundus</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Erat vultu placido canis</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>VR. Vir autem dominii Benedicti</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. Ante sextum vero exitus</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
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<td>VR. Cumque per dies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Sexto namque die</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
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<td>VR. Erectis in celum</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
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<td>VR. Cui vivere Christus</td>
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### Table 3.5e

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<tr>
<td>A. Hic itaque cum iam relictis</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Dominus regnavit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Predicta nutrix illius</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Inhilet Deo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Qui dum heremum</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Deus Deus noster</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Inito consilio venenum</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Ps. Benedictus omnipia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Benedictus dei famulus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Laudate dominum</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Pater sanctus dum intenta</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[GOSPEL]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.5f

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sess. 96</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second vespers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Beatus Benedictus per spiritum</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Dixit Dominus</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Exitus sue anime</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Confitebor tibi domine</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Acqua de montis vertice</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Beatus vir</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Frater Maure curre velociter</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps. Laudate pueri</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Hodie sanctus Benedictus</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[MAGNIFICAT]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Disentangling the complex transmission or, more appropriately, network of liturgical exchanges that resulted in so many diverse decisions for the setting of the Office for St Benedict would require a much broader investigation, as well as a selection of a restricted corpus of sources. The source for the texts of the Office is the *Vita Benedicti* from the second book of the Dialogues of Gregory the Great. A collation of the relevant passages in the *Vita* and the Nonantolan Office in Sess. 96 is presented in the Appendix I.

This collation of the chant texts in Sess. 96 and A. de Vogüé’s edition of the Dialogi shows that some are derived almost exactly from passages of Gregory’s text, while others have no direct correspondences. In the case of the latter, some are clearly texts newly composed for the purpose of the Office, while others are a sort résumé of a chapter from the *Vita*, often a reworking of various passages, realised through imitation of Gregory’s style and expressions. It is also possible that some variants derive from a different tradition of the *Vita*, possibly a local one. Finally, the verse texts are usually more concordant with the *Vita Benedicti* version. It is extremely difficult – as well as being beyond the scope of the present enquiry – to identify the centre in which the Office for St Benedict might have been first developed, especially since it is considered to be one of the oldest and most common. Certainly, many monastic communities, including Nonantola, appear to have developed their own sequence of chants and texts very early on. Tracking variations in the order of chants and the way the saint’s life was adapted to suit the purpose of the Divine Office would nevertheless be crucial for understanding the cult of one of the most influential figures in Western monasticism, as well as the transmission networks of this musical and liturgical practice in the early Middle Ages.

3.3.2. The Mass

Unlike the chants for the Office, the proper chants for the Mass on ff. 318v–319v are written following the liturgical order:

*INT Gaudemus ... Benedicti*

*PS Eructavit cor meum*

*GR Domine prevenisti eum*

*V. Vitam petit*

*TRACT Desiderium animae*

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313 N. 1102 in *Bibliotheca hagiographica latina antiquae et mediae aetatis [= BHL]* (Subsidia Hagiographica 6), ed. Société des Bollandistes (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1898–1901).

The Mass for St Benedict is absent from the manuscripts of Hesbert’s *Antiphonale Missarum Sectuple*. However, the chants are found in the following contexts:

- **Int Gaudeamus**: St Agatha;
- **Gr Domine praevenisti**: St John the Evangelist, St Adrian, St Theodor and *In nativitate pontificis*, Tract *Desiderium animae*: St Valentine, *In nativitate pontificis* and *In ordinatione episcopi*;
- **Off Oratio mea**: St Lawrence (vigil);
- **Com Qui vult venire**: St Vincent, St Lawrence (octave), SS Protus and Hyacinth, St Nicomedes and St Caesarius.\(^{315}\)

Because the festivity is celebrated during Lent (21 March), the tract *Desiderium animae* is sung instead of the Alleluia. Study of the Nonantolan Mass for St Benedict has revealed that the choice of chants in Sess. 96 is particular to the Benedictine abbey, no other manuscript having been found to have the same sequence.\(^{316}\) A remarkably wide choice of chants is contained in the eleventh-century Bolognese liturgical handbook RoA 123 (ff. 55v–57), as Table 3.6 shows.\(^{317}\) Some chants are unnotated; some belong to other traditions, including chants from the *Vir dei Benedictus* Mass, which according to Luisa Nardini may have been developed in Montecassino and only later reached the north of the peninsula.\(^{318}\) It may be conceived that the compilation of RoA

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\(^{316}\) The manuscripts checked are:
- Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, lit. 6, lit. 7 (cantatorium of Seeon);
- Benevento, Archivio della Badia, Ms 33, Ms 34;
- Cambrai, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms 75 (76) (gradual from Saint-Vaast d’Arras);
- Chartres, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms 47;
- Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, Ms 121;
- Geneva, Collection Bodmer, Ms 74 (gradual of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere);
- Graduel de Mont-Renaud (private ownership);
- Graz, Universitätsbibliothek, 807 (gradual from Klosterneuburg);
- Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale, Ms 239;
- Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 776 (gradual from Saint-Michel-de-Gaillac), lat. 903 (gradual from Saint-Yrieix), lat. 9434 (sacramentary of St-Martin de Tours), lat. 12050 (gradual from Corbie);
- St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Ms 339, Ms 359, Ms 376.

\(^{317}\) On the chants for the Mass for St Benedict in RoA 123, see B. M. Jensen, ‘Codex Angelicus 123 as a Liturgical Manuscript’, *Classica et mediaevalia* 56 (2005), pp. 303–325, esp. pp. 8–12.

123 was intended as a repository of chants, possibly collected from different sources in order to enrich the liturgy for the saint’s Mass. The particular Nonantolan choice of chants, which parallels the approach to the development of an ‘institutional’ Office for St Benedict, reveals once again the independent character of the liturgical practice at the Benedictine abbey during the late Carolingian period.  

Table 3.6. Chants for the Mass of St Benedict in RoA 123 (ff. 55v–57)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INT</th>
<th>Os insti meditabitur</th>
<th>Vr Nidi emulari</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaudaumas omnes</td>
<td>Vr Esce quam bonum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vir dei mundum</td>
<td>Vr Relicta domus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beatus Benedictus</td>
<td>Vr Relicta domus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vir dei Benedictus</td>
<td>Vr Recestit igitur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GR</td>
<td>Domine praeventisti</td>
<td>Vr Vitam petiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuit vir vitae</td>
<td>Vr Relicta domo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repletus sanctus</td>
<td>Vr Illusionem regis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACT</td>
<td>Beatus vir qui timet</td>
<td>Vr Potens in terra  Vr Gloria et divitiae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFF</td>
<td>Veritas mea</td>
<td>Vr Posui adutorium  Vr Misericordia mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hace est via</td>
<td>Vr Erectus in cellum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In columna specie</td>
<td>Vr Celsa omnipotenti Vr Intempesta noctis Vr Mirares in bac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>Beatus servus</td>
<td>Vr Ido et vos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posuisti dominus</td>
<td>Vr Domine in vitute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recestit igitur</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hodie dilectus</td>
<td>Vr Unde summa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The presence of marginalia on f. 320r may be also revealing not only of the liturgy for the Mass for St Benedict but also more broadly of the early medieval Nonantolan monastic environment. In the top margin of f. 320r a late tenth-century hand writes the *Ite missa est* trope *Ite laudantes deum*. The conclusion of the Roman Mass with the diaconal instruction *Ite missa est* and the choral response *Deo gratias* is documented from the eighth century by the *Ordines Romani*. Only Masses that include the Gloria (all festivities and Sundays, except in Advent and Quadragesima) conclude with the *Ite missa est*. Otherwise, *Benedicamus domino* is sung as a dismissal formula, followed by the response *Deo gratias*. According to Dreves, owing to their relatively scarce diffusion, ‘the *Ite* tropes

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represent the least impressive group’. Hospenthal considers it primarily a phenomenon of the German-speaking areas, not so much for the quantity as for the continuity of its transmission. Only three sources for *Ite* tropes survive from central and southern France, and the tradition in Italy is also sparse. Before this study, only four tropers were known to have transmitted these tropes between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Three of these books have strong connections to the Germanic world, while retaining a strong northern Italian character – the Nonantolan tropers Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, 1343 (Sess. 62), the Bolognese RoA 123, and the Paduan Padova, Seminario Vescovile, 697 – while the later Ben 35 testifies to a transmission of this trope that reached the south by the first half of the twelfth century. In Italy, *Ite* tropes did not endure and gradually disappeared after the twelfth century. Finally, only two late sources survive from Spain, while in northern France and England this trope is absent altogether.

If not internationally, the trope *Ite laudantes deum* is, by comparison with other *Ite* tropes, widely attested, and may be the most ancient example of the technique of transforming the *Ite* melismatic melody into a syllabic song. The text in Sess. 96 is as follows:

*Ite* laudantes deum atque dominum semper *misca [sic]* est

*Deo reni [sic] suis ac fidelibus cuntis [sic] gratias.*

The Latin is very corrupt, the hand writing *misca* instead of *missa* and *cuntis* instead of *cunctis.* Furthermore, the *Deo gratias* trope begins in Sess. 96 with an undefined Latin word *reni,* clearly to be read, as in most sources, as *reddentes* – with its variant *reddamus.* Beside Sess. 96, according to the Eifig-Pfisterer edition there are seven sources for this trope, to which are added below a fragment in Munich and a recently discovered Aquitanian manuscript:

**MÜN 14083** = Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 14083, f. 128r: eleventh century, troper, St Emmeran, Regensburg;

**MÜN 29305** = Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 29305/1: eleventh century, Kyrier, Ebersberg;

**PAD 697** = Padua, Seminario Vescovile, 697, f. 67v: twelfth century, gradual, Padua;

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324 *Melodien*, p. xi.
In the tradition of this trope, the *Ite missa est* dismissal formula seems to have been very stable, while it is the response *Deo gratias* that displays the highest number of variants. Table 3.7 compares the different versions of the *Deo gratias* response. It is revealing that the version in Sess. 96 has concordances with German or northern Italian manuscripts, while southern French and southern Italian traditions are increasingly divergent. In the eleventh-century trope St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 382, the *Deo gratias* trope is missing, because it was not performed.

| Sess. 96 | *Deo* | reddamus | = | = | = | = |
|———|———|———|———|———|———|———|
| Mün 14083 | | | | | | |
| Kas 15 | | | | | | |
| Mün 29305 | reddentes | = | = | = | = |
| Pad 697 | | = | = | = | = |
| Udi 234 | | = | = | = | semper |
| Apt 17 | | | = | = | = |
| Ben 35 | | | = | = | tibi |
| Par 887 | | | simul | atque | dominum | semper |
| L | | | cui | nunc | virtutibus | = |

330 Melodien, p. xciii.
In SG 382 (p. 70), however, a rubric prescribes that *Ite laudantes deum* was to be sung *in majoribus festis*. Thus, because of the presence in Sess. 96 of the *Deo gratias* trope, the marginalia might not be attributable directly to a St Gall hand. Yet the reason for the annotation of this trope may still be related, as in SG 382, to its use as a dismissal formula for the *majoris festum* Mass for St Benedict. A closer look at the script of the marginal annotation reveals various correspondences between the script in the top margin of f. 320r (Figure 3.8) and that of another marginalia in Sess. 96, the pen trial in the left margin of f. 316v (Figure 3.9), especially in the shapes for *e*, *r*, *s* and *a*. It seems very likely, therefore, that these annotations were added by the same hand. Furthermore, the type of hybrid notation used for the Alleluia *Eripe me* on f. 316v clearly reveals a Frankish notational substratum – particularly in the shapes for the liquescent *pes*, *torculus* and *torculus resupinus* – onto which Nonantolan signs have been grafted, possibly as an attempt by a scribe trained in a Germanic community to assimilate this last type of notation.

It follows, then, that the hand that wrote the *Ite laudantes deum* trope on f. 320r possibly came from a German monastery and left traces of his presence at Nonantola on Sess. 96. This is corroborated both by the particularly Germanic diffusion of *Ite* tropes and by the textual comparison above, which reveals strong concordances with German and especially Bavarian sources. *Ite laudantes deum* was not an omission from the original Gradual section in Sess. 96, since this trope seems not to have been used in Nonantola. That the southern German scribe thought of introducing *Ite laudantes deum* to the series of chants for this major festivity may thus be a plausible explanation for its addition on f. 320r. Moreover, the presence of this trope confirms that the compilation of the original chant book is to be dated earlier than the marginal annotations – that is, as explained above, in the early tenth century. It is thus clear that relationships between Nonantola and transalpine communities – chiefly Alemannia and Bavaria – already established in the ninth century continued throughout the following century, especially in
the Ottonian period. The late tenth century was a period of slow rebirth for the Benedictine community, and we may also suppose, on the basis of these apparently marginal features, that monks and important ecclesiastical figures were sent to Nonantola from the centre of the empire in order to strengthen the community and favour its renaissance at the turn of the eleventh century.
Chapter 4
Notation in the earliest sources

4.1 Premises for an analysis of Nonantolan music script

4.1.1. New approaches to the study of ‘neumes’

How did systems of musical notation function? On what principles does the graphic representation of melody – or of the performance of melody – rest?

What changes in the nature and function of notation correspond to these long-range changes in the relations of transmission?

These questions must lead to the study of notations in the light of their use in particular conditions: who uses them (that is, who writes and reads them), and for what purposes? What are their modes of representation? What was the conception of the musical objects that they represent? What sort of knowledge and competence did the reader require in order to be able to use them successfully?336

Since the achievements of Paléographie musicale and Cardine’s Semiologie grégorienne, the study of early musical notations advanced significantly.337 This important change in the approach to the analysis of music scripts was defined by Leo Treitler as a ‘shift of focus […] from palaeography to semiotics’.338 At the time this happened, in the early 1980s, much of the innovation in the way of thinking about music writing was in the very opposition between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ approaches. In recent years, there has been a change of perspective in the opposite sense or, rather, a merging of the two approaches. On the one hand, the cultural viewpoint broadened to include not just how music scripts relate to sound but also how they relate to space, from the metaphorical space of the writing surface to the geographical and chronological space through which such scripts were diffused and transmitted. At the same time, a return to the palaeographical approach was led by the interpretation of music signs as graphic objects forming part of a script as a written manifestation of the musical language, investigating the functioning of signs in terms of their

modes of representation. This interpretation differs substantially from Treitler’s 1982 definition of palaeography as concerning itself only with ‘the classification of signs and the identification of their periods and places of use’. Neumes are now not simply a code that we must decipher in order to access the original, ‘exemplary’ musical content; rather they are complex manifestations of an entire cultural dimension, which encompasses a range of agents from the physical perception of sound and the dynamics of the intellectual process of conversion into its graphic and symbolic representation to its sheer written, material realisation.

As one of the various consequences of these new ways of interpreting early musical signs, the standard musicological nomenclature using Latin names for neumes, e.g. *pes*, *clivis*, *torculus*, etc., will not be employed in the present description of the Nonantolan music script. Analysis of the notation has confirmed not only that this terminology does not apply to most of the graphs forming the set of musical signs employed in Nonantolan notation, but also that the very idea of *neumes*, as arising from previous scholarship, needs to be reconsidered: neume forms and their musical meaning vary considerably, and sometimes they do not match at all across scripts. Furthermore, as will become evident in the study below, such musico-graphic conceptual entities do not reflect the reality of the design and use of most of the musical signs in the notation of the Benedictine abbey. For example, a *clivis* will be here described as graph representing ‘two descending notes’ and a *climacus*, ‘three descending notes’, etc. For more complex graphs, the description of their melodic movement will be used instead of their Latin names, e.g. high–low–high (for a *porrectus*), low–high–low–high (for a *torculus resupinus*). Finally, the term ‘notation’ will be employed here to refer to particular realisations of ‘music scripts’.

Nonantolan notation uses the basic set of signs that are identified and presented in Table 4.1. The main distinction in this table is between 1) signs used both *in isolation* on a syllable and *in combination* with other signs, and 2) those employed only in combination (respectively A and B in Table 4.1). In Nonantola, the former type is always connected graphically to the vowel of the corresponding syllable in the text (represented in Table 4.1 by a horizontal line), as will be further illustrated below (§4.2). When used in combination, signs are added in sequential succession and placed higher or lower on the writing surface according to their relative pitch (discussed in §4.3). Two notes in isolation on a syllable, for example, may be expressed by a single sign (e.g. \(\bar{\text{A}}\)), or by two distinct graphs, each for a single note (e.g. \(\text{i}\), \(\text{l}\)); three notes may be represented by either

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three one-note graphs (e.g. \( \text{\textsuperscript{1}} \), \( \text{\textsuperscript{2}} \)), one note in combination with a two-note graph (e.g. \( \text{\textsuperscript{2}} \)), or a three-note sign (e.g. \( \text{\textsuperscript{3}} \)). The principle underlying this sequential selection of graphs in Nonantolan notation is that of the juxtaposition of contrasting meanings, both in terms of pitch – e.g. a higher or lower note – and also probably in terms of articulation – e.g. a lighter or a more rhythmically emphasised sound. The music scribe would choose particular signs depending on the musical, graphical and notational context.

Table 4.1. Signs used in Nonantolan notation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One note</td>
<td>( \text{\textsuperscript{1}} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two notes</td>
<td>( \text{\textsuperscript{2}} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three notes</td>
<td>( \text{\textsuperscript{3}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{4}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{5}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{6}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{7}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{8}} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four notes</td>
<td>( \text{\textsuperscript{4}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{5}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{6}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{7}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{8}} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six notes</td>
<td>( \text{\textsuperscript{6}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{7}} \text{, } \text{\textsuperscript{8}} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other music scripts, the choice of graphs and their grouping in combinations often represents articulation, with implications for their delivery; the analysis of Nonantolan graphs will allow us to assess the degree to which such a technique was employed in the notation of the Benedictine abbey.

The order in which signs will be described and analysed in the present chapter will follow the number of notes they represent from one to six, first in isolation (A) and secondly in combination (B). For each type, the graphic aspect of the signs – how they are constructed, how they are written, and the degree of graphic variation – will be studied by referring to constitutive
features of Nonantolan notation as a musical script. The various elements that form musical graphs, therefore, will be described using palaeographical (physical) terminology, e.g. stroke, dash, dot, downward stroke, horizontal dash, etc. Secondly, their musical meaning – the characterisation of a certain sign as embodying information about pitch and rhythmical nuances – will be investigated. In particular, the relationship between a Nonantolan sign and its melodic use will be studied by comparing it with the same context in other examples of early music scripts (§4.2).

4.1.2. The treatment of text

Besides its strictly musical implications, Nonantolan script possesses some graphic features and scribal tendencies that set it apart from other musical scripts. The first, and arguably the most characteristic, is that a single, isolated sign, or the first sign of a larger melodic movement, is graphically connected to the top of the vowel of the corresponding syllable in the text by means of a pen stroke, this being usually a constituent graphic element of the sign itself (Figure 4.1). In Sess. 96, in place of an actual graphic connection, signs are often only pointed towards the syllable but do not actually touch it. In general, these descending strokes are left separated from the syllable by a small gap in cases when they might otherwise generate ambiguity with the vowel, that is when the minims of i, u or a could merge with the sign and have their legibility compromised (Figure 4.1: orazio, munda). Sometimes the stroke descends to just before or after the vowel, usually in order to save space for either a single, ‘bulky’ sign or short melismatic passages, if the necessary space was not left in the process of laying out the text (Figure 4.1: meam, munda). This does not usually occur in the case of particularly large melismas, since enough horizontal space is generally provided. This graphic behaviour reveals the scribes’ awareness and control of the musical script: the space for certain signs is calculated carefully by considering their shape, their possible modification and the place they might occupy not only on the writing surface, but also in a precise musical context. The sole purpose of all this attentive consideration is to ensure the legibility of the text without compromising the placement of the signs.

Figure 4.1. Sess. 96, f. 319r.
The graphic connection of signs to the syllables in the text was evidently an essential feature of the communicative function of Nonantolan notation. But it was doubtless also perceived as a visible manifestation of a centre that was able to elaborate a distinctive type of script as an expression of its musical and liturgical customs, thus contributing to the establishment of the abbey’s independence and influence – in other words: as an identity trait. Scribes were certainly initially aware of other notational canons, even if these were still in their early stages, and of the extent to which Nonantola was differentiating itself in shaping its own institutional musical script. The evidence for such a complete conception of meta-musical significance is the obstinate use of this graphic device even after the long tenth-century period of desolation, despite the abbey’s being surrounded at that time by Po Valley centres already adopting – or adapting – transalpine notational models. The connecting graphical trait, emblematic of Nonantolan notation, was maintained when the abbey rose again in the early eleventh century; it was transferred a few decades later on to the newly ‘invented’ musical staff, and it persisted well into the production of manuscripts in the twelfth century.\(^{341}\) Yet at a purely theoretical level it might be possible to remove this connection while still preserving the meaning of the remaining graph as a musical sign, especially in the case of more complex graphs. This analytical issue will be particularly revealing about the basic alphabet of graphs and signs the Nonantolan notators were working with, as will become clear in the course of this chapter.

The separation of words and syllables in Sess. 96 is entirely functional in terms of accommodating the musical notation. It is not infrequent to find cases where the space between words is equal to or less than that between syllables (Figure 4.2). The result might be said to produce the effect of \textit{a scriptio continua}, where the text’s articulation is provided primarily by the musical signs and their meaning rather than by horizontal spacing. Another common phenomenon is that the letters \textit{n}, \textit{m}, and \textit{s} are often detached from the syllables they belong to and placed at the end of a musical melisma, revealing a very rational approach: sounds were to be sung on a vowel, while consonants did not carry so much sound and thus ought to be quickly pronounced only at the end of the musical passage (Figure 4.2a: \textit{desiderium}). In some cases, the scribe writes the full syllable and, upon realising the mistake, erases the consonant, writing it further along the ruled line, as in the case of \textit{desiderium} in Figure 4.2b.\(^ {342}\) It is likely that this

\(^{341}\) It is possible that, in the Italian peninsula, attention to the exact specification of pitch arose first in the notational experiences of Po Valley communities. The Italian music theorist Guido – one of those responsible for introducing the use of the musical staff – was trained and worked in Pomposa, an important monastic community some seventy miles east of Nonantola and another Lombard foundation. Literature on Guido and his works is vast: for a short biography and introduction see C. Palisca, ‘Guido of Arezzo’ in \textit{The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians}, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Macmillan, 2001), vol. 10, p. 522.

\(^{342}\) Other cases of erasure include \textit{que-sivit} (f. 314v), \textit{sanctu-s}, \textit{eiu-s}, \textit{santibu-s} (f. 315r), \textit{dulce-dinis} (f. 319r).
particular correction was made during the first phase of compilation and not when the notation was being added, since the latter case would assume that the scribe would have left a considerable space between the first and second word, which is unusual in Sess. 96. Instead, the Nonantolan scribe must have realised his mistake almost immediately, and his prompt reaction would seem to demonstrate that what might be seen as a scribal tendency was, in reality, established as a notational and, arguably, musical principle.

In Sess. 96, horizontal space is sometimes miscalculated in the laying out of the text, being either too little or too much. Sometimes the notation takes up more space than might be expected. An example of both cases can be found on the last two syllables of *precioso* (Figure 4.3). The text scribe left just enough space for the first melisma on *-o*, but it was not used efficiently in arranging the notation. This led the music scribe to make use of the space over the next syllable, causing the first musical sign for *-so* to be written after the vowel. Even if the end of the preceding melisma prevented the usual technique of connecting the sign for the first note to the top of the syllable *-o*, the scribe had no alternative other than to represent the connection with a downward stroke. This reveals an approach to the graphic aspect of signs as governed by fixed principles that were to be followed, ‘the first sign is always connected to the text’ being one of
these. In this case, moreover, the descending stroke clearly carries a twofold ‘symbolic’ meaning. Any Nonantolan music scribe would have known that while such a sign did exist autonomously, it would not usually have been found in such a position in this melodic context. In this respect, its practical meaning coincides not with a strictly musical value but with its function as a connecting trait, as well as a marker of the beginning of a musical section. Finally, the melisma on -so is written in the right-hand margin of f. 319r, the only instance of this in Sess. 96. Correct planning and calculation for the laying out of this text would have involved writing the last syllable on the following line, or starting the melisma on -so and continuing its notation on the next line. Evidently the scribe did not expect to have to write such a lengthy passage or, conversely, considered it too short to be moved onto the next line, and the margin was hence considered space that could be exploited for this purpose.

These cases provide interesting glimpses into how the notator of Sess. 96 behaved in contexts free of pre-fixed boundaries, such as ruling or text lines, and into the degree of flexibility of the notation itself. Miscalculations such as these in the layout, as well as in notating the Office and Mass chants, may have been due to careless copying from a written exemplar. However, as has already been argued and will be reiterated below, it is plausible that the Nonantolan scribe of Sess. 96 was rather recalling from memory the musical repertory, possibly in order to compile a collection of liturgical material to make up for the loss occurred in the sacking of the abbey by the Hungarians in 899. Taking the latter case as a hypothesis and looking closely at the final result, it is possible to consider the process involved in dealing with such a necessity: it was not only the chants’ text that the scribe of Sess. 96 was recalling, but also his knowledge of the forms and aspect that a music manuscript needs to possess and of the range of techniques required for its compilation.

4.1.3. The treatment of pitch

The other, most notable, characteristic of Nonantolan music script is that the physical place for notation is not confined to the interlinear space above the words, but makes use also of the space below them, here referred to as *sublinear*. In other words, notation develops around the text, and letters form an essential part of the musical script. Nonantolan notation simply cannot be written without the support of the chant text (Figure 4.4). For this reason, the few surviving textless musical marginalia and pen trials in manuscripts from the Benedictine abbey usually consist only

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343 See, in particular, §4.2.5.
344 An example is the melisma on the last word of the offertory *Oratio mea* (f. 319r), *mea*.
345 See §2.3.2.
of a sequence of trials of a few isolated musical signs, and not of a melody. There is also a tendency to place separate elements of descending melodic movements vertically, rather than obliquely, often depending on the amount of space available. Some three-note descending movements make use of both the horizontal and vertical space for greater pitch specificity.

This very strict dependency of the writing of musical signs on that of the chants’ text may appear to us as a limitation of this notational canon. However, it was certainly not perceived as such by early Nonantolan scribes. This graphic technique for the representation of melody, and pitch in particular, was for them surely the most effective and logical solution, stemming from the very contemporary conception of music and its relation to language and words. Cantus, the liturgical chant, was conceived of and functioned as an extension of the prosody of language; syllables and their inflections were regarded as the primary units of melody. The division of melodies was often induced by divisions in the text, marking and articulating their sense units. While it is possible to trace this attitude towards the music–language relationship throughout most of the Middle Ages and, arguably, for much of the history of European music, it is certainly during the ninth century that these reflections became so inherent to thinking about sounds, and their performance through vocal delivery, as to influence and shape their actual graphic manifestation. Late antique grammarians – especially Donatus and Priscianus – were read, and interest in them was revived in the early Carolingian period, forming a component of education and scholarship that set the essential basis for a new phase in the study of language. Knowing more about written

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346 For example, Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sess. 66 (f. 1r), Sess. 96 (ff. 310v, 318v), Sess. 94 (f. 3r).
348 Treitler, ‘The Early History’, p. 244.
language meant knowing more about how to sing it and, thus, how to display its constitutive elements. The broadly accepted theory about the origin of early musical signs as derived from prosodic accents (acute, grave and circumflex) is yet another proof of such connection.\(^\text{349}\) In this intellectual environment we may see the gradual emergence of a whole new development in musical thought: an exploration of the relationship between both oral and written elements of the musical discourse and their ‘grammar’, ‘rhetoric’ and ‘logic’. The Nonantolan approach to the representation of sound must have been formed at an early stage, when notation did not play the role of mere musical tool, thus independent in its representation from the singing and writing of words, but rather served as a means to their very amplification and an aid for the correct delivery of meaning. Such a phase may be identified with the emergence of musical scripts in Carolingian Europe, and especially with the most prolific period for their design, during the course of the ninth century. This aspect, to which we will return later, provides important evidence in favour of an early genesis of Nonantolan notation.

In other traditions the basic principle for the arrangement of musical graphs in the interlinear space is a virtual line, a conceptual boundary obtained by leaving a small gap between the neumes and the letters, below which signs are not to be placed. In Nonantolan notation such a line is the text itself, or rather its bottom ruled line, below which only one sign is allowed if required. The main reason for such a graphic approach is once again a concern for pitch specificity. The Nonantolan approach to the height metaphor is that of a relative diastematy, whereby a sign representing a note is higher or lower than the preceding or following ones rather than being put in relation to a set reference system. This necessarily requires signs to be arranged sometimes reflecting their pitch but sometimes in anticipation of the height of the following sounds or phrase.\(^\text{350}\)

A few years ago, a major divide was brought to light by Susan Rankin in her seminal study of the treatment of pitch in early music scripts.\(^\text{351}\) By studying the relationship between the placement of signs and their intervallic relations in St Gall and Laon, Rankin exposed the different approaches to the height metaphor that governed East Frankish and Lotharingian notations at the turn of the tenth century. In Laon, signs are written higher or lower in the


\(^{350}\) See §4.2.2.

interlinear space in order to represent the relative pitches of successive tones. Such a conception, then, was fundamental in the very design of music graphs that may be considered as representations of the distance between different tones, joining them graphically. In St Gall, signs are placed almost in repeated horizontal succession, or rising diagonally in cases of larger melodic movements such as melismas. Directionality was expressed rather by the signs’ ‘iconicity’ – to use Treitler’s terminology – than by their exploitation of the vertical space. In Frankish notations the specification of pitch was, thus, possibly perceived as less of a priority than the correct representation of rhythmic and performance nuances. As will become evident in the following sections, Nonantolan scribes adopted the former approach, where verticality played a major role in the specification of intervallic patterns. This approach, in which pitch is mapped out on parchment in relation to its relative height, is shared with Palaeofrankish music scripts and Breton notation. As far as the treatment of pitch is concerned, therefore, the music script developed in the Benedictine abbey in the second half of the ninth century belongs to this family of notations, and is in this light that signs will be approached in the present analysis.

Nonantolan scribes certainly considered graphs as flexible and malleable entities, but these graphic modifications always followed a rational and disciplined set of precise procedures – often to the smallest detail. Notators’ approach to diastematy and to the representation of sounds resulted from the merging of early experiments in the design of musical notation with contemporary ideas about music, language and the enrichment of liturgical practice. The notational canon that Nonantola elaborated towards the end of the ninth century was both a musical and a cultural achievement. The following sections will explore the intersection between the oral and the written, musical semiology and cognitive processes in the minds of these early notators, taking signs and their use – or misuse – as insights into the graphic and musical world of liturgical chant in late Carolingian Nonantola.

Ibid., pp. 169–170.
4.2. The use and meaning of musical graphs in Nonantolan notation

4.2.1. Preliminary remarks

The core material for the analysis of the notation will be drawn from the Mass chants in Sess. 96 (ff. 318v–319v, reproduced in Appendix II), along with comparisons to the visible signs in the palimpsest Pal. lat. 862, which cannot itself provide a sufficient corpus for analysis due to its poor legibility. The earliest, or most complete, manuscripts or fragments written in Palaeofrankish, Breton, East Frankish, West Frankish and Lotharingian scripts will be used as comparative sources. A source for Bolognese notation will also be employed as an example of a type of Frankish notation used in northern Italy, which, despite its later date, preserves a considerable amount of notated material useful for comparison. These manuscripts are, respectively:

- Wfrg = Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 510 Helmst. (ca. 900, Palaeofrankish);
- Ch47 = Chartres, Bibliothèque de la Ville, MS 47 (ca. 900, Breton);
- SG = St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 359 (ca. 900, East Frankish);
- E121 = Einsielden, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 121 (ca. 960, East Frankish);
- MR = Private ownership, Graduel de Mont-Renaud (ca. 950, West Frankish);
- L239 = Laon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 239 (ninth century, last quarter, Lotharingian);
- A123 = Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, MS 123 (1030s, Bolognese).

Transcriptions will be based on the following pitched sources:

- NO = Nonantola, Museo dell’Abbazia, Cantatorium [sine numero] (ca. 1100);
- MO = Modena, Archivio Storico Diocesano di Modena, MS O.I.13 (ca. 1100).

The shapes represented in the figures (including Table 4.1) are a normalisation of those found in the manuscripts, and the reader should allow for a certain degree of graphic variability. For example, although I have chosen to represent vertical strokes slightly slanting to the right, this is by no means a consistent phenomenon in the manuscripts; it is rather a general tendency of the musical hands, but a more perpendicular direction is also used.

In the figures, the single or double horizontal line onto which signs are placed represent 1) the virtual line running just above the top of a letter and 2) the text’s ruled line.353

Latin is normalised when referring to a chant, while the sources’ orthography is used when mentioning a particular passage, e.g. ‘the tract *Desiderium animae*’ or ‘the melisma on *anime*’; ‘the offertory *Oratio mea*’ or ‘the melody on *oracio*’.

In musical examples, liquescences are indicated with the usual smaller note-head (e.g. ), while the sign for a *quilisma* will be represented in musical examples by a two-wave sign (e.g. ), reflecting the Nonantolan design of two dots (see §4.2.16).
4.2.2. **Single notes in isolation**

In Nonantolan music script there are four ways of writing a single note in isolation on a syllable (Figure 4.5).

![Figure 4.5](image)

Signs 1 and 2 are written above the text of the chant, in the interlinear space, and connected to the top of the vowel of the relevant syllable. Signs 3 and 4 are written in the sublinear space, descending below the bottom line and attached to the corresponding vowel. As will be shown below, this particular use of the space on the page is a characteristic feature of Nonantolan script and has a clear purpose in relation to pitch.

Sign 1 \( \overline{\text{l}} \) is usually written with a downward pen-stroke. The slant of the vertical strokes varies from perpendicular to the text line (90°) to moderately oblique (80°–70°). This is often revealed by the concentration of the ink-tone towards the lower end of the stroke: the scribe would place the pen at the relevant height in the interlinear space, gradually descending as he approached the top of the vowel below. This process clearly required the scribe to calculate attentively the placing of each sign in relation to pitch, choosing to employ it according to his intended graphic representation of a certain melodic context. The scribe also needed to strike a balance between both the placement of the preceding signs and his projection of what followed. These two factors depended in turn on the layout of the text and on the shapes of the following graphs. The same considerations are valid for sign 2, \( \overline{\text{l}} \) which features a short oblique dash at top of the shaft. While the angle between the dash and the vertical stroke is always acute (40°–50°), the dash is variable in dimension; thus it is, at times, difficult to distinguish between signs 1 and 2. In Sess. 96, sign 1 often shows a slight thickening of the stroke width towards the bottom.

![Figure 4.6. Sess. 96, f. 318r.](image)

![Figure 4.7. Sess. 96, f. 318v.](image)
This phenomenon is mostly visible in syllabic passages, thus showing that the scribe was writing faster and more decisively, not having to worry about the placement of additional signs above the first one (Figure 4.6). Sometimes, in these cases, the repetition of the same note is expressed by strokes of slightly different heights (Figure 4.7).

A closer look will allow greater understanding of the musical meaning of these signs. Firstly, there is a clear intention to differentiate the meaning of single graphs by the presence, or absence, of the top dash. Signs 1 and 3 may signal a different degree of emphasis in the delivery of sound from signs 2 and 4. Comparison with other manuscripts reveals that the presence of the dash corresponds, in the vast majority of cases, to signs that might represent a rhythmic nuance such as the tractulus in East Frankish or the uncinus in Lotharingian scripts. However, this correspondence is not consistent, confirming that rhythmic nuances had a significant degree of variation between regional musical traditions, and the Nonantolan examples are merely part of such variation. The melody of the introit Gaudeamus starts with a common intonation formula on the subfinalis (C) of the first mode before going to the finalis (D) on the second syllable (Table 4.2). In the Nonantolan notation the note C, being outside the main tetrachord, was marked by placing it below the first syllable gau-. The following note (D) was written in the interlinear space above the second syllable -de-. The length of the vertical stroke is here moderate, both for indicating that the sung tone is relatively lower in the scale and, more importantly, to maintain the correct proportion between this note and the passage immediately following, a leap of a fifth from D to a/b b. These two syllables gaude- carry respectively sign 3 and sign 1.

Comparison with other notations of this passage indicates that the first two notes are usually sung with no particular rhythmic emphasis. L239 features two dots and Wfrg also makes use of two light notes, while the only different version is in E121, employing a slightly elongated shape, possibly a tractulus, for the first note. Pitch is specified in Wfrg and L239 by the placing of the puncta at different heights and in E121 by the addition of the significative letters i<nferius> m<ediocriter> (‘go down moderately’) to the tractulus, as well as the use of a virga for the second note. Ch47 employs two horizontal strokes placed at the same height; it is difficult to understand whether any rhythmical nuance is required here because the music scribe does not differentiate clearly between punctum and tractulus. In contrast to the first two notes, the last sign at the end of the word gandeanus and the intonation formula appear to have been given a certain rhythmical emphasis in Sess. 96 with the use of the connected dash. Here, E121 features a tractulus – in this case also signaling that it is a lower sound (a) than the preceding one (in E121, c) – and L239 has

354 Cf. tables in the present chapter.
Table 4.2

Table 4.3
uncinus, both associated with a less fluid delivery, while Wfrg and Ch47 do not seem to indicate any particular rhythmic emphasis.

Certain melodic contexts are associated with a particular rhythmic delivery. One such case is found at the beginning of chants, especially where musical intonation formulas may be spread across more than one syllable. The incipit of the tract Desiderium animae (f. 318v) (Table 4.3) features signs indicating a certain rhythmical emphasis, especially in L239 and SG359, where this is even more marked by the presence, respectively, of uncini and the letter t<enere> on the first tractulus, the latter case certainly involving a lengthening of the sound; the notator of Sess. 96 chose to write two connected dashes. For the second syllable of anime, L239 and SG359 show respectively uncinus and tractulus, while the Nonantolan scribe employed sign 1, possibly for a light passing tone (a), connecting the first short ornamentation on a- to the melisma on -me.

The most sustained use of single notes in isolation can be found in the section of Sess. 96 containing the antiphons for the Office for St Benedict (ff. 316v–318r). Sign 1 is the most represented because, in syllabic sections, the melody tends to move in a restricted range and generally no transposition of the musical signs to the sublinear space is needed. Signs 1 ʃ and 3 ʃ are frequently employed in syllabic contexts, pointing to the probability that they indicate a certain fluency of delivery. Signs 2 ʃ and 4 ʃ are used, on the other hand, to provide a certain degree of articulation and are often found at the end of a chant or of a phrase, or on accented syllables or particular words that would require a more articulated performance (Figure 4.8). Effectively, the dash slows down the rhythm of writing – when the pen is lifted and the direction changes – just as it might aim to represent a more emphasised sound, such as lengthening.

Previous studies have identified signs 1–4 as virgae, associating them directly with one of the two fundamental signs written in the Frankish neume scripts. For example, Ave Moderini argued that ‘there is no neat graphic distinction between punctum and virga, since the punctum […] has often a lengthened shape descending to the syllables of the text’. Moderini’s obstinacy in classifying these signs according to a standard nomenclature derived from a different script type led to a distortion of their meaning and eventually forced her to describe such a sign as a ‘punctum-virga’ or a ‘punctum elongated vertically’. Nino Albarosa referred to these signs as

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355 Moderini, La notazione, I, p. 89.
‘virga’ or ‘virga con episema’.\footnote{Albarosa, ‘La notazione’, pp. 236–237.} However, his use of the term \textit{virga} is based solely on its graphic appearance and does not take into consideration the use and meaning of such signs at Nonantola. Furthermore, Albarosa calls signs 1 and 2 ‘acuta’ (with or without \textit{episema}), based on their relation to the shape of the acute accent, while signs 3 and 4 were called ‘inferior’, for their placement below the text line. This relationship is itself interesting, but at the same time problematic. The association of such signs with the Frankish \textit{virga} would make sense only if these graphs were actually representing movement; in other words, if they were designed to represent the transition to a ‘higher sound’. However, this is not the case: each of signs 1–4 indicates a single note, with directionality expressed by the sign’s placement in the interlinear space in relation to what preceded it. To state it bluntly, if any meaningful comparison were to be made between the Nonantolan use of these graphs and graphs in other scripts, I would suggest, instead, that signs 1 and 3 should be considered in relation to the simple \textit{punctum}, while signs 2 and 4 might be compared to the Frankish \textit{tractuli}.

As shown above, the uses and meanings of signs 1 and 3 are that of a single note, to be delivered with less rhythmical weight than signs 2 and 4. The dot, which designates the equivalent function in most other notations, is here not visible since it is not represented graphically, but in a \textit{gestural} way: it is the moment the pen touches the parchment, the top of the stroke before it descends to join the syllable.\footnote{The use of this term, although reminiscent of Kenneth Levy’s Type 2 ‘gestural’, is used instead more in the sense of mere ‘scribal gesture’, disconnected therefore from a correspondence between the aspect of signs and their musical meaning. See Levy, \textit{Gregorian Chant}, p. 126.} What we see is only the connecting trait between the scribal gesture and the syllable or, rather, between a particular height in the interlinear space and the text. In this, it is possible to witness a dialogue between the notator, his perception of a musical event and its transposition to the written medium. In the light of such considerations, Nonantolan use of the connecting trait bears a musical meaning only if considered as a visual specification of the height of the notes. In signs 2 and 4, such indication is already provided by the placement of the dash in relation to pitch, and the vertical stroke serves its function only as a cue for the eye. The dash is thus \textit{connected} to the syllable and not an element added to a sign with an independent musical meaning (Figure 4.9a). Such misreading of graphs has generated the most fundamental ambiguity in all descriptions of the notation from the Benedictine abbey.

![Figure 4.9a–b.](image-url)
This analytical process of reduction does not pertain to the analysis of the graphic features of signs, of which the connecting trait remains an essential component, but it provides for a reading of signs in their constitutive elements as the basis for a full understanding of their musical meaning. A possible objection to such an interpretation is that it may seem arbitrary to consider the connecting trait as an indivisible element. Studies mentioned above saw in the vertical stroke an elongation of the virga to reach the syllable in the text and, in the dash, an episema added on top of such a virga (Figure 4.9b). However, there is a fundamental issue in these readings: that of the partial understanding of the musical use of the virga or, rather, of the incorrect translation of such a concept to Nonantolan script. As will be explained in the following section, Nonantolan notation does possess the concept of a sign for representing a higher sound, though this sign is never used in isolation on a syllable and has a precise function only in combination with other signs. For example, the concept of a virga, as intended in Frankish notations for designating a single, isolated sound, higher than the preceding or following one, was not used in Nonantolan notation because it already possessed a way to represent this function: the placement in the vertical space above the text.

The indication of pitch was certainly a major concern for Nonantolan notators. For signs 1  and 2  relative pitch is represented by the length of the connecting trait. In particular, in sign 2, this specificity is also reinforced by the height of the dash. For signs 3  and 4  pitch is not represented by the length of the vertical stroke, which is mostly constant, but rather by the signs’ positioning in the sublinear space. In the case of a line change, the height metaphor is interpreted in a different way, as the placement of signs is chosen in relation both to the arrangement in the previous line and to what was going to be the tessituro of the melody for the following passage. As a general rule, signs for a single note are placed in the sublinear space to ensure a coherent relative placement of the musical signs, according to a precise melodic context. The tract Desiderium animae (ff. 318v–319r) provides a very clear example of this technique (Figure 4.10). The first two notes (F) are represented by a sequence of two signs 2 while, on the next line, the same pitch (F) is repeated thrice on et voluntatem and represented, instead, by sign 3. The reason for this decision becomes evident by looking at the melodic passages that follow: on the word desiderium, the maximum extent of the melodic range is a major third (F–A), while on voluntatem the melody reaches c with a triadic movement from F (F–a–c). The notator probably foresaw such leaps and decided to move the notation for the entire phrase accordingly to fit the interlinear space. This reveals not only that the notator was conscious of the melodic range that needed to be notated, but also that in calculating this he was aware of the space required for the correct arrangement of signs. In these cases, the possibility to write musical signs below the
syllables in the text was a useful tool for the specification of pitch relations. More importantly in this context, it shows that the scribe knew exactly how much space a certain graph or combination of signs would have occupied, and what was the best way to arrange them coherently. Shapes and graphical entities of musical signs formed a picture in the notator’s mind that was represented graphically in relation to his expectation of the melodic profile.

4.2.3. Single notes in combination

In Nonantolan notation there are five signs designating a single note within a larger group (Figure 4.11). Three further signs, representing specifically a single higher note in combination, will be analysed below.\(^{359}\)

![Figure 4.11.](image)

Sign 1 is a dot and it designates a note with no particular rhythmic emphasis, and often leading to the next note. Its placement on the page is also reinforced by the particular sign context into which it is inserted.\(^{360}\) The particular function of the dot will be further outlined in the following sections, for it often constitutes an essential part of certain graphs.\(^{361}\) Sign 2 is written as a comma, and is always found representing the bottom note of a descending melodic movement.\(^{362}\) The same pitch value is conveyed by sign 3, a double comma, though a different rhythmical emphasis is indicated. Signs 4 and 5 may be described graphically as a horizontal comma and a double horizontal comma. These are always preceded by a note of the same pitch and are used at the top of descending melodic movements.

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\(^{359}\) See §4.2.5.

\(^{360}\) For example, the use of the dot in signs for three rising notes and three notes with start at the unison (see §4.2.6).

\(^{361}\) These include a particular use of two dots for the shape of the Nonantolan quilisma. See §4.2.16.

\(^{362}\) The term ‘comma’ is used in Albarosa, ‘La notazione’, pp. 243–244.
The dot may be used in combination for a series of repeated tones. An example of two equally pitched notes in isolation on a syllable is found in the offertory *Oratio mea* (f. 319r) (Table 4.4). On *ibi* the two *f* are differentiated by the use of a connected dash and a dot, placed at the same height. The choice in Sess. 96 to employ the connected dash instead of a connected dot as the first element of the graph may have been aimed at producing a contrasting intensity between

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Table 4.4.

the two *f*. The subsequent graph for two descending notes on *-bi*, represented by a connected dash and a comma, also features a high *f* as the first element.\textsuperscript{363} Thus the Nonantolan notator may have chosen to articulate the series of three *f* by specifying a particular emphasis for the first and third ones and assigning a light delivery for the second, leading to the next syllable. Instead of using a connected dot for the first *f*, the choice of the connected dash provided a different level of articulation for the entire passage, requiring a lighter sonority of the middle *f*, designated by a dot. Other traditions treat the same passage differently, with no particular distinction between the delivery of the first two *f*. For example, the notators of E121 and Ch47 chose to articulate their performance by the use of a *bivirga* instead of *strophae* (whatever that was intended to convey). The next moment of articulation was signalled by the E121 scribe with an *episema* for the first note of the *clivis* on the last syllable *-bi*. This matches the Nonantolan use of the connected dash and comma, instead of the more cursive connected downward

\textsuperscript{363} See sign 2 for two descending notes described in §4.2.7.
Nuances of delivery are expressed in Nonantolan notations with the use of particular sequences or combinations of signs, all with their particular rhythmical and performance weight, and the attention given to these details is remarkable. Another example from the same chant is found on *detur* and *locus*, where the series of five repeated tones on *c* is represented by a sequence of dots, preceded by a connected dot for the initial lower *G*. In other notations, this particular passage is represented by series of *puncta* (Ch47, ending with a *tractulus*), *strophae* (E121) or *virgae* (MR, A123).

The dot is also used in the context of a rising melodic movement, for example in the tract *Desiderium animae* (f. 318v) on *de-* and *um* (*F–G–a*), as well as inside the melisma on the last syllable, as the middle tone of a three-step descending gesture (*a–G–F*) (Table 4.5). In particular, once reaching *a*, the melody features the repetition of the same note *a* and a descent to *G*. On both syllables, these pitches are represented respectively by a double horizontal comma, followed by a comma. On *de-*., SG359 employs a clivis episemata and L239 the disjoint clivis in two *uncini* for a rhythmically articulated delivery, while Ch47 employs an unmodified *clivis*. MR uses an *oriscus* followed by a lower dot. On *um*, despite the same melodic passage *F–G–a–a–G,*

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364 For Nonantolan graphs for high–low see below, §4.2.7–8.
notational traditions differ: while Ch47 uses a disjoint *clivis* (with a slightly elongated *tractulus* as last element), MR employs the standard cursive *clivis* and L239 uses the shape of the angular *clivis* to mark the start at the unison with the preceding note (a–a–G). SG359 renders this passage with a series of four rising *puncta*, thus starting the ascending passages a tone lower on E, and terminates with a *trigon* which this element is a *tractulus* with *episema* for G.

The short passage on *-ri- (a–G–G–F)* in *Desiderium animae* is represented in Sess. 96 with a graph for two descending notes, followed by a horizontal comma and terminating with a comma . Ch47 uses a *clivis* followed by a *pressus maior*, SG359 joins these graphs in a compound form and L239 uses a compound of two graphs for two descending notes. MR features a *clivis* followed by an *oriscus* – placed at the same height of the bottom note of the *clivis* to designate the unison a–a – and a final *punctum* for G. As opposed to the dot, with which a simple delivery (probably fast) is implied, the horizontal and double horizontal commas may have the function of designating the repetition of the same note and, for the latter sign, emphasising the notes it designates with a certain rhythmical or melodic effect as shown by the doubling of the horizontal comma. Although it is clear that the delivery expressed by the horizontal comma is expressed in some other notations with the *oriscus*, the precise musical function and performance of the latter sign is still a matter of disagreement. Finally, in this passage it is possible to observe how the comma is used to designate the bottom note of a melodic inflection (a–G, G–F, a–G, a–G–F, G–F).

The comma is also employed to articulate series of repeated tones, for example at the end of the offertory *Oratio mea* (f. 319r) in a section of the melisma on *mea* (Figure 4.12). Here, dots, double commas, double horizontal commas and a dash joined to a vertical stroke are chosen by the Nonantolan scribe to mark different structural units and specify the melodic contour. Sometimes the scribal tendency is to place the comma as near as possible to the bottom line of

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the text, regardless of its intervallic relation to the previous note. A comma may also be found in
the middle of a descending movement in the final melisma on seculi (Figure 4.13), terminating the
gradual verse Vitam petiit (f. 318v).

The meaning of the double horizontal comma \( \, \), which often corresponds to an oriscus
in other notations, remains somewhat difficult to determine because the sign is used in a larger
variety of contexts, as the following example will show.\(^{366}\) A graph featuring both a dot and a
double horizontal comma is found on the second syllable of discessi in the offertory verse Probavit
me (f. 319r) (Table 4.6). In this case, the short ornamentation c–c–c–a is expressed in Sess. 96 by
a connected dot \( \, \), a dot and a double horizontal comma \( \, \), followed by a lower comma \( \, \). A
possible reading may be provided by the comparison with the same passage in E121 where, after
two strophae, the scribe not only adds an episema for the first note of the clivis but also provides the
additional information \( m<edio\, criter> t<\, enere> \) (‘hold moderately’).

\(^{366}\) For Albarosa the horizontal and double horizontal comma are the Nonantolan shapes for the oriscus.
Nonantolan double horizontal comma may, then, have been chosen in order to give this note a greater emphasis before descending to a. This is also confirmed by comparison with the same melodic movement earlier on in the same chant on præceptis. The double horizontal comma is replaced by a second dot, and this lack of rhythmic articulation is matched in the use of a clivis without episema in E121, and an unmodified clivis in Ch47. The double comma \( \text{\textit{}} \) is found twice in the chants for the Mass for St Benedict following a double horizontal comma \( \text{\textit{}} \). Finally, in other cases the double comma is employed as the bottom notes of ascending melodic movements involving quilismata (see §4.2.16).

4.2.4. Two rising notes

In Sess. 96 there are four ways of notating two rising notes in isolation on a syllable (Figure 4.14). These graphs are composed from the combination of graphs for a single note described in section §4.2.3, and a second element for the higher note. Both elements may be placed above the syllable, with the first stroke connected to the top of the corresponding vowel (signs 1 to 3), or split, the first element being written below the vowel (signs 4 to 6).

```
  1 1 1
  1 1 1 1 1
  1 1
```

Figure 4.14.

Sign 1 is written with two downward strokes placed vertically on the relevant syllable. The scribe would write the lower stroke and then place the pen at the top of the second stroke, descending far enough to leave a small gap between the two graphs. In the vast majority of cases, the second, higher stroke is written on the same axis as the first sign – be it perpendicular or slightly slanted. This tendency is coherent with pen movements in cursive script, where the hand tends to keep moving in the same direction: changing the movement from downwards for the first element to upwards for the second would not only break the flow of the writing, but also change the direction of the pen’s nib. This is why the second stroke, though it denotes the top note of a rising movement, is in fact written downward. Melodic directionality is provided here not by the direction of the stroke (as in a Frankish script) but rather by its positioning in the graphic context and by the pre-established convention of the second element as representing a higher note. Sign 2 differs in the presence of an oblique dash at the top of the second stroke, while this is found at
the top of both vertical strokes in sign 3. The same applies to signs 5 and 6, the latter featuring instead the first element below the vowel of the corresponding syllable. In sign 6 the dash is at times straight, at times slightly curved, and reversed, i.e. downward from right to left.

In the case of signs 4 to 6, a small gap is usually left between the top of the letter and the end of the downward stroke for the second sound: the upper element is not connected to the vowel because it represents not the first note associated with that vowel (shown by the sublinear stroke) but a second, higher note. This graphic device may also be interpreted as a cue to the singer: the differentiation of this sign from the stroke representing a single note in isolation indicates that the singer should expect to find the first note of the two-step movement below the text. Nonantolan music scribes gave great importance to pitch indication as well as to coherence and clarity in assigning musical signs to the correct syllable while preserving the text’s legibility. For this reason, there is no case in Sess. 96 of two rising notes both written below the syllable, even in cases when the melodic context might have merited such a graph. The reason for the absence of such a solution was surely to avoid the risk of interfering with the notation in the interlinear space below. This concern possibly became a scribal technique; even in cases when the space in the bottom margin of the page would be ample for accommodating two strokes, only one graph was allowed under the vowels. The Nonantolan graphic approach was certainly pragmatic, but it followed precise procedures in which certain limits could not be ignored.

To analyse the techniques described so far and the use of low–high Nonantolan graphs, we shall direct our attention to an especially informative case: the second line of the introit Gaudeamus (Figure 4.15). Here, the first word In features two rising notes F–G. The first note F, despite being a fourth above the initial C of Gaudeamus, is notated below the syllable. Further on in the same line the same use of signs is found on celebrantes (D–G).

The underlying principle is to position the signs so as to accommodate the line’s entire melodic range (D–c); in this case, the sign on in shifts up a fourth for F–G and down again for the D–E on celebrantes. The scribe chose to place signs for F in the sublinear space because this is an important tone in this section of the melody. This shows that the scribe knew the melody well
and also knew the space typically occupied by Nonantolan neumes. Before starting to notate a line, therefore, the scribe had to think about the notation of a particular passage and make his calculations for the signs’ placement accordingly.

Melodic contour in signs for two rising notes is indicated by the placement of the first element below the text line, as well as by the length of the strokes, according to principles outlined above. The interval between the two sounds, by contrast, is not graphically represented: the size of the gap between the two elements is always constant. Compare these cases: the first three examples show two rising notes a tone apart at different pitches in isolation on a syllable; the way the Sess. 96 musical scribe treats them is revealing. The length of vertical (oblique) strokes depends solely on the particular melodic context in which these passages are located.

![Figures 4.16a–d.](image)

For example, the first element of Figure 4.16a is longer than that of Figure 4.16b despite their representing, respectively, a lower (F) and higher (G) pitch. Figure 4.16c is another example of the flexibility of Nonantolan signs: the first element of sign 3 on in from the offertory Oratio mea (f. 319r) was elongated in order to designate a melodic inflection (d–e) located in the top end of the chant’s tessitura (D>f). However, Figure 4.16d shows how the gap between the two elements remains constant even when indicating larger intervals such as a minor third (a–c).

Interesting cases of low–high signs can be found on prevenisti (f. 318v) from the gradual Domine praevenisti (f. 318) (Table 4.7), on tribuisti (f. 318v) in the tract Desiderium animae and in the chant’s first verse Quoniam praevenisti on the word benedicione (f. 319r) (Table 4.8). Firstly, the relatively accurate treatment of pitch by the scribe is evident: he chose to arrange the signs on the last syllable of prevenisti, and the second of tribuisti, by using the sublinear space to reflect the melodic contour. Secondly, we see that sign 1 is expressed in other notations by pedes with no particular rhythmical emphasis on either of the sounds (cf. prevenisti), while the presence of signs

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367 Cf. oratio in the offertory Oratio mea (f. 319r), and venire in the communion Qui vult venire (f. 319r).

368 Cf. preceptis in the offertory verse Probavit me domino (f. 319r).
and 3 \( \downarrow \) in Sess. 96 (cf. tribuisti, benedictione) corresponds to shapes that record a certain degree of articulation. In Ch47 these are written as disjoint pedes with one case featuring an oriscus for the first note, in SG359 as pedes quadrati, pes quadratus and pes quassus, and in L239 and MR as four disjoint pedes (in the latter, punctum + virga and virga + virga).

To understand Nonantolan ways of representing two rising notes in isolation on a syllable, it is essential to appreciate how different constitutive elements were conceived. Firstly, it must be stressed that the characteristic Nonantolan downward stroke for the first note of a melodic movement is primarily a graphic means of specifying to what syllable a note or sign belongs, while having effectively no actual musical meaning: it originated only as a connecting trait between the scribal gesture, representing a single musical event, and its relative vowel in the text.

The same happens when the first element is a dash, also employing this connecting trait, without which its musical meaning of a single emphasised sound would theoretically be unaltered. The implications of this reading for the interpretation of signs 1–6 in this section are clear. Low–high graphs were originally conceived as featuring a connected dot or a connected dash (Figure 4.17) as their first element, be it above or below the syllable, rather than the Frankish ‘virga’ or ‘virga episemata’. This is simply because such signs do not inscribe directionality, which is provided instead by their placement in relation to the melodic context and, thus, to surrounding signs.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\downarrow \\
\downarrow \\
1 2
\end{array}
\]

Figure 4.17.

We may understand the meaning of the second, higher stroke in signs 1–6 by following a different approach. Because the first element of this graph suffices to express the connection of the sign to a particular syllable, no downward extension or connection to the vowel is needed for the higher sign, be it with or without dash. These signs, therefore, are in their entirety musical and their shape, despite the graphic similarity to the first elements of signs 1–6, was clearly meant to designate something semantically different: a higher sound. For example, in sign 1 \( \downarrow \) the two strokes for the two notes, though identical, are yet inherently different in origin and meaning.

In principle, given the concerns for pitch-specificity in Nonantolan notation, placing a dot or a dash above the first connected sign would have provided the same pitch information –
and this, indeed, does happen in specific cases. However, this is a solution Nonantolan scribes did not contemplate, since they possessed already the concept of a specific sign to designate a higher note. Moreover, as will be explained below, the dot has a particular function and its use in this context would have generated ambiguity. As with many other traditions, early Nonantolan experiments at designing musical graphs do not survive. However, it is possible to formulate the hypothesis that scribes may have initially worked with a set of signs that included a vertical stroke denoting a higher sound. The graph Nonantolan scribes chose to employ is shared with other notations, and in Frankish scripts it is later called virga. Its presence in most transalpine music scripts is particularly revealing of the initial network of contacts and of the basic generative sign-layer shared with Nonantolan notation that will be explored in the next chapter. The way such a sign was used, altered and modified will be illustrated in the next section.

In signs 1 \( \frac{1}{2} \) and 4 \( \frac{1}{7} \), the element designating the second, higher note is written in its simplest form, a vertical stroke. Rather than being a ‘note’, a symbolic representation of a musical event, the slanting stroke was likely to be perceived as an instruction for the reproduction of such an event, a symbol alerting the reader that ‘the next sound is higher’. In signs 2–3 \( \frac{1}{1} \) and 5–6 \( \frac{1}{1} \), the dash is, thus, not an addition to a ‘virga’, but quite the opposite. It has already been demonstrated that the dash is the basic symbolic graph for designating a rhythmically more emphasised sound. The slanting stroke accompanying the top dash in neutral–high graphs specifies that such a sound is higher and, at the same time, leads the eye of the reader through the notation more effectively than a simple dash, an effect that Nonantolan scribes were very much concerned with. As opposed to the episema in East-Frankish notations, in Nonantolan notation the dash is the main sign to which the vertical slanted stroke is then added. The signs for the acute accent, in its basic form or added to a dash, are also used in Nonantolan notation in combination within larger groupings, and their study will be even more revealing of their conception and use.

Graphs for two rising notes may be followed by a third graph for a third note. For example, a dot may be added to the right of the top element, signifying the repetition of the same pitch. This combination of signs is found in isolation on a syllable in the introit Gaudeamus omnes (f. 318v) on Benedicti and in the offertory Oratio mea (f. 319r) on idea, in both cases for the melodic movement G–c–c (Table 4.9). The first two notes are consistently represented by a pes followed by a virga in most music scripts (Ch47, E121, MR, A123), while in Wfg (on Agathe) the disjoint sign for low–high is followed by a tractulus for the second high c. In Sess. 96, the preference for employing the dash on the second element was evidently dictated by the choice of stressing the

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369 See, for example, the series of three dots in the melisma on precioso (Figure 4.3).
370 See §5.2.
reaching of the high c after a light leap from G before repeating the same tone. The position of this particular graph on the last syllable of Benedicti and on the first of ideo addresses different musical and performance purposes. In the first case, this articulation provided a brief moment of stasis after a fluent, almost recitative setting of the saint’s name by the use of connected dots, while at the same time the light, repeated c led to the more emphasised delivery of the following word abbatis. In the second case, the articulation of the first high c for the first syllable of ideo provided a moment of preparation for the singer, before two consecutive cs, and facilitates the intelligibility of the adverb (‘therefore’, ‘thus’). These musical and textual nuances are here enhanced by conscious notational choices and detailed instructions for vocal performance, aimed at the correct delivery of the music and of a verbal – and thus theological – message.

Table 4.9

4.2.5. Higher note in combination

In Nonantolan notation there are three signs that indicate a sound higher than the preceding note (Figure 4.18). Such signs are never found in isolation on a syllable, nor attached to it, but only in combination with other signs as part of, or as the top note of, an ascending melodic movement. The simplest case is that of two ascending notes, analysed above, or three rising notes, as will be
explained below.\textsuperscript{371} This section will consider the use of these signs in larger notational contexts, such as melismas.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
1 & 2 & 3 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Figure 4.18.

For the sake of clarity, and because of their graphic relationship to the acute accent, the signs in Figure 4.18 will be referred to as 1) \textit{acuta}, 2) dash with \textit{acuta}, and 3) \textit{curva}.\textsuperscript{372} The \textit{acuta} is used only at the top of ascending melodic movements requiring a certain speed in delivery: for example, in syllabic contexts to ensure the flowing of the word, or in short ornamentations or melismas to ensure a fluid passage from the last note to the first on the following syllable. The dash with \textit{acuta} can be found at the top of ascending movements, as well as within, for the purpose of articulation. The \textit{curva} is also a graphic modification of the simple \textit{acuta} and is employed only as the top graph of arch-like melodic contours.

In the chants for the Mass for St Benedict in Sess. 96, an \textit{acuta} in a specific combination with other signs can be seen in two cases. The first is the first syllable on \textit{petitit} in the gradual verse \textit{Vitam petit} (f. 318v), and the second is on the first syllable of \textit{laborium} in the tract \textit{Desiderium animae} (f. 318v) (Tables 4.10 and 4.11). For the short melisma \textit{G–F–G–a} on \textit{pe}–, Ch47, MR and A123 use a sequence of \textit{clivis} (\textit{G–F}) and \textit{pes} (\textit{G–a}), and SG359 uses the second note pair \textit{G–a} as a \textit{virga strata}, articulating the passage as 2 + 2 notes. The same melodic movement on \textit{laborium} is represented in Ch47 and SG359 with a \textit{clivis} and a \textit{pes} and in MR with a \textit{clivis} and a disjoint \textit{pes}, while in L239 the scribe chose to write a joined ligature of \textit{clivis} and a \textit{pes} in a compound form, possibly to express a more fluid delivery. The \textit{pes} on \textit{laborium} is disjoint in MR, written as a \textit{punctum} and a \textit{virga}, that is, exactly the same graphic shapes as found in Sess. 96. This confirms again that such was the basic form for a low–high sign in Nonantolan notation, and that it shared with Frankish notations, as well as with Breton and Lotharingian, the concept of a sign for a higher note derived from the shape of the acute accent. However, the use of the \textit{acuta} is solely in combination with other signs: the Nonantolan notation does not feature a joined form for a low–high sign such as the East-Frankish \textit{pes rotundus}, and two rising notes are articulated by the use of

\textsuperscript{371} See §§4.2.4 and 4.2.6.

\textsuperscript{372} I have drawn this terminology (\textit{acuta, curva}) from Albarosa, ‘La notazione’, pp. 239–240. However, it is important to stress that I propose here a different use: for Albarosa \textit{acuta} and \textit{curva} (adding also \textit{inferior} and \textit{gravis}) refer to the \textit{virga}, as the Italian scholar saw essentially no difference in design between signs connected to the syllable and those used in composition. I maintain here that such a distinction is indeed present in Nonantolan notation, where a sign comparable in its use to the Frankish \textit{virga} is employed only in combination (see above, §4.2.4). Therefore, I will use the terms (1) \textit{acuta} for the vertical stroke in composition (‘connected dot’ if in isolation), (2) dash with \textit{acuta} in composition (‘connected dash’ if in isolation), and (3) \textit{curva} for the graphic modification of the \textit{acuta} in composition.
Table 4.10

Table 4.11
Table 4.12.

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dashes, rather than by disjoint forms as used in the Lotharingian and Breton scripts or graphic modifications such as the pes quadratus used in East Frankish scripts.

The use of both dash with **acuta** and **curva** graphs may be helpfully illustrated by the analysis of the melisma on the second syllable of the first word in the gradual verse *Vitam petiit* (f. 318v) (Table 4.12). After a sign for two descending notes and one for high–low–high, the melisma continues with three rising notes (E–F–G), the highest of which is indicated by a dash with **acuta**, the others by dots. This graph may designate a more emphasised sound than the dots and represents the top of the ascending movement. The melody then continues with a triadic movement E–G–b, this time featuring a **curva** for the top note, possibly signalling that the melody should be sung with a turning gesture; it terminates with two descending notes, designated by a dot for the middle one and a comma for the bottom one. The same articulation is present in SG359, Ch47 and A123, while MR articulates this differently. In Sess. 96 a **curva** then starts a series of three descending notes in a chain of thirds a–F–D that counterbalance, one tone lower, the previous triadic ascent. A second comma designates the bottom note (D) but the melody rises up again with a dash with **acuta** (E), articulating the end of this section of the melisma. The melody continues with a four-note arch-like movement (G–a–F–E). Finally, a dash with **acuta** is
used as the top note only for the last ascent of the melisma (F–G–a), providing a moment of articulation before the next passage.

4.2.6. Three rising notes

Three rising notes in isolation on a syllable are represented in Nonantolan notation as signs for low–high (see §4.2.4) with the addition of a dot between the two elements (Figure 4.19). Sess. 96 features seven combinations, all with different rhythmical or pitch significance.

![Figure 4.19](image)

In signs 5–7, the Nonantolan approach to the treatment of pitch, making use also of the sublinear space, is realised by placing the first sign below the syllable in the text. The dot for the second note will then be written above the vowel and, above this, the top element is added, either as an acuta (sign 5) or dash with acuta (signs 6 and 7).

There are four cases of three ascending notes in isolation on a syllable in the chants for the Mass for St Benedict in Sess. 96. The first is found on the last syllable of posuisti in the gradual Domine praevenisti (f. 318v) (Table 4.13). The E–F–G melodic movement is represented by the Nonantolan scribe with a connected dot \( \underline{L} \), a dot, and dash with acuta \([\dagger]\), i.e. sign 3. The use of the dash only for the top element prescribes a light delivery of the first two notes (E–F) and a degree of rhythmical emphasis for the third one (G). The same applies for the second and third occurrences, on the third syllable of posuisti (G–a–c) and the first of precioso (F–a–c), in the second verse Posuisti super caput (f. 319r) for the tract Desiderium animae. For the latter case, the necessity to express the amplitude of the triadic gesture was fulfilled by writing the first element in the sublinear space – despite its being sung at the same pitch as the preceding connected dash on lapidem (Table 4.14). In doing this, the scribe also redefined the placement of graphs for the entire melisma on precioso which reaches a high d, developing mainly around c and a, as opposed to the previous passage, built instead on the sonorities of a and f, only touching the high c in a short melodic gesture. The scribe’s constant awareness of the whole tonal space of the melodic passage was both necessary for and reflected in the use of Nonantolan signs. Ch47 and L239
Table 4.13

Table 4.14
feature a dot for $F$, followed by the graphs for the *quilisma* on $a$, and ending with a *virga* for the high $c$; the scribes of E121 employs the shape of the *salicus*.

The last case is found on *semetipsum*, in the communio *Qui vult venire* (f. 319r), and features a connected dash as first element, i.e. sign 4 1 (Table 4.15). The meaning is that of an emphasis on the first note ($F$) as is also reflected by the notation in L239, which has an *uncinus* with the significative letter $a<neget>$ (‘lengthen’) followed by a *virga*, and in SG359 where a *tractulus* is used for the first note of a *salicus*.

A special graph for three rising notes differs from other graphs in the use of a dash with *acuta* 1 for the second note. The only instance in which this modified form is used in the chants for the Mass for St Benedict is in the intonation formula for the incipit of the introit *Gaudeamus omnes* (f. 318v), in particular $D–a–b$ $b–a$ (Table 4.16). This very common intonation for the first mode produces the effect of stressing the two important sonorities of the mode, i.e. $D$ and $a$.

The first note $C$ on *Gau-* leads to $D$ on *-de-*, which is in turn stressed by its repetition as the first note of the three-note rising movement on *-a-. The $a$ is repeated also on the last syllable *-mus*. In this particular melodic context, therefore, such a graph may not have been regarded strictly as an
isolated three-note rising movement but seen rather as part of a larger context, \textit{a--b b--a},

encompassing the note \textit{a} sung on the following syllable \textit{-mus}.

If we look at this passage in other notations we may observe that the Nonantolan way of articulating such inflections matches their choice of graphs. The first sign on \textit{Gau-}, a sublinear connected dot $T$, is often associated with the delivery of a note without any particular rhythmical emphasis and corresponds to a sign for a single note in the other examples. The second note (\textit{a}), on \textit{-de-}, is designated in Nonantola by the interlinear connected dot \textit{-L}, for which a lighter delivery may also be required. On \textit{-a-} the sequence of a connected dot and two dashes with \textit{acuta\text{e}} for \textit{D--a--b b} is represented by a \textit{pes} followed by a \textit{virga} in Ch47 and E121, with the addition in L239 of the letter \textit{a<nge>}, while in Wfrg the vertical stroke for two rising notes is followed by a \textit{tractulus} placed above.

The first connected dot in Sess. 96 may have been employed because the \textit{D} sonority was already manifested on the second syllable \textit{-de-} and no further stressing was needed. The use of the dash with \textit{acuta}, instead of the dot in other three rising note signs, may have been used as an indication of the emphasis given to the top half of the melodic movement: the note \textit{a}, as the other main sonority, resonates for the first time exactly in the middle of the graph and it may have been
perceived as requiring a different degree of emphasis. This phenomenon, along with the necessity to isolate the top \(a-b\ b-a\) inflection, may have led the notator to a modification of the standard shape (e.g. sign \(\mathcal{l}\)) in favour of a greater clarity of the melodic contour. In the other music scripts the emphasis is provided by *coupure* instead of the *scandicus*, a combination of *pes* + *virga* is employed, while Wfrg features the vertical stroke for low–high followed above by a *tractulus*. Finally, the note \(a\) on -*mus* is represented by a *tractulus* in E121 and L239, matching the Nonantolan connected dash \(\mathcal{1}\). This tone may have carried a greater rhythmic value: it not only concludes the \(a-b\ b-a\) inflection but also marks the end of the initial melodic section and the articulation on the word *Gaudeamus*.

When the three-note melodic movement starts with two notes at the unison, the middle dot is placed to the left, at the same height as the first note. Following the melodic movement, the second dash with *acuta* \(\mathcal{1}\) is then written above the dot after a small gap. An example of this combination of signs is found in the tract *Desiderum animae* (f. 318v) (cf. Table 4.3). Here, the melodic movement represented is \(c-c-d\). Sess. 96 features a melodic variant to the version transmitted in the other music manuscripts analysed; the latter require instead a sign for two rising notes, \(G-c\), followed by a second one for \(c-d\), the latter with an emphasis on articulation. The presence in most traditions of the extra note (\(G\)) signalled by the use of a *pes* was possibly in order to facilitate the leap to high \(c\), and the repercussion of the same tone \(c\) had to be specified by those scribes with *coupure*.374

### 4.2.7. Two descending notes

The musical scribe of Sess. 96 employs only two ways of notating two descending notes in isolation on a syllable (Figure 4.20).

```
/                   1
\                 \  1, 2
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Figure 4.20.

An analysis of the pen strokes suggests that sign 1 is written with a slanting upward stroke, connecting the vowel in the text to the top of the second slanting downward stroke, generally perpendicular to the ruled line (Figure 4.21a). For the latter stroke, the scribe would begin at the

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373 It is possible that the \(a-b\ b-a\) inflection may instead have been \(a-c-a\), common in Germanic chant dialects.

374 The Aquitanian manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 776 (f. 64v), concords with the Nonantolan version \(c-c-d\).
relevant height and write the downward stroke, sometimes even crossing the vowel and going below the bottom line (Figure 4.21b). The length and position of the descending vertical stroke is determined by the interval between the two notes. This shape develops horizontally as well as vertically, taking up more interlinear space than other graphs and often extending in a wider horizontal space than the vowel. To save space, the connecting stroke is often written before the vowel, as opposed to the usual placement above it. Sign 2 combines the connected dash for a single note and a sign corresponding to the second note, usually a second or a minor third apart, written to the right of the first sign and at a lower level.

![Figure 4.21](image)

Sign 1 is used in contexts where a certain fluency of vocal delivery is required. Comparison with other music scripts confirms that the musical meaning is that of two descending notes of equal length, possibly to be sung with no particular emphasis. In the first line of the gradual *Domine praevenisti*, sign 1 \( \downarrow \) is written on *Do*– and *pre*–. Ch47, MR and A123 employ their standard shape of two descending notes for the melodic movement on these syllables \( (F–E) \), and SG359 reinforces this rhythmic nuance by adding \( c<\text{eleriter}> \) (‘fast’) (Table 4.17).

Great care in the indication of pitch is also revealed by the modification of the sign for high–low in cases where the second note is lower than the base-pitch established by the notator for that melodic passage. In these cases, the downward stroke is elongated, reaching the space below the text line. An example of this is in the gradual *Domine praevenisti* on *coronam de lapide* (Table 4.18). Here, the scribe used this altered graph for the two descending notes \( \text{D–C} \) because they are in a lower tessitura than the previous and next passages. While taking into account that the phrase on *lapide* is lower than the previous phrase on *coronam, F–E–G–E–F–D*, the scribe is also anticipating the rising to \( \text{b} \) on the following *lapide*, \( F–G–a–a–b–a–G–E–F–G \). In order to preserve a clear arrangement of the musical signs in relation to pitch, the scribe wrote the two descending notes as low as possible, making use of the space below *de*. The downward stroke cuts through the letter \( e \), ending in the lower interlinear space. This special technique is not shared by other examples analysed, which employ their unmodified shapes for high–low. The two light descending notes were further qualified in E121 by the addition of \( c<\text{eleriter}> \).
Table 4.17

Table 4.18
The second Nonantolan graph for two descending notes in isolation on a syllable is made of a connected dash and a comma \( \downarrow \). The usual sign in other notations for this melodic inflection is that representing two descending notes, to be sung distinctively and with a certain emphasis. For example, in the introit *Gaudeamus* (f. 318v) the last signs of the words *omnes*, *conlaudent* and *Dei* are sign 2 \( \downarrow \) for a\( \rightarrow \)G in the first two and E\( \rightarrow \)D in the third (Tables 4.19–4.21). In the other music scripts analysed here, this rhythmical nuance is represented by a disjoint sign for high–low, or a *clivis episemata* in E121 on *collaudant*, with the exception of Wfrg, which uses a normal unbroken high–low graph. When the bottom note of a high–low sign is followed by a unison, a dot is placed at the same height, following the usual technique. This graph appears three times in the introit *Gaudeamus omnes* on *festum* and *celebrantes*, each time for G\( \rightarrow \)F–F (Figure 4.22).\(^{375}\)

\[\text{fes- tum ce- le- bran- tes}\]

Figure 4.22. Sess. 96, f. 318v.

### 4.2.8. High–low in combination

In Sess. 96 there are five signs for two descending notes in combination on a syllable (Figure 4.23).

\[\begin{array}{cccccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 \\
\end{array}\]

Figure 4.23.

Sign 1 is written with two pen strokes: the first is a left-facing semicircle placed at the relative height of the first note, the second is a downward stroke almost perpendicular to the writing line. In certain melodic passages, this stroke tends to be written slightly curved to the right, maybe as a

\(^{375}\) In both cases, other notations (Wfrg, Ch47, E121 and L239) have a sign for high–low–high (G\( \rightarrow \)F–G). The Aquitanian manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 776 (f. 48r), again, concords with the Nonantolan version (G\( \rightarrow \)F–F).
result of the *ductus*: when the scribe is writing fast, the downward movement of the pen is likely to result in some curvature. Usually, the pen is also lifted gradually, producing a pointed shape. The length of this second stroke is proportional to its pitch value. Sign 2 is constituted by the graph for sign 1 with the addition of a horizontal dash terminating in a small hook-like shape and surmounted by a dot. Sign 3 differs from sign 1 in that it has a horizontal dash in place of the left-facing semicircle. In the vast majority of cases, the width of the vertical stroke becomes larger towards the centre, probably as a result of being written more slowly. Sign 4 is written with a single curving stroke, as an upside-down letter *U* terminating generally lower than the start. Finally, sign 5 is graphically related to the composition of signs 1 and 2 in that it differs from sign 4 only in its dash ending in a hook onto which a dot is placed. The use of Signs 4 and 5 in certain melodic contexts will be further discussed below.

The melisma on *non*, in the verse *Probavit me domino* (f. 319r) for the offertory *Oratio mea*, serves the purpose of this analysis well in that it shows three different ways of representing a high–low melodic movement (Table 4.22). The melisma starts with a vertical stroke for a single note *d*, followed by two descending notes *e–d*, represented by sign 2  \[\text{\textnormal{\textcopyright}}\]. The first note is designated as a sign for a single note with the addition of *t<enere>* in Ch47, in E121 by a *virga episemata* and in MR and A123 by a *tractulus*. In these choices, it may be possible to see the intention to articulate the incipit of the melisma by detaching the first note from the two descending tones that follow: no other notator, for example, writes a *torculus* for *d–e–d*. A sign in the Nonantola notation, comparable to those employed for the first note in this passage in the other music scripts, would be a connected dash, but the rhythmic articulation in Sess. 96 is provided instead by the shape of the first graphic element of the following sign. Sign 2  \[\text{\textnormal{\textcopyright}}\] for *e–d* features on its top a left-facing semicircle and, although its meaning would be best understood in comparison with other signs for high–low, it is clear that such a graphic element was meant to signal that the top of a descending movement was disjoint from what preceded, and not to be considered as part of a high–low–high. It follows that such a graphic device was acting *a parte post*, further defining the first note of the melisma in the previous sign as distinct, yet without a strong rhythmical emphasis, where other notations chose to articulate the *d–e–d* gesture as 1 + 2. It also has the consequent value of leading the rhythmical weight to the following note, as the *c<eleriter>* in Ch47 and E121 would seem to suggest. The sign then terminates with a hook with dot, which might specify that the singer should perform this passage with an articulation between this note

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376 This graphic element, with such a distinct design, is very important for its relationship with other Italian notations that will be explored in §5.2, §5.4–5.
and the first of the next sign. This becomes clear by observing other notations in which the
scribes chose to isolate e–d from the following e–b by employing two clives in E121 and MR, a
sign for high–low and one for high–low–high in Ch47, and a clivis and a virga (followed by two
strophae) in A123.

The next graph is sign 1 \( \uparrow \) and, as explained, the left-facing semicircle may signal that the
two notes (e–b) should be sung together with movement towards the lower note. This
interpretation might be supported by the significative letters (\( s < u p e r i o r > \) e\( < c l e r i t e r > \) in E121, if
the interpretation were similar. In Sess. 96, the absence of the hook with dot for the bottom note
b denotes a fluent delivery, leading to the following repeated tone b. This note, then, is
represented by a dot, the Nonantolan way to indicate a short passing tone moving quickly to the
next. Interesting also is the way A123 articulates this passage with a virga and two strophae for the
repeated bs, which would support the idea that the Nonantolan scribe chose to express fluidity
by using sign 1 followed by a dot. In Ch47, by contrast, the high–low–high graph signifies not a
repetition but a rising to d via c.
The melody then falls again from d to c. Sign 2 \( \text{\textdagger} \) is used here, terminating with a hook with dot to articulate the repetition of two cs, to be sung now as distinct notes belonging to two different gestures (d–c, c–a), the second of which is represented by sign 3 \( \text{\textdagger} \). When the first note of a high–low is at the unison with the preceding one, Nonantolan scribes used a horizontal dash on top of a downward stroke, hence the choice of sign 3. It is noteworthy that sign 1 and the first of the two signs 3 in the melisma share the same length to designate leaps larger than a second (e–b, c–a). Finally, with the exception of a second sign 3 (c–a), the remainder of the melisma features signs, such as high–low–high, that will be analysed in more detail below.\(^{377}\) Figure 4.24 shows the melodic contour of the melisma resulting from analysis of the signs.

![Figure 4.24. Melisma, Sess. 96, f. 319r.](image)

Another interesting case for the study of high–low signs is the melisma on coniunctus in the responsory *O beati viri Benedicti* (f. 316r) (Figure 4.25).\(^{378}\) The melisma starts with a connected dash on a and proceeds with a melodic contour articulated by curvae \( \nwarrow \), commas, and dashes with acutae \( \text{\textdagger} \). The scribe chose to write a curva for the second note of the melisma (a), despite its not being at the top of an ascending movement. It is possible that this choice was dictated by the necessity for graphic coherence with the following sequence of three descending notes, all represented by the same combination of signs (curva + dot + comma), the usual graph for such melodic movement (see §4.2.9). The scribe compensated by placing the curva at the same height of the preceding connected dot (a) which starts the melisma. The melody then again reaches a, represented by a dash with acuta, after which there is a series of signs for two descending notes.

Sign 3 \( \text{\textdagger} \) is used for the start of a melodic gesture on a unison [a]a–G, followed by sign 1 \( \text{\textdagger} \) for a falling movement a–F starting at a higher pitch than the preceding note; two dots are employed for a quick rising to c via G–a. Another sign 1 \( \text{\textdagger} \), with a particularly elongated vertical stroke, is written to show a downward leap c–G, followed by a sign 2 \( \text{\textdagger} \) for c–a. This sign, featuring the typical hook with dot, is chosen by the Nonantolan scribe to articulate the first of the repeated as

\(^{377}\) See §4.2.11–12.

\(^{378}\) The melody of the *neuma triplex* for this responsory does not appear in any surviving Nonantolan manuscript and it has been reconstructed by comparing the version in Sess. 96 with the one in the antiphoner Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, lat. 12044 (f. 159v) from Saint Maur-des-Fosses (twelfth century, first quarter). On the *neuma triplex* see T. F. Kelly, 'Neuma triplex', *Acta Musicologica* 60/1 (1988), pp. 1–30.
so that they will be sung as three distinct notes. This entire passage is then sung a second time before the final section of the melisma, and signs are repeated accordingly.

Sign 4 is the least frequent graph for high–low in Sess. 96 and is only found in combination in specific rhythmic contexts. In Sess. 96, the first syllable of *abneget* in the communio *Qui vult venire* (f. 319r) features such a sign (Table 4.23). After the first connected dash for F and two dots for the Nonantolan *quilisma* on G, the two descending notes a–G are represented by sign 4, followed by a dot for a, and sign 2 for the last two notes of the melisma b–a. The graph of sign 4 may have been employed here by the notator to clarify that the two descending notes a–G were to be sung as part of the ascending movement (F–a), leading rapidly to the following note a, before the last two-step movement b–a. In L239 and Ch47, this fluidity is expressed by a particular joined form with the addition, in the Laon manuscript, of the letter *n<on or nectum>* (‘not held’, ‘ligated’); E121 and MR opt instead for grouping together the last three notes a–b–a by showing them with a single sign. The shape of sign 4 might erroneously be thought to be related to the similar graph for two descending notes in Frankish notations, the *clivis*. However, the use of sign 4 in Nonantolan notation is not only very limited but also pertinent to specific rhythmic and melodic contexts. Thus, rather than being a basic sign for high–low, sign 4 is the result of a graphic modification. In order to fit its purpose of designating the top of a turning melodic gesture, the sign originates on the same trajectory as the ascending movement and changes its direction by curving downwards. The absence of the hook with dot then indicates a light and fluid delivery for the bottom note.

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379 On the use of significative letters in L239 see M.-C. Billecocq, ‘Lettres ajoutées à la notation neumatique du codex 239 de Laon’, *Études grégoriennes* 17 (1978), pp. 7–144.
4.2.9. *Three descending notes*

Nonantolan notation employs two different, yet related, graphs for three descending notes (Figure 4.26).

![Figure 4.26.](image)

Sign 1 is formed by a connected dash for the first note, a dot for the second one and a comma for the bottom one, while sign 2 features instead a *curva* as the first element. Melodic movement involving three descending notes in isolation on a syllable is rare in the Mass chants in Sess. 96: sign 1 is present only in the chants for the Office (ff. 314r–318v), while there is a single occurrence of sign 2 on *me* in the communio *Qui vult venire* (f. 319r) (Table 4.24).
The descending F–E–D is represented by a curva followed by a dot and a final comma. In a melodic context developing mainly a and F, the notator had to specify the lower tessitura of the three descending notes both by keeping the first element as close as possible to the syllable and by using the horizontal space between words for the two remaining notes: the bottom note D is written as a comma on the ruled line of the text. This arrangement also provided for the placement of signs for the following melisma on abneget. A comparison with the treatment of this passage in other manuscripts reveals consistency in the use of graphs for three descending notes: Ch47, A123 and MR feature a sign for three descending notes without any modification to express rhythmical nuances. Rather, L239 matches the use of the comma in Sess. 96 with an uncinus for the final note, directing the weight of the melodic gesture towards the bottom pitch, while in E121 a virga episemata as the first element of the climacus may require an emphasis on the first note instead.
4.2.10. *Low–high–low in isolation*

In Sess. 96, there are six ways to notate a low–high–low melodic movement in isolation on a syllable (Figure 4.27).

![Figure 4.27.](image)

The first four signs are formed by a connected dot as the first element and a high–low graph for the second. The most frequently employed graphs are signs 1 and 2, featuring as the first element a connected dot \( \text{\textbullet} \) in the interlinear or sublinear space and followed, after a small gap, by a high–low sign \( \text{\textbullet} \text{-}\text{\textbullet} \). Signs 3 and 4 are less frequent and feature respectively high–low sign 1 \( \text{\textbullet} \text{-}\text{\textbullet} \) and 2 \( \text{\textbullet} \text{-}\text{\textbullet} \) as their second element. Sign 5, used only once in Sess. 96, is a low–high sign 3 \( \text{\textbullet} \text{-}\text{\textbullet} \) with the addition of a comma for the third and last note. The last graph, sign 6, is written with a slightly slanted vertical stroke connected to the syllable, curving right and widening towards the top. The pen is then lifted to add a horizontal dash above the first element, below which is placed a comma for the third note of the low–high–low melodic movement.

Except in sign 6, in Nonantolan notation, unlike in the most common shape for the *torculus* in most other notational traditions, the first note is always separated from the rest of the graph. In several notations such a separation might signify *coupure neumatique* and might thus have a deliberate meaning in relation to articulation. The Nonantolan graph for a low–high–low melodic movement in isolation on a syllable is, by contrast, always conventionally represented by two signs, but no particular emphasis on the first note seems to be suggested. A connected dash is never used for the first element of low–high–low graphs but, in order to ensure the flowing of the delivery, only a connected dot.\(^\text{380}\)

For signs 1 \( \text{\textbullet} \text{-}\text{\textbullet} \) and 4 \( \text{\textbullet} \text{-}\text{\textbullet} \) we turn again to *tribuisti* and *benedicione* (cf. Table 4.8). Sign 1 is used in Sess. 96 for the \( G\text{-}a\text{-}G \) on first syllables *tri-* and *ben-*, while other notations employ their unmodified shape for a low–high–low. The hook with dot that terminates sign 1 has the purpose of keeping such inflection distinct from the low–high (\( F\text{-}G \)) on the following syllables. For the

\(^{380}\) Further reflections on this aspect, and on its relationship with Palaeofrankish notation, will be illustrated in §5.6.
low–high–low a–c–b, sign 1 is used on -cią, while sign 4 is preferred for -ti. Other music scripts employ a single sign for low–high–low, except Ch47, which articulates the first note by coupure (1 + 2). In Sess. 96, the choice of the sublinear downward stroke as the first element of the low–high–low graph is dictated not by the particular musical context but rather by the shrinking of the interlinear space due to the presence of the lower half of the capital D of Desiderium on the previous line. If the scribe had been able to exploit the vertical space fully, the preferred solution for such melodic context might have been to write sign 1 ̅₁ as on -ści. The first note on -ti is a minor third lower than the preceding tone c, but this fact alone would not warrant placing its graph in the sublinear space, as the graph on -ści shows.

Sign 3 is found in the introit Gaudeamus omnes on filium (f. 318v), where the graph is used for the melodic movement F–G–E. The connected dot for F is placed below the syllable, in the sublinear space (Figure 4.28). The need for an effective treatment of pitch information required the placement of the first element of the graph in the sublinear space, showing it to be lower than the last note (G) for the preceding word conlauvant. As a consequence of this choice, the scribe then inserted high–low sign 1 ̅₁, a left-facing semicircle and a long downward stroke. In order to better express the pitch value of this sign (G–E), the Nonantolan notator considerably elongated the sign downwards, primarily because the bottom note (E) is lower than the first one on fi- (F), which was already placed below the syllable, and possibly also in order to avoid the interference of the sign with the shaft of the letter l in filium.

The decision to employ this particular form may reveal another necessity felt by the musical scribe, which can only be understood by looking at the broader melodic and notational context. The short melisma on the last syllable -um develops mainly around F and G, reaching a. In order to notate this passage, the scribe had but to write the connected dash for F on the preceding syllable -li- very close to the corresponding vowel. As a result, since the final note of the low–high–low graph on fi- is E, and thus a tone lower than the F on -li, it could not be placed at the
same height but had to fall necessarily into the sublinear space. This, in turn, caused the first note on \( \dot{\text{f}} \), \( \text{F} \), to be also placed below the vowel \( \text{i} \), despite being at the same pitch as the connected dash \( \ddot{1} \) on \( \text{-li} \). Given this context, that of a relatively low first note \( \text{F} \), one higher \( \text{G} \) and an even lower third note \( \text{E} \) to be notated in the interlinear space, the only sign for two descending notes allowing for such a sequence of intervals and used in combination with a sublinear stroke was the one employed by the Nonantolan scribe, \( \dddot{1} \). This ‘chain of events’ led the scribe to compensate in advance for problems that might arise and shows that, in the notation of the Benedictine abbey, the specification of pitch relations was achieved not only by vertical positioning but also through juxtaposition of graphs.

Another example is drawn by comparing the use of music signs on the words \( \text{venerabilis} \) and \( \text{benedictus} \) from the antiphon \( \text{Fuit vir} \) (f. 316v) (Figure 4.29). On \( \text{-ra} \) and \( \text{ben} \) the scribe writes respectively sign 1 \( \dddot{1} \) and 3 (this with the first element above the syllable) for a three-note melodic movement low–high–low, followed by a high–low sign 1 \( \dddot{1} \). The different choice of graphs may have been dictated by the necessity to articulate the unison on \( \text{-rabi} \) between the last note of the first graph and the first of the second. This was not needed on \( \text{bene} \), since the first note of the high–low on \( \text{-ne} \) is higher, and the notator chose instead the more appropriate sign 3, with the left-facing semicircle and without the hook with dot that terminates sign 1 on \( \text{-ra} \). In this light, the use of a different sign is related not only to delivery nuances but also to a more explicit pitch indication.

![Figure 4.29. Sess. 96, f. 316v.](image)

The single occurrence of sign 5 \( \dddot{1} \) is found in the gradual \( \text{Gaudeamus omnes} \) (f. 318v) (Table 4.25). On \( \text{abbatis} \) the three-note melodic movement \( \text{a-b-a} \) is represented in other manuscripts on \( \text{martyris} \) (for \( \text{Agatha} \)): Wfrg employs the disjoint form for a \text{torculus} (\text{punctum} + \text{clivis}), Ch47 also employs a modified shape for a \text{torculus}, E121 uses a special \text{torculus} and L239 three \text{uncini}. In Nonantola, the use of the connected dash \( \dddot{1} \) and dash with \text{acuta} \( \dddot{1} \) for the first two elements, and of a comma for the last, may reflect a deliberate decision to specify a particular emphasis for each of the three notes. In this light, the sign may be seen as the opposite solution for a more articulated delivery to the ones analysed above, and one for which a more articulated
performance was expected. The reason for this preference is possibly connected to the meaning of the word *abbatis*: the chant, dedicated to St Benedict, required a particular prominence for the word ‘abbot’. Once again, the use of individual signs, each with its own performance value, combined together to form a single graph as a way to express nuances of vocal delivery is one of the characteristics of Nonantolan notation.

The last graph for low–high–low, sign 6, features an upward stroke, starting from the vowel of the corresponding syllable and ending with a thickening of the stroke and a curve to the right. The pen is then lifted gradually so as to finish with a pointed shape onto which another horizontal stroke is added. This last stroke is produced by a quick movement of the hand and begins with the pen already in the turned position, ending again with a pointed shape. The last element, added below the second stroke and about at the same height of the top of the first stroke, is a comma. This graph is rarely employed and is found in only two instances, in the gradual *Gaudeamus omnes* on *bonore* and *solemnitate*. In both cases the melodic movement is G–a–G and it is found at the end of a word, preceded by G–a–c–a (Table 4.26). Ch47 and L239 employ modified shapes for the *torculus*, while in E121 the scribe adds a t<enere> on the second note of the *torculus*. Wfrg features two different notations of the melodic movement: a sign for low–high–low with the addition of the significative letter t<enere> on *bonore* and a disjoint shape consisting of a punctum and a clivis. It is possible, therefore, that in Sess. 96 the graph C required a medium level of articulation, that is between the more cursive low–high–low and the fully articulated one of sign 5. In particular, the horizontal dash for a may have the same function as the t<enere>, indicating that the note should be hold longer than the next one. The use of the comma for the last element of the graph may be seen as another way to specify articulation. The same melodic movement G–a–G is found isolated on the first syllables of *tribuisti* and *benediccione* (cf. Table 4.8), where low–high–low sign 1 is used instead: the particular context at the end of words may be the reason for the use of sign 6, specifying a rhythmical articulation and possibly involving a more emphasised delivery.

Finally, the notation on *bonore* and *solemnitate* features an example of a low–high–low in combination with other signs. After a connected dot for G, the scribes writes for a–c–a a disconnected low–high–low sign 1, thus having a dot as first element, where other notations feature an unmodified *torculus* (Wfrg, Ch47, E121 and L239). Other low–high–low graphs in combination for larger melodic movements also follow the same principle of replacing the connected dot with a dot placed at the corresponding height, while sign 5 and 6 are found only in isolation on a syllable.
Table 4.25

Table 4.26
4.2.11. High–low–high in isolation

The only graph representing a high–low–high melodic movement in isolation on a syllable may be described as a modification of the high–low sign 1 \( \triangle \) with the addition of an upward stroke, starting from the second note of the melodic movement and rising up towards the height of the third tone, and terminating with the typical hook with dot (Figure 4.30).

![Figure 4.30.](image)

The gradual *Domine praevenisti* (f. 318v) offers some examples of its use in context. The first occurrence is on *dulcedinis* (Figure 4.31). The melodic movement here is F–E–G, preceded by a D on *dul-* and followed by a short passage G–E–F on *-di-*, concluding on D on *-nis*. The sign is written in a slightly slanted way but its diastematy is clear: the third note must be higher than the first one and at the same pitch of the first note of the following sign. All of the other music scripts under consideration (Ch47, SG359, MR, A123) employ here the unmodified shape for a *porrectus*.

![Figure 4.31. Sess. 96, f. 318v.](image)

The degree to which both the position and the shape of Nonantolan signs are graphically modifiable according to pitch specification is evident in the phrase *in capite eius coronam* (Table 4.27). Here, the level of flexibility of graphs is remarkable and their placement and modified shapes reflect their different meanings. The melodic gesture on *ca-* is a–F–a and the sign represents this sequence of pitches by extending the last upward stroke to reach the height of the first note. Other notations make use of a *porrectus*, except Ch47, which features instead a disjoint *clivis* and a *virga*. The next high–low–high is found at the end of the word and efficiently designates the lower gesture G–F–G. Other music scripts employ here an unmodified *clivis*. 
However, rather than signalling a melodic variant in Sess. 96, the scribe wrote a sign assimilating the first note of the following word *eius* (*G*) because of the repetition of the vowel *e* between the words *capite* and *eius*. The Nonantolan notator may have noticed this mistake – possibly immediately after writing it, given that he was forced to write only one musical sign for the two syllables of *eius* – but perhaps thought that a correction was unnecessary: in the end, such a mistake bore no consequences for the singing of the words.

This case is also worth considering for what it could reveal about the origin of Sess. 96. A lack of absolute precision in the choice of musical signs, and this type of mistake in particular, could lead us to consider the hypothesis that the scribe may have been writing from memory rather than copying from a written exemplar. The Nonantolan scribe may have indeed been looking at a corrupt or imprecise original, but he could instead have been using his knowledge of signs to write the melody from memory. This idea has already been suggested in previous chapters, where it has also been remarked that the destruction of the abbey’s library by the Hungarians may have left a lacuna of liturgical books.\(^{381}\) It was possibly felt particularly urgent, therefore, to fill such a gap, especially for an important feast such as that of St Benedict of

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\(^{381}\) See §1 (esp. §1.1.4) and §2.3.3.
Nursia. It is conceivable, then, that no exemplar was available for copying and that, at the same time, the compilation may have been planned for the personal use of the abbey’s cantor and not as a high-grade chant book to be seen by all. Finally, the first syllable of the following word coronam features another high–low–high graph for F–E–G. In this case, too, the sign’s shape is chosen according to the intervallic relations of both the preceding melodic context and this particular sequence of tones by elongating the last stroke upwards, in order to represent a higher note than the first one. Once again, it is not possible to think about an absolute ‘diastematy’, but awareness and control are evident in these efforts at differentiating pitch by means of graphical alteration and the flexibility of signs.

4.2.12. High–low–high in combination

In Nonantolan notation there are five ways to notate high–low–high melodic movements in combination with other signs (Figure 4.32).

![Figure 4.32.](image)

In these shapes it is possible to recognise certain graphic elements that these forms share with high–low signs (see §4.2.8). For example, signs 1, 2 and 5 feature, as first elements, respectively the left-facing semicircle, signalling a higher note than the preceding one, and the horizontal dash, designating instead a unison, while sign 3 and 4 feature the curved shape used at the top of turning gestures. Signs 1–3 finish with an upward slanting stroke ending with the hook and dot, whereas signs 4 and 5 terminate instead with a curving stroke, indicating the top of a descending movement.

In Sess. 96, sign 1 is found in combination with other signs from the simple case of following a connected dot to larger melodic movements, but always preceded by a lower note. Sign 1 conveys three pieces of information: 1) the high–low–high is to be delivered as a single gesture, of which 2) the first element, the left-facing semicircle, designates a higher note than the preceding one and articulates such notes into two different gestures, and 3) the last note, designated by a hook with dot, also implies articulation, yet this time in relation to the following note. The last technique may be used for ‘breaking’ the repetition of the same note, to mark the end of a melodic movement, or to divide a large passage into different gestures. For example, in
the verse *Vitam petiiit*, sign 1 is used on the first syllable of *seculi* (Table 4.28) in order to signal both the end of the melodic passage on -*cu*- and also the articulation of the repeated *a*, the first pitch of the following melisma on -*li*. Other music scripts analysed (SG359, MR and A123) employ here a *torculus resupinus*, with the exception of Ch47 which renders instead *F–a–G–a* with *coupure neumatique* in a *tractulus* and a *porrectus*.

Two more examples are found in the introit *Gaudeamus omnes* on *angeli* and *filium* (Tables 4.29 and 4.30). In the first case, sign 1 is preceded by a connected dot for *F*, followed by a dot for *G*. The scribe chose to terminate sign 1 with the hook and dot, not in order to articulate a unison like the one just discussed on *seculi*, but to mark the end of the melodic gesture on *an*- and, at the same time, render the articulation required by the consonants *ang*-. E121 and L239 make use liquescent *porrecti*, Wfrg of a *porrectus*, and Ch47 a disjoint shape for the *torculus*. Nonanolan notation possessed liquescent signs, as it will be illustrated below, but probably not the technique of altering certain graphs such as high–low–high sign 1.

On *filium*, sign 1 is featured on -*um* as the middle element of a short melisma. L239 and E121 are consistent in representing the melodic profile as developing around a central *porrectus*, preceded by two dots (*praepunctis*) and followed by two descending notes. Exceptions are Ch47, which has the *a–F–G–F–E* inflection articulated into a *clivis* and a *climacus*, and Wfrg, which has a *porrectus flexus* and a final *punctum*. This was possibly to emphasise the first note of the *climacus* (*G*), which also carries an *episema* in E121. The scribe of Sess. 96 seems also to take in this nuanced interpretation: the choice of the hook with dot for terminating sign 1 is an attempt to give more prominence to its last note (*G*). Conversely, Wfrg and L239 seem to represent a turning gesture, thus directing the weight of the phrase to the ending tone *E*.

It is possible to study the use of signs 2 and 5 in their context by further observing the melisma on *non* in the verse *Probavit me dominus*, f. 319r (cf. Table 4.22). The first sign for high–low–high designates the inflection *c–b–c*. The first horizontal stroke, even if resembling the first element of the ‘equaliter’ high–low sign 31 immediately before (*c–a*), does not designate unison with the preceding note (*a*). The scribe possibly employed sign 5 to stress that the first note of the high–low–high movement is at the same height as the first note of the previous sign (*c*), an important sonority in this melisma, thus visually strengthening its status of horizontal repercussion. The last note, again *c*, being the highest tone of the three-step descending movement that follows, was rendered in a similar way to a *curve*. The termination is not the usual hook with dot but is modified in order to fit the following turning gesture (*b–c–A–G*). The same gesture (*c–b–c*) represented here by sign 5 is found elsewhere (*labiorum, coronam*), where

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382 See §4.2.8.
Table 4.28

Table 4.29

Table 4.30
sign 1 $\nu$ is employed instead, for it is part of a different melodic context. Finally, sign 5 $\nu$ is followed by a dot and a comma, marking the bottom end of the descending movement and corresponding to a moment of articulation in the melisma.

The second shape for high–low–high on non is sign 2 $\nu$. The first element, a horizontal stroke, specifies that the first note is at the unison with the preceding one – a shape possibly related to the horizontal comma $\downarrow$ (see §4.2.3). The first descending stroke is, then, clearly elongated to show a larger interval, a fourth (c–G), by extending it into the space below the base line of the text, a common procedure in Nonantolan notation. Finally, the notator placed the third element, the hook with dot, lower than the first left-facing semicircle to specify that the last note (a) is three steps below the first (c). This causes the entire graph to be slightly crooked.

Sign 3 $\nu$ is found at the top of turning gestures that rise upwards for their last note. It often follows a quilisma, as in angeli in the introit Gaudeamus omnes (f. 318v). In this case (cf. Table 4.36), the curved stroke (like an upside-down U) leads the eye of the singer through G–F, while the termination with hook and dot ’breaks’ the repetition of G, the last note of the graph, from the following G, starting a high–low G–F on -li. Other notations (Ch47, E121 and L239) consistently represent the melodic movement F–G–F–G with a quilisma pes flexus resupinus, while the sign in Wfrg is missing because of a lacuna on the writing surface. In Sess. 96, by contrast, the gesture starts on E, because the previous sign is a high–low sign 2 $\nu$. High–low–high sign 3 $\nu$ may also precede a lower note on the following syllable, as in the case of dei further on in the same introit. This may imply an articulation between syllables.

Sign 4 $\nu$ connects the top of two turning melodic gestures, as in the melismas on eum (tract Desiderium animae, f. 319r) and benedicione (v. Quoniam praevnisti, f. 319r) (Figure 4.33a-b).

The two melodies share a long section of material; the Nonantolan notator chose sign 4 $\nu$ to designate the c–a–c central inflection, in the context of a bigger movement a–c–a–c–a–F.

383 A full description and study of the Nonantolan quilisma will be found below in §4.2.16.
4.2.13. High–low–high–low in isolation

In Sess. 96, a four-note high–low–high–low melodic movement in isolation on a syllable is expressed by one single sign (Figure 4.34).

Sign 1 is a continuous curved stroke, bending three times, starting from the vowel of the corresponding syllable in the text, and terminating at the height of the last note with the typical Nonantolan shape of a hook and dot. An example of this sign may be found on the second syllables of *dulcedinis* and *coronam* in the gradual *Domine praevenisti* (f. 318v) (cf. Figure 4.31 and Table 4.27). After starting on the top of the vowel, the pen stroke bends downwards once it reached the height of the first note of the melodic movement G, and bending upwards after marking the relative pitch for the second note E. The same scribal gesture is then repeated for F and, finally, D where the sign ends. Through its very cursive design, this graph efficiently conveys the flowing delivery prescribed for this specific melodic contour. For a similar purpose, the scribe of SG339 employs a *biclīvis* complemented by the addition of c<eleriter>, placed on the first of the four-note movement, but possibly intended to be applied to the entire gesture. A different choice is made by the scribe of Ch47, which represents the descending G–E–F–D movement by means of a *clīvis* and a *pressus maior*. In Sess. 96 this passage involves a modification of the signs and of each scribal movement according to the relation between each stroke and its position in the interlinear space. It is evident that the scribe was in control not only of the physical and material realisation of such signs but also of the range of techniques for expressing pitch and intervallic relations allowed by the Nonantolan notational canon.

There are two ways of representing high–low–high–low in combination with other signs (Figure 4.35).

Both forms are fundamentally the same sign used in isolation on a syllable $\text{\textvisiblespace}$, but without the hook with dot. Sign 1 $\text{\textvisiblespace}$ is connected to the text and commonly found at the start of a melisma, while sign 2 $\text{\textvisiblespace}$ designates four notes inside a longer passage.

The short melisma on *anime*, in the tract *Desiderium animae* (f. 318v), starts with sign 1 $\text{\textvisiblespace}$ for *a–G–a–F* (Table 4.31). The sign effectively represents the melodic gesture and, in particular, the interval of a descending third by elongating downwards the last stroke. Other notators chose to represent such passages with either two signs for high–low with the addition of $e<\text{eleriter}>$ in SG359 or a ligated form in L239 and MR, conveying again the sense of a fluid vocal delivery. Ch47 divides instead the melodic passage into a high–low and a high–low–high, which last tone incorporates the first note (a) of the following inflection, designated in the other traditions by a *torculus resupinus*. For the last part of the melisma, the Nonantolan notator employs a dot followed by a high–low–high sign $\text{\textvisiblespace}$.

There are three occurrences of sign 2 $\text{\textvisiblespace}$ in the chants for the Mass in Sess. 96, all in the offertory *Oratio mea* (f. 319r). One example is on the first syllable of the word *peto* (Table 4.32). The short melisma starts with a connected dot (c) above which is placed sign 2 (d–c–d–c). The closest notational version is E121, where the compound form implies a delivery with no particular emphasis and the $e<\text{qualiter}>$ specifies that the musical graph is a repetition of the same pitches. Other traditions articulate this gesture into two *clives* (Ch47), a *torculus* and a *porrectus* (MR) or a *quilisma pes* compound with a *porrectus* (A123). The choice of this particularly cursive form of the Nonantolan high–low–high–low may be visually suggestive of an equally ‘cursive’ delivery: the correspondence between signs, their shape and their musical meaning must have been perceived as a very rational and immediate one by the notator of the Benedictine abbey.
Table 4.31

Table 4.32
4.2.15 Six notes (high–low–high–low–high–low) in combination

The only sign for high–low–high–low–high–low (Figure 4.36) may be seen as an expansion of the high–low–high–low signs analysed above (§4.2.14.)

![Image](Figure 4.36)

Sign 1 is found in combination only once in Sess. 96, in the verse Posuisti super caput (f. 319v) for the melisma on eius (Table 4.33). The quick ornamentation on a (a–g–a–g–a–g) is represented by the sign’s ‘wavy’ vertical shape. E121 renders such an indication with a series of three clives onto which is added <leriter>. L239 also employs a ligated form, while MR chooses a torculus compound with a clivis. Ch47 instead makes use of three clives, as opposed to modified ones (consisting, usually, of two dashes), which was possibly sufficient to specify the rhythmic nuance required for such melodic inflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MR</th>
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<tr>
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<td>f. 318v</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>f. 30v</td>
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<td>![Image]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.33.
4.2.16. Quilisma

In Nonantolan notation, the sign corresponding to the *quilisma* in other notations is represented by two vertically aligned dots (Figure 4.37).

\[ \cdot \]

Figure 4.37.

Such a sign is always part of a combination of signs and is usually preceded either by a sublinear connected dot \( T \) or dash \( \overline{T} \), a comma \( , \) or a double comma \( \overline{,} \). These signs, in turn, may be followed by other dots, thus placing the *quilisma* in a more internal position, as the following examples will show.

The first syllable of *oracio* from the offertory *Oratio mea* (f. 319r) features one of the simplest graphs containing the sign for a *quilisma* (Table 4.34). The two dots are preceded by a sublinear connected dot \( T \) and terminating at the top with a dash with *acuta* \( \acute{1} \), together designating the melodic movement \( D \rightarrow E \rightarrow F \). E122 features a *tractulus* followed by a *quilisma pes*, and a similar arrangement can be found in A123. The use of a dash with *acuta* as the top element is conventional in Sess. 96, and a simple *acuta* \( \acute{1} \) is never found in such a position. There is also a parallel in the decision of the Nonantolan scribe to place the first sign below the initial \( O \) with the use of the significative letter \( i \) *inferius* (‘go down’) in E121.

The short melisma on *non* from the tract *Desiderium animae* (f. 318r) features the two dots preceded by a comma and a dot (Table 4.35). The reason for this arrangement is that the first two descending notes of the melisma (\( a \rightarrow G \)) were to be sung distinctively and with a greater articulation, as the disjoint *clives* in Ch47 and L239 and the *clivis epistemata* in E121 suggest.

Nonantola indicates such articulation with a high–low sign \( 2 \downarrow \), from which the melody rises again with a vertical series of three dots, the first for \( a \) and the second and third for the *quilisma* on \( b \). The graph terminates again with a dash with *acuta* \( \acute{1} \). To the modern reader such sequence of dots, with no graphic differentiation between a note, represented by a dot, and a *quilisma* may generate confusion. However, Nonantolan singers knew exactly when to interpret such a vocal effect from the particular melodic context, and no further specification was required. All other notational traditions examined here employ instead a single note (*virga* in Ch47, L239 and MR, or *tractulus* in E121) followed by a *quilisma pes*.

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384 There is only one instance where the connected dash is the first element: in the communion *Qui vult venire* on *abnegat* (see Table. 4.12).
The case of *dei* (Table 4.35) from the introit *Gaudeamus omnes* (f. 318v) differs from the first two examples in its use of a sublinear connected dash \( \bar{\downarrow} \) as the bottom note of the melodic movement that terminates with a high–low–high sign \( \checkmark \). The first note *D* is designated in other traditions by a rhythmically more emphasised sound (a dash in Ch47, a *tractulus* in E121, an *uncinus* in L239), and in all cases the top inflection *F–E–F* is represented by a compound form with the *quilisma* as first element. The notator of Wfrg instead writes a *punctum*. The termination in Sess. 96 in a hook with dot clearly indicates articulation between the end of the short melisma and the next syllable. Finally, a similar case is that of *angeli* (Table 4.36) earlier on in the same chant, which features a double comma \( \downarrow \) to designate the bottom note of the rising melodic movement *E–F–G*, possibly requiring a greater degree of emphasis in delivery than the simple comma \( \downarrow \).

Relevant to this discussion is Nino Albarosa’s 1981 essay dedicated specifically to the Nonantolan *quilisma*.\(^{385}\) The Italian scholar studied the occurrences of the *quilisma* in the gradual fragments now in Monza (Biblioteca Capitolare, b.1.41) and Milan (Biblioteca Ambrosiana S. 37. sup.), paying particular attention to those cases where the standard two dots are replaced by three. The aim was to evaluate Ave Moderini’s hypothesis of a link between the Nonantolan three-dot *quilisma* and the ‘wavy’ East Frankish design.\(^{386}\) Albarosa concluded that there is only one example in those fragments of such a graph (which was not the one indicated by Moderini), and that there may be a connection between the design in the two music scripts, pointing out that the more common two-dot Nonantolan *quilisma* may be related to the less common two-pointed shape in East Frankish notations. Further reflections on this graphic relationship will be discussed in Chapter §5.2.

4.2.17. *Liquescences*

In Sess. 96 there are four ways of notating a liquescence in isolation on a syllable (Figure 4.38).

\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\
\text{\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure4.38.png}}
\end{array} \]

Figure 4.38.


\(^{386}\) Moderini, *La notazione*, I, p. 236.
Sign 1 is written with an oblique stroke ending with a round thickening. Sign 2 is also written with an oblique stroke, terminating in a round thickening after a downward curve. Sign 3 is the equivalent of sign 2, but placed on a syllable in relation to its pitch and reaching the sublinear space. Sign 4 is written with an oblique stroke, closed at the top in a loop. Halfway up the stroke thickens into a more or less protruding small bow. Signs 1–3 designate a downward liquescent note, while sign 4 represents an upward liquescent one.

An example of the use of sign 1 is found on the first syllable of omnes from the introit Gaudeamus omnes (f. 318r) (Table 4.37). Although it is difficult to determine whether it may have been a deliberate choice of the scribe, the sign is written above the syllable, terminating exactly between the consonants -mn- that should carry the sound connecting the two As through a small inflection on G. E121 uses a cephalicus, Wfrg and L239 a liquescent punctum, while Ch47 does not provide any particular nuance, using an unmodified sign for a single note.

Signs 2 and 4 can be found in sequence on et conscius in the offertory Oratio mea (f. 319r) (Table 4.38). This choice of signs effectively represents the passage form D on et to C on con-, and from this back to a series of two Ds on -scius, by linking the tones with light liquescent notes. The scribe of E121 chooses a cephalicus and an epiphonus, and Ch47 and A123 employ the equivalent signs. MR uses a virga for the D on con-, followed by a pes – possibly a small melodic

<table>
<thead>
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<th>f. 14v</th>
<th>A123</th>
<th>f. 129v</th>
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<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>f. 145r</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>f. 148r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.37.

Table 4.38.
variant – and a final virga. Sign 3 $\rightarrow$ is found only once in the chants for the Mass for St Benedict in Sess. 96 towards the end of the same chant, on dominum, in order to represent the liquescence on G(E). Its placement ‘across’ the syllable is justified by its relatively low position in a melodic context, mainly developing around high c.

It is interesting to note that the Nonantolan sign for a liquescent low–high is strikingly similar in design to the East Frankish cephālicos, despite their very different melodic meaning. The former requires a liquescence on the second, higher note, while the latter involves a liquescence on the second, lower note. In Sess. 96, sign 4 $\neq$ clearly signals the presence of a first note with the presence of the left-facing bulge, representing the upper liquescent note with a loop. The signs corresponding to the melodic function of the Germanic cephālicos, however, are signs 1–3. Finally, the graphic difference between signs 1, 2 and 3 may possibly be explained by the intervallic distance larger than a tone between the liquescent note and the starting note. However, the rarity of these signs in Sess. 96 leaves this aspect still to be determined.

4.2.18. Liquescent signs in combination

In Sess. 96 there are four ways of notating a liquescence in combination (Figure 4.39).

![Figure 4.39.](image)

Sign 1 is the equivalent of the sign in isolation on a syllable (see §4.2.17). Signs 2 and 3 are modifications of the same basic sign: in particular, sign 2 is used as the top element of a turning gesture and thus follows a lower note, while sign 3 always follows a higher note. Sign 4 is used when the preceding note is at the same height, possibly expressing such an indication by the presence of a short vertical stroke at the start of the sign. All these shapes are distinctively thicker than the average Nonantolan strokes, a solution that may have been developed by the scribe to differentiate such signs from high–low ones. The presence of the round thickening at the end, designating the liquescent note, may also be a scribal device to avoid such confusion.

Sign 1 is found in combination on the first syllable of gaudent in the introit Gaudeamus omnes (f. 318v) (Table 4.39). The first of the two rising notes, F, is represented by a connected dash Ʌ, above which sign 1 $\rightarrow$ is placed. This was the Nonantolan scribe’s only way of notating

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two rising notes, \( F - G \), the second of which is liquescent \( G(F) \). For exactly the same rhythmical nuance, E121 employed a liquescent \( pes \) quadratus, and L239 a disjoint \( pes \) formed by an \( uncinus \) and a \( cephalicus \). Wfrg and Ch47 also use disjoint signs for two rising notes with a liquescent second element. In E121, the liquescence reaches \( E \), as the significative letter \( i_{inferius} \) implies, thus connecting the \( F \) on the second syllable -dent from a tone below. This is also confirmed by the use of a \( virga \) instead of a \( tractulus \). Close analysis of the manuscript’s digital reproduction revealed that the E121 scribe expected this note to be lower and initially wrote a \( tractulus \). Upon realising that the liquescence would have instead reached \( E \) – i.e. a note below – he consequently emended it into a \( virga \).

An example of sign 2 \( \) is found at the end of the melisma on the first syllable of \( munda \) in the offertory \( Oratio mea \) (f. 319r) (Table 4.40). The sign is written so that the top of the curve is at the same height as the starting sequence of three \( c \). All other traditions employ a liquescent sign for two descending notes and a liquescence (\( ancus \)) for \( b-a(G) \).

In the same chant, sign 3 \( \) is employed at the end of the melisma on the second syllable of \( eternum \) (Table 4.41). The melody starts with a connected dash for a single note \( b \) which is articulated from the rest of the melisma in most other music scripts analysed (Ch47 horizontal dash, E121 \( virga \) episemata, MR \( virga \)). The following \( d-c-d-c \) is represented by a high–low–high–low sign 4 \( \) in Sess. 96, and articulated in two \( clives \) in Ch47 and E121, in a compound form (\( porrectus flexus \)) in MR, and as the two last notes of a \( torculus \) followed by a \( clivis \) in A123. The Nonantolan scribe, then, writes a double horizontal comma \( \) for \( c \) and sign 3 \( \) for the liquescence \( b(a) \), where other notations prefer to render this inflection with an \( ancus \). The reason for this choice is that the first note \( c \) is at the unison with the preceding one and not, as in the previous example (\( munda \)), a tone lower. More importantly, however, is the intention of specifying a rhythmical emphasis on the first note, as is revealed by the particular choice of a double horizontal comma \( \) and confirmed in E121 by the letter \( t_{enere} \) written on the top of the \( ancus \). It is clear that the flexibility and the range of different combinations available in the notation of the Benedictine abbey made it possible to choose the most accurate way of representing graphically each particular melodic contour with a considerable level of precision.
Chapter 5
Designing a musical notation

5.1. A closer look at music scribes

The title of this section deliberately echoes that of the English palaeographer Malcolm Parkes’s 2008 book *Their Hands Before Our Eyes: A Closer Look at Scribes*, for it aims to investigate the processes involved in the creation of musical graphs, the techniques used and the possible correlations with other realms of writing in the early Middle Ages, from the point of view of the scribes themselves. This approach stems from the premise that musical notation is a written system of communication, that its realisation was inextricably connected to the range of ‘graphic tools’ that Carolingian scribes possessed, and that its development drew on other manifestations of the act of writing. In order to understand these dynamics in the earliest phases of the creation of a type of musical notation at Nonantola, a primary concern is to look at music writing not as a mere exploitation of a scribal technique but as the outcome of a complex and rich body of experience, fully embedded in its contemporary cultural and institutional environments.

Unlike the study of later notated sources, the analysis of the oldest surviving testimonies of Nonantolan notation allows us to get as close as possible to the first stages of development of this repertory of signs, providing an insight into the moments preceding the fixation of such music script, the most creative experimental phase of which no trace is known to have survived. The theorisation presented in this chapter will move out from the context of an exclusively musicological analysis to explore different and alternative ways to think about the graphic bases of how music signs are made. This is not an exploration of the unknown but rather an attempt to reconstruct, based on the observation and reading of signs as graphic ‘events’, the processes that led to the formation of a music script. Just as historiography attempts to write a narrative based on surviving evidence and the comparative study of other similar events, Nonantolan notation will be treated in this section as offering a series of clues to how this particular way of representing sound came about. Signs will be approached also through the ‘looking glass’ of the ways in which other early forms of music writing developed and, thus, of how scribes responded to the necessity of inscribing on parchment the nuances of liturgical chant. In order to achieve

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388 Parkes, *Their Hands*. 
this, it is essential to employ a wide range of investigational frameworks, mainly provided by the discipline once referred to as an *ancilla historiae*: palaeography.

Some of the concepts formalised by Parkes in his book – and helpfully defined in his ‘Glossary’ – will inform the present chapter and guide the analysis of musical graphs as products of writing processes. The long-established idea in Latin palaeography that all scripts share a basic graphic layer, which was eventually elaborated through time and/or with the initiative of individual scribes or communities, is expressed by Parkes in a series of concepts. The most fundamental is that of *essential elements*: ‘those characteristics of a letter shape, which enable a reader to distinguish one letter from another’. For example, in Caroline minuscule the addition of a vertical stroke to the right edge of a semi-circular stroke will distinguish between a letter *c* and *d* if such stroke ascends from the bottom line, or *c* and *g* if it descends below the line. The combination of these essential elements, therefore, forms a *letter shape* that ‘embodies the characteristics, or essential elements, which enable a reader to distinguish one letter from another in the alphabet of a particular script’. A *shape*, then, may be considered as the ideal model for a letter, which may be realised in different ways, leading to the establishment of a *letter form*. Using Parkes’ terminology, a *letter form* is the combination of movements of the pen that produce a stroke on the writing surface required to construct a particular *letter shape*. In other words, the ways of writing the letter *d* by two different scribes share the same *letter shape*, while being realised in different letter *forms*. As will be illustrated below, these ideas can be effectively applied to the study of Nonantolan graphs, their design and their modifications.

Other concepts also formulated by Parkes will be helpful here for describing certain graphic features of musical signs. In particular:

— the *approach stroke*, that ‘which records the initial movement of the pen into an essential stroke in the construction of a *letter form*’;

— *auxiliary elements*, ‘those strokes (especially *approach* and *transitional strokes*) which record all or part of those *movements* of the pen that enabled a scribe to manoeuvre it into the appropriate positions to trace strokes forming the *essential* or *subsidiary elements* of a letter, or to make the transition from one letter to another’;

— a *juncture*, ‘the point at which one stroke was joined to another when constructing a *letter form*’;

— *slope in handwriting*, ‘when a scribe was writing rapidly letters could develop a slope from top right to bottom left’;

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390 *Ibid*.
391 I have merged here Parkes’s definitions of *letter form*, *configuration* and *traces*. See *ibid.*, pp. 150–154.
— *subsidiary elements*, those ‘features above or below the cue-height which have a supplementary function to enable a reader to read more quickly’;

— *transitional strokes*, ‘curved or diagonal finishing strokes’ which touch or connect to the following letter (especially those at the feet of i, l and t, and the stroke added at the top right of the lobe of g) without forming a *ligature*, all of which contribute to consistent spacing between letters’.

Another important concept, this time formulated by the Italian palaeographer Giorgio Cencetti, is that of *scrittura normale*. Cencetti understood that a *script*, rather than being only the final outcome of a writing process, was primarily ‘the ideal model, [...] the “platonic idea” of alphabetic signs’. Such a model, if shared by a community in a specific time and place, becomes a *scrittura normale*. This ‘normative script’ possesses proper and uniform basic features, while not responding to, or being constrained by, precise and binding rules for its realisation. The *scrittura normale* is thus a set of graphic conventions that is inscribed and shaped diversely by individuals reacting to certain necessities, be they material, aesthetic or institutional (*scritture individuali*).

This idea presupposes that such a script never exists in its material form but is rather the result of a ‘graphic process’ (‘processo grafico’) of constant shaping and modification. A comparable concept is expressed by Parkes with the term *archetype*: ‘the system whereby graphic signs in contrastive distribution function within a complex of conventions to communicate language in a visible form’. Caroline minuscule, for example, is a term encompassing many possible realisations of an archetype, while the latter never existed in its material form – and this is why a common consent is that we should rather speak of Caroline minuscules.

For Cencetti certain ‘graphic tendencies’ (*tendenze grafiche*) are the ‘elementary factors’ (*fattori elementari*) that generate those gradual modifications that will, in time, result in an alteration of the *scrittura normale*. This is what happened in the transition from Caroline minuscule to the *littera textualis* or ‘Gothic minuscule’.

In the case of Nonantolan music writing, the *scrittura normale* is the ideal model of how music graphs should be written down, that is, the set of graph-*shapes* that are then inscribed in graph-*forms* by individual notators. These shapes are based on a number of *essential elements* that, in the phase of design, may be kept in their simplest form or modified and combined with graphic ideas, according to the necessities for the representation of sound as perceived and transmitted in this particular community. The use of such musical *scrittura normale* is then influenced by graphic tendencies or other musical necessities (e.g. the placement of signs on a staff), resulting in its alteration and development. The present chapter will investigate the dynamics that governed

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395 Ibid., p. 69.

396 To my knowledge there has not yet been any relevant publication on the idea of Caroline minuscules.
those phases preceding the formation of the Nonantolan music script, exploring the processes of
the design and normalisation of such graphs.

From the results of the musical analysis of graphs in Chapter 4, it is possible to identify
the different components of the graphic process in the definition of the Nonantolan type of
music writing. For their description I will use the following terminology:

1. the matrix is the received set of essential elements for the representation of fundamental musical
gestures, which may be shared by a number of different scripts;
2. the base is the matrix with the addition other elements proper to Nonantolan notation, whether
original or acquired from other external bases;
3. the design is the stage during which the base is shaped by graphic and musical ideas such as the
relationship with the writing of the chant text or the particular treatment of pitch;
4. the settled script is the last stage of the graphic process and is the set of graph-shapes that form the
Nonantolan 'normative' script, to be followed in the script's written realisation in graph-forms.

Through the observation of the musical meaning of graphs in the settled script (4) and the scribe’s
techniques for their realisation, it will be possible to understand how such graphs were designed (3)
and what essential elements served as the base for their formation (2), as will be demonstrated in
the following sections. The matrix (1) is, thus, the only level of the graphic process that cannot be
reconstructed through the surviving manuscript sources. In particular, its role in the definition of
other music script will not constitute the object of the present study.
5.2. Exposing Nonantolan graphs

In the previous chapter I have illustrated some of the processes for the reduction of Nonantolan musical graphs into their basic constitutive elements.\textsuperscript{397} The aim of this operation was to understand fully the functions of such graphs by comparing their shapes and forms with their use in a particular melodic context: in other words, what these signs meant \textit{musically}. Close analysis of the notational practice revealed, for example, that the characteristic stroke connecting the signs to the syllables in the text – whether in the interlinear or sublinear space – must be considered a mere graphic device elaborated in the Benedictine abbey. Its function is purely pragmatic: to specify that a sign belongs to a certain vowel; it does not bear any musical meaning except that its length corresponds to the relative height of the note it represents.\textsuperscript{398} Therefore, rather than the stroke itself, it is the height of the top end that transmits musical information. Moreover, the contrasting meaning of other signs such as the connected dash expresses the connected dot’s value of a lighter note with no particular rhythmic emphasis. I have demonstrated that, contrary to what is maintained in previous scholarship, such a connection is not the equivalent of an ‘elongated’ Frankish \textit{virga} but is rather the graphic manifestation of the distance separating the first element of a musical sign and the top of the letter’s minim, or of its base in the case of signs places in the sublinear space.\textsuperscript{399} Thus these signs \textsuperscript{1} \textsuperscript{1} should be considered a connected dot and a connected dash \textsuperscript{1} \textsuperscript{1}.

It is important to stress that this process of identification must be supported by internal as well as external evidence. In the case of single notes in isolation on a syllable, for example, dots and dashes are among the most common signs in most of the other notational families (i.e. \textit{puncta} and \textit{tractuli}), and their meaning has been shown to be comparable to the characteristic connected shapes used in Nonantolan notation.\textsuperscript{400} The same applies to the signs for two rising notes, of which the first element is always either a connected dot or a connected dash (e.g. \textsuperscript{1}, \textsuperscript{1}). As for the top element designating the second, higher note, its shape and function for indicating a ‘higher note’ may be comparable to that of the \textit{virga} in other music scripts.\textsuperscript{401} Indeed, in Nonantolan notation such a vertical stroke is used also in composition for larger melodic passages, either alone (\textit{acuta} \textsuperscript{1}) or supporting the dash (dash with \textit{acuta} \textsuperscript{1}).\textsuperscript{402} For the latter sign, the comparison with the East Frankish \textit{virga episemata} is tempting, albeit problematic: as explained

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{397}] See §4.2.
\item[\textsuperscript{398}] See §4.1.2, pp. 123–124.
\item[\textsuperscript{399}] See §4.2.2.
\item[\textsuperscript{400}] \textit{Ibid.}, p. 136.
\item[\textsuperscript{401}] See §4.2.5, p. 149–150.
\item[\textsuperscript{402}] \textit{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
above, in Nonantolan notation the dash is not an added rhythmical nuance but rather an emphasised sound supported by the *acuta* specifying directionality, which functions as an integrative indication of movement and articulation in addition to the diastematic placement of the dash itself. Therefore, if we had to read aloud such a sign, *l* should be verbalised as ‘the next note is longer/stressed, and at the top of a rising movement, i.e. not a passing tone’.

The results achieved through this type of approach lead to some interesting initial conclusions. For the creation of these graphs, the scribes of the Benedictine abbey worked with a basic set of three signs: a dot (·), a dash (–), and a slash (*acuta*). Different combinations lead to a set of solutions that proved sufficient to express a range of melodic nuances for one or two rising notes in isolation on a syllable (Table 5.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.1. Construction of graphs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single notes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two rising notes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The other important tool Nonantolan scribes employed was their particular approach to the height metaphor, the placement of signs in the available space. The exploitation of both the interlinear and the sublinear space reflected the early notators’ own idea about the relationship between music and liturgical text. This interdependence was expressed graphically by interweaving the contour of musical signs with the linearity of the chants’ text, placing them above or below the words. Finally, all these elements were further characterised by use of the distinctively Nonantolan connection trait joining the dot – incorporated into the connecting stroke – or the dash to the vowels of the corresponding syllables. The placement of signs in the sublinear space was only possible with this very connection; without it, the signs would have

403 See §4.2.4, pp. 148.
interfered with the subsequent interlinear space and could thus have been mistakenly interpreted as part of the notation for the line below. All of these scribal techniques must have been assessed carefully by the creators of such notational solutions.

In Nonantola, graphs for three rising notes were designed with the same set of basic signs as those for two rising notes (dot, dash and *acuta*) simply by the addition of a dot as the second element (Table 5.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>• - ₱</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Design" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Script" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dot in Nonantola’s signs for three rising notes is a quick note leading to the next: in Frankish notations, such a function may be expressed by the *oriscus*, which is absent in Nonantolan notation. The design with two dots and an *acuta* (cf. the first shape in ‘Design’, Table 5.2) rather matches that of the Aquitanian *scandicus*.

The process of analysis applied here to signs for one or two rising notes can be extended to the remaining graphs used in Nonantolan notation. The key to ‘decoding’ such graphs can be found in the analysis of the sign for two descending notes in isolation on a syllable.\(^{404}\) The principle of the connecting trait is transferrable on this particular shape: starting from the height of the first note of a high–low, the pen descends to the vowel of the corresponding syllable, as shown in Figure 5.1.

\(^{404}\) See §4.2.7, p. 158.
This selective reduction of signs into a vertical stoke and a connecting trait could be regarded as arbitrary and artificial, especially given the similarity of the high–low sign to the standard shape for the clivis in most other notational families \( \nearrow \). I will explain the validity of this reduction with a series of arguments, starting from internal evidence.

The analysis in the previous section led to the conclusion that the connecting trait is a graphic device that characterises Nonantolan notation, and that its ‘removal’ allows us to gain access to the basic shapes of the musical graphs. For two descending notes, this graph can be identified with the perpendicular stroke which, as the analysis of the pen strokes revealed, was also often traced with a greater width than the connecting trait \( \nearrow \). Furthermore, this ‘angular’ shape for high–low never appears disconnected, that is, in combination with other signs, in which it might appear thus \( \nearrow \). The only constant graphic element that is common to all high–low graphs in Nonantolan notation is the downward vertical stroke (Figure 5.2).\(^{405}\)

![Figure 5.2. The vertical stroke in Nonantolan high–low graphs.](image)

For the last two shapes in Figure 5.2, the vertical stroke originates to the left with a curving movement, in order to express its meaning in a particular melodic context of two descending notes at the top of a turning melodic gesture.\(^{406}\) It should, therefore, be considered only a graphic modification of the basic shape of the same vertical stroke present in all other high–low signs.

What differentiates these graphs is the presence, or absence, of certain added elements that will be further analysed in the following paragraphs. The use of signs as complementary rhythmic and pitch indications and particularly their placement in the design – either at the top or at the bottom of the stroke – reveal that, in the minds of early Nonantolan notators, such a stroke constituted the visual representation of the distance between two descending notes, corresponding to the extremities of the sign. This approach may also be comparable to that applied to the acuta with dash, whereby the articulation sign is placed exactly at the top of the stroke. Figure 5.3 shows how the melodic contour is represented by the placement of signs and the lengths of strokes, chosen in relation to the relative distance between tones.

\(^{405}\) See §4.2.8, p. 162.

\(^{406}\) Ibid., pp. 166–167.
This approach to diastematy denotes tones by roughly locating the place for signs in the vertical dimension of the interlinear or sublinear space. This way of indicating the height of the notes certainly characterises early music scripts, yet it was not the only one. As discussed in the previous chapter, the height metaphor was realised differently in Breton and Lotharingian notations – to which family Nonantolan notation belongs – compared to the Frankish family.\footnote{See §4.1.3.}

Nonantolan scribes employed a set of signs that could be added to the vertical stroke and used to specify pitch or articulation in graphs for two descending notes within larger melodic movements. These were (1) a left-facing semicircle \( \mathcal{Q} \), always placed at the top end of the vertical stroke; (2) a hook with dot \( \downarrow \), always found at the bottom end of the stroke; and (3) a horizontal dash \( \hline \), always added at the top end. Each of the three signs was placed at the relevant height on the page corresponding to either the top or the bottom end of the vertical stroke (Table 5.3). As can be seen in the previous chapter, the meanings of these signs are respectively (1) a note at the top of a descending movement, articulating from the preceding, lower one and directing the weight to the bottom; (2) a note at the bottom of a descending movement, articulating it from the following one (be it higher, equal, or lower); and (3) a note at the top of the descending movement and at the same height as the preceding, thus specifying pitch rather than rhythm.\footnote{See §4.2.8.}

External elements also confirm this reading of graphs for two descending notes. The first evidence in support of the identification of the vertical downward stroke as the basic graphic element for the representation of such melodic movement comes from the presence of the same design in Palaeofrankish notation.

The two most characteristic graphs employed in Palaeofrankish notation are the downward stroke \( \downarrow \) for high–low and the upward stroke \( / \) for two ascending notes. These shapes were developed, as has been convincingly demonstrated by Charles Atkinson, from the shapes of the diacritic acute and grave accents, and were described as such by the
ninth-century theorist Aurelian of Réôme.\textsuperscript{409} This emerging relationship between Nonantolan notation and Palaeofrankish music script will be further assessed in the following sections.\textsuperscript{410}

After having established the meaning and role of the vertical stroke it is possible to understand how the remaining Nonantolan signs were designed. Graphs for high–low–high are constructed using as a base graphs for high–low and an added element for the final rising note (Table 5.4). In almost all cases this element is a graphic modification of the hook with dot $\text{冫}$: rather than functioning only to articulate the note it represents from the following one (e.g. $\text{卐}$), with the upward elongation of the shaft of the hook with dot it serves also to express a pitch indication by reaching the height of the last high note (e.g. $\text{卍}$). The last sign $\text{卐}$ features, instead,
the addition of a *curva* (\(\checkmark\)). As explained in the previous chapter, this sign is a graphic modification of the basic *acuta* (\(\acute{\text{a}}\)) sign and designates the top note of an ascending movement as part of a turning melodic gesture.\(^{411}\) This is why the graph (\(\checkmark\)) is always followed by one or more lower dots and a final comma (\(\checkmark\)), marking the bottom end of the melodic gesture.

The design of Nonantolan graphs for sequences of high–low, corresponding to four or six notes, is based on a succession of two or three downward vertical strokes (Table 5.5). In one case, the hook with dot is added to the last note to provide articulation with the following one. If starting a melisma, the graphs are connected to the syllable with the typical pen trait, which becomes part of the signs themselves. The disconnected graphs found as part of larger melodic movements always follow a lower note, hence the modification of the stroke, starting from the left of the base vertical stroke. Each sign for two notes is connected with a transitional stroke, as an auxiliary element, by a curving movement of the pen, possibly reflecting also the rather fluid delivery required for these melodic inflections.

Table 5.5. Construction of graphs for sequences of high–low

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>High–low × 2</th>
<th>High–low × 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>(\text{I} \text{I} \text{I} )</td>
<td>(\text{I} \text{I} \text{I} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script</td>
<td>(\checkmark)</td>
<td>(\checkmark)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is worth dedicating a few remarks to the shape of the Nonantolan signs for the *quilisma*. The meaning and origin of such a sign in early music scripts is still debated. The German palaeographer Bernhard Bischoff noted the striking similarity between signs for a *quilisma* in various notations and the sign for the question mark in late eighth-century manuscripts.\(^{412}\) His observation was then taken further by Leo Treitler as proof that the signs used to build up a music script should be sought among punctuation signs rather than accents, as the former

\(^{411}\) See §4.2.5.

provide the articulation of texts into its syntactic units. In light of the analysis of Nonantolan notation, however, such connections appear less solid in the case of the quilisma shape used at the Benedictine abbey. As explained in the previous chapter, the quilisma note is represented in Nonantolan notation by two vertical dots (\(\cdot\)). Nino Albarosa and Ave Moderini have stated, in different ways, that a relationship may exist between such a sign and the Frankish ‘wavy’ shape, particularly the two-pointed one found in Alemannic manuscripts from St Gall and Einsfelden. This argument rests only on the idea that the two vertical dots in Nonantolan notation were written in Frankish notations as small semicircles. While such a connection may, to a certain extent, be plausible – and palaeographically acceptable – the question still remains open.

It is worth mentioning here a piece of evidence hitherto neglected by scholarship on the notation from the Po Valley abbey: the definition of the nota quae dicitur tremula in the anonymous treatise referred to as Quid est cantus?, copied in the early tenth century, and now in the manuscript Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Pal. lat. 235 (ff. 38v–39). According to Élisabeth Pellegrin, the five units forming the composite Pal. lat. 235 originated as separate manuscripts and were copied in one or more centres in Germany. The description of the sign is: nota quae dicitur tremula ex tribus gradibus componitur id est ex duabus brevibus et acuto [sic], ut est Ex or infantium (f. 38v). In the early twentieth century Raffaello Baralli and Peter Wagner interpreted the definition in the Vatican text of duabus brevibus et acuto as a reference to the shape of the quilisma pes in East Frankish notations featuring two curved stokes and a pes, while Constantin Floros argued, instead, that the tres gradus referred only to the quilismatic note itself, thus drawing a comparison with the Frankish three-wave sign. More recently Charles Atkinson argued that ‘the “tremula”,

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414 See §4.2.16, p. 184.
415 Ibid., p. 186.
as the Vatican Anonymous calls the quilisma, is composed of two breves and an acute accent, appearing on three scale degrees.419

The example provided by the anonymous writer is the incipit of the introit *Ex ore infantium*, which features several realizations in different notations and manuscripts.420 The introit does not survive in Nonantolan manuscripts, but the same melodic movement (D–E–F), featuring a quilisma on E, is found in Sess. 96 on the first syllable of *oracio*, from the offertory *Oratio mea* (f. 319r) (Figure 5.4), where a sublinear connected dot  for D is followed by two vertical dots : for E and a dash with acuta  for F.

Figure 5.4. *Quilisma* in the offertory *Oratio mea*.

In Nonantolan notation the dot represents a short, light note leading to the next (Vat.: brevis), and the two dots for the quilisma are always part of a rising melodic movement and always precede a higher note (Vat.: acutum), which may be represented by a dash with acuta – as in the case of oracio – or a compound, as the top note of a sign for two descending notes for a turning melodic gesture.421 Like the provenance of the text, the notation that the anonymous writer of the treatise in Pal. lat. 235 had in mind remains undetermined, and was possibly not a Germanic type, despite the presence of East Frankish musical signs in the margin of f. 38v.422 An association with Paleofrankish script is discarded by Atkinson because ‘the 2-note pes or podatus that would be the Paleofrankish equivalent of the acute accent does not appear to be what the anonymous author is referring to under that term’.423 Certainly, however, his definition of nota tremula fits the Nonantolan shape of two dots followed by an acuta in quite a striking way.424

420 Floros mentiones the versions in E121, Bamberg lit. 6, Ch 47, Pa 903, a fragment in Beneventan notation from Chieti and Benevento 34. See C. Floros, *The Origins of Western Notation*, rev. and trans. N. Moran (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), p. 84.
421 See §4, Table 4.36.
422 Atkinson advances the thesis that the text may have been written in the so-called zone de transition between the Seine and the Rhine. See Atkinson, ‘The Anonymus Vaticanus’, p. 26.
424 A study of the punctuation marks in Nonantolan manuscripts of the late eighth century and the ninth would be useful in establishing whether there may be a connection between the Nonantolan quilisma and the shape of the question mark.
5.3. The writing of language as the representation of sounds

The complete base of Nonantolan notation may have involved a set of seven essential elements that can be referred to as dot (\textasteriskcentered{}), dash (\texthyphen{}), acuta (\textasciitilde{}), downward stroke (\textbackslash{}), left-facing semicircle (\textdegree{}), hook with dot (\textbullet{}) and comma (\textcommas{})(Figure 5.5).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{Figure5_5}
\caption{Elements of Nonantolan notation.}
\end{figure}

The way these signs were combined to form complex graphs depended on the particular melodic and rhythmic features of the musical event they designated. How the base was shaped and elaborated for the final establishment of the musical \textit{scrittura normale} at the Benedictine abbey was the result of particular combinations of graphic ideas and scribal techniques that established their roots in the contemporary use of writing with its various manifestations.

Of all the phases of the graphic process, that of the designing of the Nonantolan script is certainly one of the most interesting for the present discussion. What range of graphical ‘tools’ and \textit{scribal gestures} were available to music scribes for the creation of graph-shapes? Were they referring to any pre-existing graphical tradition or even text script? For graphs of more than one note, two approaches can be identified: one is the sequential arrangement of signs, the other is the composition of complex compound shapes. The first is, for example, the case of graphs for two or three rising notes, where sequences of discrete elements effectively inscribe the melodic movement both by the shape of the different elements (articulation) and by their placement (relative pitch). The techniques employed for their placement on the page are governed by the scribes’ understanding and exploitation of the height metaphor, in a manner shared with Breton and Lotharingian notations, where the melodic contour is outlined by the relative positioning of the signs themselves. The second type of approach is the one followed in the design of two descending notes, as well as high–low–high signs, and in sequences of two or three high–low, where base shapes are added to one or more core elements in order to expand their meaning, particularly in relation to articulation. As I will explain, the techniques used in the creation of such graphs are found also in other realms of Carolingian writing culture, such as cursive scripts and Tironian notes.

The use of writing in an early medieval monastic community was not confined only to the copying of texts, and a \textit{scriptorium} was not only a place where high-grade manuscripts were produced. Writing was used for all kinds of everyday activities, internal communications, memoranda, glosses etc., and the type of script was very often not the same book hand used in
the compilation of manuscripts. In ninth-century northern Italy this script was the *late* New Roman Cursive, and examples of it are found in manuscripts from all over the northern part of the peninsula (e.g. Figure 5.6: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C. 73 inf., f. 79, CLA 314). In the words of Bernhard Bischoff, ‘[cursive script] is proper to the whole spectrum of everyday scripts’. Such script writes the letters, as far as possible, ‘as a unit, without lifting the pen, immediately attaching them in a natural way to their neighbours’. Malcolm Parkes defined ‘rapid or cursive handwriting’ as ‘protean by nature: letter shapes are recognizable but not invariable, since scribes gave priority to the momentum and continuity of the movements that governed the direction of the traces’. As a corollary, we may argue that cursive script tends to link letter-shapes within a word as much as possible, sometimes also extending ligatures across word boundaries.

![Figure 5.6. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C. 73 inf., f. 79, CLA 314.](image)

Some of the most characteristic graph-shapes of Nonantolan notation are those for two descending notes and high–low–high used in combination. How were these signs conceived and developed? In order to answer this question, I believe we should reflect on the semiotics of these graphs. What these signs have in common is the need for providing the largest possible amount of information in the space of a single graph. For example, visually a Nonantolan high–low–high graph provides the reader with four pieces of information at the first level of signification. Of the three tones of the three-note movement (1) the first note is high, (2) it is followed by a lower one, and (3) the movement ends with a higher one, while (4) the ligature in itself represents a performance indication, i.e. that these notes should be sung together and with no articulation nuance. This very idea of grouping together different pieces of information under a single sign can also be found in the principles of cursive writing, where letters may be joined consistently provided that their articulation remains discernible.

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Figure 5.7 compares the shape of a Nonantolan high–low–high graph with a word in an early medieval cursive script. The visual representation of the word *quam* is perceptibly a single, self-standing unit while being distinctly composed of different letter-forms; the high–low–high graph appears to the reader of the music script as one discrete graphic event encompassing various pieces of information. A second level of interpretation involves the understanding of the meaning of the particular elements that compose the musical graph, not just their number (three notes), pitch (high–low–high), and shape (ligated). In order to interpret this the reader needs to possess knowledge of the particular meaning of signs and the performance indications they carry.

This is a deeper level of signification that only a singer trained in the reading of Nonantolan notation may have access to. Moreover, cursivity might be one of the agents of those ‘graphic processes’ that Cencetti considered fundamental for the shaping of a ‘scrittura usuale’. Parkes believes that ‘cursive resolution modifies letter shapes, and over a period of time generates new ones.’

As far as Nonantolan music script is concerned, therefore, it may be possible to argue that the particular *ductus* employed in the representation of certain graphs may have contributed to the development of the notational script, along with other scribal tendencies and techniques. In the ninth century, individuals who used writing in an ‘active’ way – as opposed to a ‘passive’ copying activity – surely possessed the skills of writing shorthand. According to Isidore of Seville, the system of shorthand known as Tironian notes (*notae tironiane*) is believed to have been invented by Cicero’s scribe Marcus Tullius Tiro, and their use survived in the chanceries of the Merovingians and Carolingians. By the early Middle Ages this system became part of the everyday written language of Carolingian scribes, forming an essential part of a cleric’s training. Notas are mentioned in the *Admonitio generalis*: ‘et ut scolae legentium puerorum fiant. Psalmos, notas, cantus, computum, grammaticam per singula monasteria vel episcopia et libros catholicos bene emendate’ (‘and that schools for the instruction of boys in reading may be founded. Make the appropriate corrections in Psalms, notes, chants, computus, grammar, and the catholic books through the

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428 The example of cursive script was taken from Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography*, p. 108.
429 See §5.1, p. 193.
individual monasteries or cathedrals’). This passage has been read closely by musicologists for its reference to notas and cantus; Kenneth Levy, in particular, suggested that notas may refer to musical notation. Grier argued that such an interpretation is problematic, as the presence of both terms notas and cantus, if referring to liturgical chant and its notation, would have been unnecessary redundant. The more common interpretation is that they meant, in fact, Tironian notes, which circulated vastly in the form of transcriptions of the Psalter. A recent article by Evina Steinova discusses the meaning of the term nota in the Carolingian period. While arguing that ‘it is reasonable to consider that the lexeme [nota] encompasses multiple practices that were seen as similar in certain respects’, Steinova dismisses an association between this term and musical signs – as suggested by Kenneth Levy on the basis of the passage in the Admonitio generalis – chiefly for the reason that there is no evidence of this use in any source from that period. Furthermore, the Commentarii notarum Tironianum, a handbook of Tironian notes, is preserved in more than twenty manuscripts from the Carolingian period and there is no reason to believe that notae tironiane were not also used at Nonantola. In fact, Italian scribes made frequent use of this tachygraphic system, especially in the seventh and eighth century, though their use continued until the eleventh century in notarial documents.

The fundamental principle of Tironian notes is that of the symbolic association between signs and letters or syllables. These signs are then combined into compound graphs for the creation of words, and two systems can be distinguished in their use (see Figure 5.8: Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XXII (20), f. 64, CLA 490).

Figure 5.8. Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare, XXII (20), f. 64, CLA 490.

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435 Grier, ‘Adémar’, p. 64.
436 Bischoff, Latin Palaeography, p. 81, n. 208.
438 Ibid., p. 428.
439 Bischoff, Latin Palaeography, p. 81.
It could be argued that singers were working with a set of instructions, rather than a mere depiction of the melody. Every sign has a defined and unique meaning and can be considered as a written mark, a *nota*, for a performance indication. In this sense, for example, the eight one-note signs (Figure 5.9) may be read in sequence as ‘a single note, and first (or single) on a syllable’; ‘a single, more emphasised sound, and first (or single) on a syllable’; ‘a note with no particular emphasis and leading to the next’; ‘a higher sound’; ‘a higher sound to be performed with more emphasis’; ‘a higher sound at the top of an arch-like melodic movement’; ‘the bottom note of a descending movement’; ‘repetition of the same note before a lower one’. The Nonantolan high–low–high (Figure 5.10) may thus be seen as a compound graph featuring symbols for performance indications. The left-facing semicircle, possibly deriving from the *apostrophus* found also in *nota romana*, represents both a note and details for its delivery: a higher note, articulated from the preceding, and leading to the following lower one. The downward vertical stroke is the graphic representation of the distance between the two descending notes, the position of its lower end designating the relative distance to the first note. The presence of the last element, a hook with dot with an upwardly elongated shaft, specifies that (1) the second note is a passing tone, and (2) the third note is higher, (3) ends the melodic inflection and (4) should be sung in such a way as to articulate it from the following one, which will start a new melodic passage.

![One-note signs](image1)

**Figure 5.9. One-note signs.**

![Three-note signs](image2)

**Figure 5.10. Three-note signs.**

Finally, Tironian notes are found as additional performance indications in the late ninth-century manuscript L239 possibly with the following meanings: *supra*, *sub*, *sursum*, *iusum*, *devexum*, *deorsum*, *seorsum*, *devertit*, *subjice*, *prode sub eam*, *sonare*, *mox* and *quam mox*, and *ut supra*.  

This relationship between cursive script, Tironian notes and Nonantolan music graphs is far more than simply visual: the cognitive processes involved in the reading of graphs require the understanding of their semiotics and the ability to distinguish different levels of interpretation of a graphic event. It is possible that the same shared set of principles and the same set of graphic procedures found in those writing phenomena guided the creativity of early medieval music scribes at the Benedictine abbey in the creation, or development, of their particular type of

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musical notation. Elements pertaining to apparently different realms of a graphical culture formed part of the vocabulary of signs, the ‘tool box’ as it might be called, that medieval scribes were accustomed to and that they also used in the shaping of Nonantolan neumes.
5.4. ‘Nota romana’: assessing an Italic influence

The dot (·), dash (–), slash (/) and downward vertical stroke (\) have been established as possibly constituting the base, the set of signs from which Nonantolan notators drew in creating their institutional type of music script. It has also been remarked that such signs do exist – as such or slightly altered in shape – in most other major notational families, and that they carry comparable meanings to those employed at Nonantola. In particular, the downward vertical stroke is used as such in Paleofrankish notation for designating two descending notes. We would probably not be very far from a reasonable hypothesis if we were to consider the above signs as part of the set of graphs that was shared and that travelled – more or less at the same time – throughout Carolingian Europe. This line of enquiry might lead us to the investigation of what may have been the original set of signs – or conventions – that spread, at least from the second quarter of the ninth century, throughout Francia. However, this would take us far from the scope of the present study, which will be devoted instead to further exploring the constitutive elements of the settled Nonantolan script. The focus will be on the processes involved in the creation of this music script, observed in the way signs were designed and developed and also seeking possible comparisons with other notational families. Without delving into speculative reconstructions, it is possible to reach the core of this repertory of signs and understand the complex net of influences from which the formation of Nonantolan graphs began. However, since no material evidence for musical notation survives that can be securely dated before the second quarter of the ninth century, it is unlikely that we will ever have a clear sense of how the first ‘archetypal’ music script looked and functioned. Furthermore, this spreading necessarily implies that attempting to localise an exact, or even approximate, place of origin for these musico-graphic conventions is an almost impossible task. Yet in the case of Nonantolan notation we may move a little further.

If this group of signs (· – \) formed part of a set of notational conventions shared by some early music scripts throughout the Carolingian Empire, then we can certainly consider the particular uses of additional articulation signs, such as the left-facing semicircle \ and the hook with dot \, as one of the most distinctive properties of the music script elaborated in the Benedictine abbey. Their presence raises a series of questions: were these signs created \textit{ex novo} by the individual/s responsible for designing Nonantolan notation? Or were they borrowed from other notation/s? Is there a way we may trace the origin of such signs? And, if so, would it help to establish the complete network of contacts and influences that constituted fertile soil for the

development of Nonantolan music script? In order to address these questions we must now turn our attention to the opposite direction: the South.

The earliest manuscripts containing musical notation from central and southern Italy date no earlier than the end of the tenth century. A colophon with a handful of musical signs in Montecassino, Archivio della Badia, MS 269 (p. 135), written in Capua before the year 949, is considered to be the earliest example of Beneventan notation.\(^1\) Also apparently of an early date is the front endleaf of Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Patr. 101, containing a musical annotation dating to tenth century, possibly the last quarter.\(^2\) Two hands write the text of the antiphon *Cum venerimus*: the first hand writes in a romanesca minuscule, and the second is a type of southern Italian minuscule with some Caroline elements.\(^3\) The musical notation is likely to have been added by the second scribe, since it is written over some of the ascenders written by the first hand. Surprisingly, little attention has been devoted to this source in the studies of Beneventan notation, probably because it does not contain Beneventan chant. However, the presence of the romanesca minuscule suggests either that the manuscript was used in the Rome area or that a scribe trained in Rome had access to the manuscript, and a second scribe subsequently wrote the neumes. The very presence of different elements and scripts make the Bamberg manuscript an extremely interesting source for the study not only of early central Italian and Beneventan notations, but also of the later dissemination of these notations.

The most complete compilations date to around the year 1000. Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. lat. 10673, is an incomplete gradual of unknown provenance – probably not from Benevento itself – dating to the beginning of the eleventh century; its contents extend from

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\(^{3}\) On the romanesca minuscule see P. Supino Martini, *Roma e l’area grafica romanesc* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell’Orso, 1987).
Septuagesima to Holy Saturday (Exultet). Another important manuscript is Benevento, Biblioteca Capitolare, Ms 33, a plenary missal extending from the vigil of Christmas to 11 November, also probably of a non-Beneventan origin and dating to the early eleventh century. Of the same date is Lucca, Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana, Ms 606, a plenary missal with an appendix (ff. 150–156) containing music for special Holy Week rites. Much of the music is Beneventan and the type of notation is early Beneventan, probably written by a scribe coming from and having trained in the south. Early use of Beneventan notation is found in Exultet rolls such as Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Ms 9820, compiled for use at St Peter’s in Benevento, probably around 981–987. Containing Beneventan text and melody, the roll was reversed and rewritten in the late twelfth century to contain the Franco-Roman text with Beneventan melody. As a palimpsest, it still preserves some traces of the oldest layer of notation from the original late-tenth-century compilation. An incomplete Exultet roll, dating to the end of the tenth century or the beginning of the eleventh, is Manchester, John Rylands University Library, Ms 2. The provenance is unknown, but it was probably used at Montecassino and contains Beneventan Exultet text and early Beneventan notation.

The other major tradition from the Italic peninsula, linked in particular with the city of Rome, is the so-called Old Roman chant. This repertory is preserved in a group of manuscripts and fragments dating from the middle of the eleventh century through the thirteenth. Old Roman chant has intrigued scholars for its musical and liturgical features, but primarily because it is the oldest surviving trace of the chant of the Church of Rome and the closest testimony of the material that generated the Romano-Frankish tradition, merging with regional chant dialects such

448 Thomas Kelly argues that the scribe’s musical writing is ‘in a style practiced nowhere in the north, and it does not resemble the music-hand of the rest of the manuscript. [...] there is, however, no surviving source from which the Lucca supplement could have been copied directly. The musical contents of the supplement, rich as they are, are not precisely those of any other manuscript preserving Beneventan chant’; Kelly, ‘The Oldest’, p. 52.
as the Gallican or the Old Hispanic around the year 800. Yet the first notated manuscripts of Old Roman chant appear approximately two centuries after the beginning of the Frankish written tradition in the early ninth century. The gradual for the urban basilica of St Cecilia in Trastevere, now in Geneva, Martin Bodmer Foundation, MS 74 (hereafter Bodmer 74), is arguably the most important source for the Old Roman mass chants. The manuscript has been dated to 1071, but the liturgical tradition represented in it has been identified in Rome as early as the eighth century. Other manuscripts are the eleventh- or twelfth-century gradual Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Var. lat. 5319, perhaps copied in the Lateran; Vatican, Archivio di San Pietro, F 22 and B 79, respectively a thirteenth-century gradual and a twelfth-century antiphoner of the Old Roman rite from St Peter’s basilica; and London, British Library, Add. 29988, a twelfth-century antiphoner, perhaps from the Lateran.

The gap of well over two hundred years between the earliest records of the Old Roman repertory and the fixation of its music on parchment raises a series of challenging questions. Is it possible that the oldest known tradition of Christian liturgical chant, associated with the papal see and with the most important centre of Christianity in the West, never developed, used or adopted a way for recording music in written form until the mid-eleventh century? If so, why was it only notated at that particular stage and what type of notation did the Roman scribes choose to employ? Should we consider manuscript sources such as Bodmer 74 to be a mere record of the musical repertory, or has any processes of editing (or ‘composition’) been undertaken in their compilation phase? Finally, Leo Treitler commented that ‘the music for that

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tradition [Old Roman] must have been an unwritten one for at least three centuries': if the repertory's transmission functioned exclusively on orality, how strong and disciplined was it?  

The main issue that concerns us here is whether a way of writing down music did exist in Rome in the ninth and tenth centuries and whether it may have influenced the creation of Nonantolan notation. In an attempt to answer the question about the presence of a music script in early medieval Rome, John Boe investigated surviving liturgical books from the city in search of traces of such notation. Boe observed two different types of music scripts in two manuscripts: Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Archivio di San Pietro C 105 (f. 29r) and Chigi C.VI.177, respectively a musical addition to a homiliary and a notated breviary from Farfa. He formulated the hypothesis that 'notation entered central Italy [...] along with caroline minuscule script [...] perhaps coming into very occasional and tentative use at Rome some time after 800, but probably not until late in the ninth century.' However, the process of 'domestication of notation at Rome' after its introduction and before the eleventh century, and its interaction with oral tradition, are 'obscured by loss of manuscripts and the disruption and decay of cultural, political and economic life' in the late ninth century and the tenth. A different type of notation, adiastematic and usually associated with pieces from the Gregorian repertory, was introduced at monasteries touched by Cluniac and Dijonesque reforms some time between the mid-tenth century and the early eleventh. According to Boe, during the second half of the eleventh century, this 'monastic' West Frankish notation was replaced by the Guidonian version of Roman notation.

Certainly, the notation used for the recording project undertaken by Roman music scribes was highly receptive to the ideas of Guido of Arezzo. From his Epistola Guidonis Michaeli monacho de ignoto cantu directa we know that Pope John XIX (1024–1033) invited Guido – at that time based in Arezzo, under his patron Theodald of Canossa – to Rome so that he could present his innovations in the teaching and learning of music shortly after the completion of his Micrologus. Pope John welcomed Guido with great favour and was evidently impressed by the monk’s achievements, especially by a copy of an antiphonary that was offered to him as a gift: nostrumque velut quoddam prodigium saepe revolvens antiphonarium (‘[Pope John] looked through our antiphoner many times as if it were some prodigy’). In the eleventh century, the reform of the Roman

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460 Ibid., p. 41.
461 Boe, ‘Music Notation’, p. 41.
462 Ibid., p. 44–45.
church and papacy after the tenth-century *saeculum obscurum* also involved liturgy and chant.\textsuperscript{464} The constant need for new material for liturgical practice in one of the most active centres of Christian worship may have led to a new phase of manuscript production, and it is not unlikely that old books were destroyed in order to be replaced by new and up-to-date compilations.

From the point of view of the repertory, a written tradition of codified texts for liturgical chant existed in Rome from the eighth century, prior to the Carolingian formalisation. Furthermore, Kenneth Levy has demonstrated in two important articles that the ‘ROM-to-GREG flow’ – the formation of a Gregorian repertory on the basis of the Old Roman, nowadays called Romano-Frankish – should not be considered unidirectional. In the case of certain chants the Frankish tradition influenced, as a major contributor, the musical substance of the eleventh-century Old Roman.\textsuperscript{465} As a postulate, it may be possible to argue that, during such a return phase, Gregorian chant travelled with the support of musical notation. This circular flow may constitute important evidence for the presence of Frankish notation in central Italy and Rome during the tenth century and thus have implications for its influence on the consolidation of the central Italian type of music writing.

In a recent article, James Grier shed new light on a passage from the *Chronicon* by Adémar de Chabannes (989–1034), Aquitanian monk, polemicist, and musician, in which Adémar states that Frankish singers adopted Roman musical notation in the late eighth century.\textsuperscript{466} The text records a dispute between the Frankish *cantores* who accompanied their king Charlemagne to Rome and the papal *cantores* Theodoric and Benedict at the court of Pope Adrian I in 787.

\begin{quote}
Mox petiit domnus rex Karolus ab Adriano papa cantores qui Franciam corrigerent de cantu. At ille dedit ei Theodoricum et Benedictum Romanae ecclesie doctissimos cantores qui a sancto Gregorio eruditi fuerant, tribuisset antiphonarios sancti Gregorii quos ipse notaverat nota romana. [...] Recti sunt ergo antiphonarii Francorum [...] et omnes Franciae cantores didicerunt notam romanam, quam nunc vocant notam franciscam, excepto quod tremulas vel viuolas sive collisibiles vel secabiles voce in cantu non poterant perfecte exprimere Franci, naturali voce barbarica, frangentes in gutture voce potius quam exprimentes. Majus autem magisterium cantandi in Metis civitatis remansit, quantumque magisterium Romanum superat Metensem in arte cantilenae, tanto superat Metensis cantilena ceteras scolas Gallorum. Similiter erudierunt Romani cantores supradicti cantores Francorum in arte organandi.
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{466} Grier, ‘Adémar’.
(Soon the lord king Charles sought from Pope Adrian cantores who would correct the
Frankish kingdom in the matter of chant. And the pope gave him Theodorics and Benedict,
the most learned cantores of the Roman church, who had been instructed by Saint Gregory,
and he also gave him antiphoners of Saint Gregory that the saint himself had notated with
Roman notation. [...] The antiphoners of the Franks, therefore, were corrected, which
everyone, from his own judgment, had corrupted, either adding or suppressing, and all the
cantores of the Frankish kingdom learned the Roman notation, which they now call Frankish
notation, with the exception that the Franks could not perfectly express the tremulous or the
sinuous notes, or the notes that are to be elided or separated, breaking the notes in the
throat, with a natural barbaric voice, rather than expressing them. A greater mastery of
singing remained in the city of Metz, and however much the Roman mastery surpassed the
Messine in the art of singing, by so much did the Messine singing surpass the other choirs of
the Gauls. Similarly, the aforementioned Roman cantores instructed the Frankish cantores in
the art of singing organum.)

In his study, Grier convincingly demonstrates that Adémar’s text and his statements, while
covered with a certain rhetoric veil, cannot be easily dismissed as the ‘ahistorical musings of
a late and misinformed source’. Adémar was a well-informed eleventh-century historian,
and as a musician he was ‘professionally competent and fully musically literate’, employing
‘technical terms from the vocabulary of music theory’. There seems to be no doubt, for
example, that his mentioning of a nota romana refers unequivocally to musical notation.
Yet Grier’s conclusion is that these claims of the Roman paternity of musical notation and
the involvement of a ‘Pope Gregory’ in the creation of a musical repertory and style arose
from the Carolingian propaganda campaign that accompanied the dissemination of the new
chant in an effort to establish its authority over local dialects and that, as such, they should
be dismissed. Rather, what seems to find corroboration in Adémar’s narration is the
common origin of all Frankish notations (notam franciscam) that would match Treitler’s idea
of a fully notated archetype whose existence, in Grier’s view, should be placed in the early
years of Louis the Pious’ reign after the death of his father, Charlemagne. The difference
is that, according to Adémar, this notation originated from a Roman invention and not
from a Frankish one such as the Palaeofrankish.

Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis 129 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 89–90. Excerpt and translation
469 Ibid., p. 53.
470 Ibid., p. 49.
471 Ibid., p. 55.
472 Ibid., p. 77.
What Old Roman notated manuscripts tell us is that no written transmission survives from before the eleventh century. Yet liturgical sources constitute evidence for the argument that by that time a repertory of texts had long been fixed and transmitted. Furthermore, written records of the initiatives to bring the Frankish liturgy and chant into conformity with Roman practice reveal the pivotal role that its liturgy and chant played in such process. Their role was not only in the codification of liturgical text but certainly also involved in music and its performance. A letter dating to 761–767 informs us that the cantor Simeon, prior of the schola cantorum, who taught chant in Rouen before going back to Rome, continued his music teaching to monks sent to the Holy See by Bishop Remigius of Rouen. However, the Frankish singers struggled to learn the Roman way of singing from Simeon.\textsuperscript{473} Music education in cantum Romanum was also promoted by Frankish bishops such as Chrodegang of Metz and was further enforced in the Admonitio generalis, where particular emphasis was also put on the correctio of texts.\textsuperscript{474} Adémar tells us that in 787 a Roman antiphoner was used to emend the Frankish compilations and mentions the names of two cantores involved in this operation, Theodoric and Benedict.\textsuperscript{475} A particularly controversial passage in the Chronicon is the one about Frankish singers also learning a Roman way of writing music (nota romana), which eventually evolved into Frankish notation (nota francisca). Whether romana or francisca, the importance of music writing as a pedagogic tool for teaching and transmitting chant may have resulted from the need to instruct Carolingian clerics in the performance details of a different way of singing, the Roman, which was considered at that time more authoritative, rather than the need to record a repertory in written form.

No manuscript evidence survives that can prove the existence of a nota romana in the late eighth century. Yet at the time Adémar was writing his Chronicon in the early eleventh century, central and southern Italy had already developed a type of musical notation. As Boe stated, certainly ‘notation of a domesticated Roman sort was at least occasionally in use at St Peter’s basilica by around the year 1000’.\textsuperscript{476} Indeed, this period corresponds also to the initial phase of Beneventan notation. The great similarity in the shape and use of music graphs in nota romana and Beneventan notation has led many scholars to refer to such types wholly as ‘Beneventan’ or,

\begin{footnotes}{473}Ibid., p. 61.\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{474}Ibid., p. 62.\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{475}Ekkehard IV (ca. 980–ca. 1056) names the two cantores, Petrus and Romanus, in the upper margin of St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 578 (p. 54). On Ekkehard’s and other versions of this story, see S. Rankin, ‘Ways of Telling Stories’ in Essays on Medieval Music in Honor of David G. Hughes, ed. G. M. Boone (Cambridge, MA: Isham Library Papers, 1995), pp. 372–394, esp. pp. 372–375.\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{476}Boe, ‘Music Notation’, p. 41. See also J. Boe, ‘Chant Notation in Eleventh-Century Roman Manuscripts’ in Essays on Medieval Music, pp. 43–57.\end{footnotes}
more generally, ‘central Italian’. In a series of recent writings, Giacomo Baroffio has proposed instead the definition of *nota romana* as the type of musical notation that spread from Rome to nearby areas (Tuscany, Umbria, northern Campania and Apulia) during the course of the late tenth and eleventh centuries, eventually reaching the Po valley (Emilia, Lombardia) in the early twelfth century. The eleventh century was a time of ecclesiastical reform of the Roman church, and one of the guiding principles was that of a return to the old liturgical tradition; the great basilicas, especially St Peter’s, were on the whole ‘tenacious of Roman repertory and Roman notation’. According to Baroffio, *nota romana* is, for example, the notation employed in the compilation of Bodmer 74, as much as that in Benevento 40; developed differently, both notations share many elements of the same basic type. In this study I will follow the idea that Beneventan notation is a type of *nota romana* and, in view of this, that sources of Old Roman and Beneventan chant should be approached as notationally comparable. But the question remains: when was this type created, and how? Is it possible that, as early as the ninth century, Rome possessed a way to represent sounds, although it may have been of use only to expert *cantores* for the purpose of music teaching?

What is the purpose, then, of this excursus? As will be illustrated in the following section, Nonantolan notation features certain essential elements for the designing of graphs that can be matched with shapes found in *nota romana*. Given that the use of notation at the Benedictine abbey is documented since the late ninth century in Pal. lat. 862, and was certainly in full use in the early tenth century in Sess. 96, could these traces be the oldest proofs of the existence of an Italic, indeed Roman, notation in the Carolingian period? Might these also shed light on the oldest type of Italic notation, possibly originating in Rome, which then spread to Benevento but was written down earlier in Nonantola? Could the base for this notation have been brought by Roman *cantores*, possibly on their way back to Rome from Frankish centres? And, finally, might Nonantola have been the first to employ musical notation in the compilation of books, possibly

477 For example, Max Lütolf refers to the notation in Bodmer 74 as a type of Beneventan. See Lütolf, *Das Graduale*, vol. 2, p. 24.


479 Boc, ‘Music Notation’, p. 45.

because it was closer to, and more receptive of, Carolingian reforms than were Rome and Benevento? If these hypotheses were confirmed, it would imply that Nonantola cantores found themselves between two driving forces during the creation of their type of music writing: the Frankish notational solutions coming from the north, and the Italic tradition from the south. This perspective is tantalising and the following sections may contribute to a first step towards an answer, although the sole focus will remain here the interpretation and graphic use of those elements in the context of Nonantolan musical notation. The later date of surviving manuscripts and fragments containing nota romana may raise methodological issues relating to comparisons between two different periods in the development of music writing in the early Middle Ages, that is, between the appearance of Nonantolan notation in the late ninth century and that of central/southern Italian music script in the late tenth century. However, the striking relationships that will be illustrated below between the two Italic ways of representing sound will not only shed new light on the possible graphic base of the notation of the northern Benedictine abbey, but also offer the potential of different and interesting perspectives for future works on the subject.
5.5. Borrowing graphs from grammarians

The first of these traces that may link the notation of the Benedictine abbey with the *nota romana* is the left-facing semicircle. This sign, used as essential element in the base for Nonantolan high–low or high–low–high graphs in combination, may be related to the Beneventan *apostrophus*. John Boe dedicated an essay to the study of the *apostrophus*, noting that there are hundreds of instances in manuscripts from southern Italy from all periods except the last, i.e. the late eleventh century and the twelfth. This sign is found in Beneventan notation, usually in isolation on a syllable and never compounded with other graphs, while it seems to be lacking in Old Roman notated manuscripts. It appears chiefly in Gregorian melodies for the Proper of the Mass and it is set to low, unaccented syllables that begin a phrase and move upward towards an accented syllable. Boe draws a parallel with the St Gall *punctum* and notes that more than two-thirds of the cases correspond to signs carrying the letter *c* for *celeriter* in East Frankish notations. Not many instances of the *apostrophus* appear in Old Beneventan chant, and those few are always in the same context as in Gregorian chant. Finally, this sign is never found in melismas or neumatic combinations and, in tropes and *prosulae*, the *apostrophus* may occur anywhere except the last note. The study concluded that ‘celerity’ seems possible as a single interpretation because low, quick, unaccented syllables at the start of a phrase in the Gregorian mass Propers are usually designated by this particular sign.

The rhythmical function of the *apostrophus* in Beneventan notation matches that of the left-facing semicircle in Nonantolan notation for a quick, shortened note leading to the following one, as described in the previous chapter. However, it differs in its graphic use in that it is always found compounded, as the first element of two descending notes or high–low–high graphs, and never isolated with syllabic value – for which Nonantolan uses, instead, the connected dot. Table 5.6 compares the shape of the *apostrophus* in the oldest Beneventan manuscripts with that used in Nonantolan graphs. Albarosa proposes a problematic interpretation of the graph for two descending notes featuring the *apostrophus* – which he refers to as ‘clivis strozzata’ – as composed of a ‘virga curva’ attached with a curving descending movement of the pen to a downward stroke designating the lower note. Ferretti simply notes that ‘on many [Nonantolan] neumes, the upper note has often the shape of […] a semicircle open on its lower end and attached to the following grave accent’ and, instead, sees the *apostrophus* in

482 Ibid., p. 44.
483 See §4.2.8, esp. p. 164.
the sign we called comma, employed for the bottom note of descending movements.\textsuperscript{485} According to Ferretti, the musical function of the \textit{apostrophus} differs from its grammatical origin as diacritic sign. In particular, he notes that the diacritic \textit{apostrophus} is an elision, the absence of a vowel, which contrasts with its use in musical notation as designating, instead, an actual sound rather than its absence.\textsuperscript{486} Furthermore, Ferretti argued that the diacritic sign is always ‘apposed’, yet in music scripts we may find \textit{apostrophi} that are ‘not apposed’.\textsuperscript{487} This was due to the particular sign and function that the Solesmes monk had in mind: that of the \textit{strophicus}, and not of the \textit{apostrophus} studied here. I will argue rather that this original diacritic function is indeed the one transferred onto music writing by the Nonantolan scribes, and with an even greater adherence than in the later Beneventan use.

The Greek term \textit{apostrophos} comes from \textit{apostrépho}, meaning ‘turning away, back, or in the opposite way’.\textsuperscript{488} Diomedes, and later Donatus and Priscianus, defined this sign as \textit{circuli pars dextera, sed ad summam litteram consonantem adposita, cui vocalis subtracta est} (‘a circle on the right, itself placed at the top of the consonant to which a vowel is subtracted’).\textsuperscript{489} This passage gives us three pieces of information: the graphic aspect of the \textit{apostrophus}, its positioning and its function of elision. The first point is self-explanatory, as the sign is always represented by a semi-circle to the right (\textit{circuli pars dextera}), while the rest of the grammarians’ definition will be revealing of how this sign was understood and used in Nonantolan notation. In particular, the \textit{apostrophus}’s function of

\begin{table}[h]
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\caption{\textit{Apostrophus} shapes}
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\textit{Sess. 96} \\
\textit{Vat. lat. 10673} Ben34 Lucca 606 Ben40 \\
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\textit{\includegraphics[width=0.1\textwidth]{figure1.png}} & \textit{\includegraphics[width=0.1\textwidth]{figure2.png}} \\
\textit{\includegraphics[width=0.1\textwidth]{figure3.png}} & \textit{\includegraphics[width=0.1\textwidth]{figure4.png}} \\
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\textsuperscript{486} ‘[...] l’apostrophe marque l’élision, ou l’absence d’une voyelle; en musique, au contraire, elle indique un son positif, ayant sa fonction spéciale’, ibid., p. 66.
\textsuperscript{487} ‘Chez les grammairiens l’apostrophe est toujours un signe apposé, on trouve au contraire en musique des apostrophes NON apposès, comme c’est le cas pour les distropha précédées d’une apostrophe plus basse ou deux apostrophes, également plus basses, et disposées elles-mêmes l’une au dessus de l’autre’, ibid.
\textsuperscript{488} See the entry ‘Apostrophe’ in the \textit{Oxford English Dictionary} (accessed online).
elision of a vowel effectively produces the effect of shortening, breaking the sound of the syllable (*consonantem ... cui vocalis subtracta est*). This corresponds to the sign’s rhythmical use for a light and quick note or, rather, for a contracted sound, explaining ‘celerity’ and its consequent effect of leading to the next note. As mentioned above, while not seeing a connection to the *apostrophus*, Ferretti argues that ‘this form of *acute accent* has a meaning both melodic and rhythmic; that is, it designates a *higher sound* than the preceding and at the same time a *quick sound*’. The positioning at the top of a letter (*ad summam litteram ... adposita*) matches that at the top of a melodic movement and, therefore, at the top of high–low graphs. Furthermore, the *apostrophus* is never used in Nonantolan notation to articulate the lower end of melodic passages, for which the comma-shaped sign is employed instead. Finally, while the sign is not graphically apposed to the preceding graph, its function of articulating the melodic inflection from the previous note is effectively that of ‘turning away, back’ from that note, thus further defining it as a separate one by functioning *a parte post*, as we saw in Chapter 4. The sound designated by an *apostrophus* may thus have had a dual effect: that of ‘breaking’ the melody from what came before it and thus also directing the weight of the movement to the following, lower note (Figure 5.11). This may have been achieved by a ‘contraction’ of the sound, a shortening, rather than an actual faster delivery. The use of the semi-circle/*apostrophus* might be defined further by its absence from those shapes for high–low that prescribe a fluid delivery of the top of a turning melodic gesture, e.g. \(\uparrow \downarrow\), arising from the preceding lower note, rather than being articulated.

![Figure 5.11. Low–high–low melodic movement.](image)

The hook with dot \(\uparrow\) is present in Beneventan and *nota romana* notations, both in isolation on a syllable and compounded (Table 5.7). The musical use at Nonantola is that of an articulation sign separating the note it designates from the following one. It is not, for example, the equivalent of an East Frankish *episema*, for its meaning is not of a greater rhythmical emphasis such as a lengthening. In the study of Beneventan notation in volume 15 of the *Paléographie musicale*, this sign is classified as an *oriscus*, as it is also in Lütolf’s study of the notation of Bodmer 74. In

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490 ‘Cette forme d’*accent aigu* a une signification à la fois *mélodique* et *rythmique*; c’est-à-dire qu’elle marque un *son plus élevé* que le *son précédent* et en même temps un *son bref*, *Paléographie musicale* 13, p. 85.
491 See §4.2.8, p. 164.
492 See §4.2.8, p. 163.
493 In particular, the ‘troisième forme’ of the Beneventan *oriscus*. See *Paléographie musicale* 15, p. 142.
Bodmer the hook with dot is often found on accented syllables and used as a middle element between a preceding note at the unison and a following lower note. In Nonantola, this function is expressed by the horizontal comma.\textsuperscript{494} In the Santa Cecilia gradual, the hook with dot is also used to designate the first note of high–low–low. More frequently, however, it is found either at the beginning or at the end in compound graphs, but its shape remains the same in all cases. This form is described as a forme classique that is present in the majority of preserved Beneventan manuscripts.

Table 5.7. Forms of the hook with dot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vat. lat. 10673</th>
<th>Lucca 606</th>
<th>Ben40</th>
<th>Bodmer 47</th>
<th>Pal. lat. 862</th>
<th>Sess. 96</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The shape in Vat. lat. 10673 and Lucca 606, both isolated and compound, features an upward slanted approach stroke leading to a horizontal thickening of the trait’s width, connected through an upward transitional stroke to a second horizontal short trait, essentially a dot (Figure 5.12a). The shape in Ben40 and Bodmer 74, by contrast, is that of an approach stroke ending in a dot exploiting the nib width, followed by a second dot in slanted sequence (Figure 5.12b). Palaeographically, it is evident how the various graph-forms reveal a basic graph-shape for this particular sign of two main consecutive elements, preceded by an approach stroke.

![Image](image5)  

Figure 5.12. Graph-forms of the hook with dot.

The shape in Pal. lat. 862 and Sess. 96 is comparable with those in nota romana manuscripts Ben40 and Bodmer 74 in the absence of the transitional stroke between the two essential elements. When the sign is used in compounds – as is always the case in Nonantolan notation – the approach stroke in nota romana becomes an important component of the graph’s design, acting as a juncture from the preceding downward vertical stroke (Table 5.7). In the notation of the

\textsuperscript{494} Lütolf, \textit{Das Graduale}, p. 27.
northern Italian abbey, this juncture stroke is also exploited for specifying pitch in high–low–high signs, elongated according to the relative height of the note and thus modifying the shape of the graph (Table 5.7: Sess. 96).  

It seems that Nonantolan scribes were exposed to the sign and its meaning, as well as its use in design, very early in the elaboration of their script as they chose to incorporate it in the script’s base. Its restricted use only in the formation of compound graphs is due to the sign’s function as an articulation and distinction mark, especially to specify relationships between successive tones. Nonantola already possessed graphic techniques for specifying pitch, such as the placement of notes in the interlinear or sublinear space, which, together with the contrasting meanings of the connected dot and dash, would have made the use of this sign in isolation redundant. In compounds, though, it was perceived necessary to specify the particular note in the graph that needed to be delivered distinctively.

As for the origin of this sign, which might be interpreted as a sequence of two dots, it may be of particular interest to compare it with the Ancient Greek diacritic mark involving a separation of two sounds, two vowels: the dieresis. The meaning of the word διαίρεσις is ‘taking apart’, ‘division’, ‘separation’, and in prosody the dieresis is used to show that a pair of vowel letters is pronounced separately: the sign is always placed on the first vowel, but its influence falls also on the following one. In this sense, the sound designated by a ‘dieresis’ is separated, divided from the following one, thus involving not a fluid delivery, as a quick connection, but a clear ending of a melodic movement followed by the beginning of the next. Another possible interpretation of the hook with dot is that it may derive from the punctuation mark, the colon, which use is to articulate different sections of a period. Indeed, in at least three cases, the scribe of Sess. 96 writes two vertical dots instead of the hook with dot. The first two cases are found in the melisma on the last syllable of precioso from the tract verse Posuisti super caput (f. 319r) (Figure 5.13a) and the third on the melisma on mea at the end of the offertory Oratio mea (f. 319r) (Figure 5.13b).

Figure 5.13. Use of vertical dots instead of the hook with dot (f. 319r).

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495 See §4.2.11–12.

496 On the relationship between punctuation signs and early music scripts see Treitler, ‘Reading and Singing’.
What these cases have in common is the lack of an adequate horizontal space for the writing of the melisma: is it possible that the scribe chose to represent the two elements of the shape we called hook with dot vertically rather than horizontally? It is hard, however, to determine exactly whether these shapes should be considered as an alternative shape, a modification or simply a mistake.

A final consideration to conclude this section regards a possible relationship between the comma sign ( comma) in Nonantolan notation and the Ancient Greek diacritic sign diastole or hypodiastole. The comma is used to designate the bottom note of a descending melodic movement and it corresponds to a moment of articulation between that gesture and the start of the following one. Isidore, in his Etymologiae, tell us that the diastole is a distinctio, quae e contrario separate and that should be written as dextera pars circuli supposita versui (I, §19). Thus, just as the apostrophos is an articulation at the top, the diastole is an articulation at the bottom, and this use matches that of the sign we called comma in Nonantolan notation. In this case too, the musical sign, which shape may be compared to that of the punctuation mark comma, is used for a minor caesura between two sections of a musical phrase.

\footnote{I do not claim here any direct relationship between Nonantolan notation and Byzantine notation. On the theory of a possible Byzantine origin of musical notation in Europe see C. Floros, The Origins.}

\footnote{See §4.2.3, pp. 141–142.}
5.6. Music scripts, accents and the heritage of Rome

After having analysed the set of essential elements and the graphic process of design of Nonantolan notation, one final question still remains to be discussed: what is the possible origin of this music script? And, in particular, to what other early music script/s – if any – might the notation of the Benedictine abbey be related? Two arguments may be set out: the first could be referred to as the ‘pes argument’, the second as the ‘torculus argument’.499

The premise of the ‘pes argument’ is the absence in Nonantolan notation of a single graph for two rising notes. In most known notational families, a low–high movement is expressed either by a single graph, its modification or an alternative ‘disjoint’ form, depending on the particular rhythmic nuance the scribe needed to represent (Table 5.2). East Frankish types use signs such as the pes rotundus or quadratus with or without episema for the top note, while the alternative sign, with two virgae placed in vertical sequence, is less common. Along with the pes, Lotharingian notation often uses an alternative sign consisting of a vertically placed uncinus and virga. Similarly, in Breton notation a dot/dash is used instead as the first element of the rhythmically articulated shape, alongside the joint form for low–high. In West Frankish music scripts (e.g. MR), what would be a pes rotundus in East Frankish is always quadratus; alternative forms such as punctum + virga or two virgae are also present. Most Italian notations, whether of East (e.g. Bobbio, Aquileia) or West Frankish influence (Bologna, Novalesa, Beneventan), possess both alternatives, but joint shapes are used predominantly. The only music script that systematically uses a disjoint graph for two rising notes in the shape of a punctum + virga is the Aquitanian.

In Nonantola the rhythmical articulation of two rising notes is achieved with the contrasting meaning of the presence or absence of the dash (either connected or on top of an acuta), and not by the joining or splitting of the two elements. The joined alternative, therefore, seems never to have reached Nonantola: were the notators of the Benedictine abbey aware of this possibility? And, if so, why was it not employed? The established links with transalpine abbeys, as well as with other northern Italian centres such as Bobbio with its East Frankish notation, would have favoured such influence.500 It is therefore possible to argue that the notators of the Po Valley monastery made the deliberate choice not to adopt these forms, as they had

499 I employ here this terminology (i.e. pes, torculus) only for the sake of clarity in the comparison with other early music scripts.

already developed a system that was functional and rational enough for their requirements. This would necessarily imply that joint shapes were not part of the original layer of musical signs that the scribes were working with. Alternatively, the Benedictine abbey may have been determined to create a distinctive type of notation that was representative of its customs and traditions as part of a process intended to strengthen the institution’s autonomy and authority. Such shapes may have been considered by Nonantolan scribes to be too closely associated with other traditions to be suitable for use in the shaping of their own institutional music script. This hypothesis would imply that joint graphs for two ascending notes arrived at Nonantola before, or during, the phase of the creation of its settled script but were then discarded. However, given the spread and wide diffusion of joint shapes for two ascending notes throughout Carolingian Europe and later, this last possibility is difficult to sustain: such a programmatic rejection is not consistent with the very pragmatic nature of Nonantolan notation. Furthermore, as we have seen, the northern Italian notation already shares some of its simplest shapes (dot, dash and *acuta*) with other contemporary music scripts, albeit with some degree of variation in meaning, and the selective exclusion only of joint graphs for low–high movements would seem improbable. Therefore, of the two scenarios, it is the first one that I will carry further in the following paragraphs: that is, that the earliest layer of music signs at Nonantola did not include such joint forms and that these were adopted by Frankish notations either at a later stage or, more likely, contemporarily yet independently.

The Paleofrankish interpretation of the acute accent (*/\*), designating two rising notes, is not present in Nonantolan notation, nor does it appear possible to prove a shifting of its shape in that of the *acuta*. While such a shift may have taken place in Frankish notations, where the Paleofrankish vertical stroke was translated to signify a single higher note (*virga*) and the ‘original’ meaning was inscribed, instead, in the designing of the *pes* by the addition of an approach stroke, in Nonantolan notation the graph for the *acuta* – with or without dash – is only used in combination to mean a single higher note, and it is never compounded.501 On these bases, it may be possible to conclude that there was no direct relationship between Paleofrankish notations and the Nonantolan music script in the shape of signs for low–high.

Table 5.8 shows the main shapes for two rising notes in music scripts around the year 900. In Nonantolan and Aquitanian notations the two tones of a low–high are always represented by two distinct graphs, while in Breton, Lotharingian and West Frankish notations two rising notes may also be designated by a single graph. At the other end of the spectrum are East Frankish notations that make use only of single graphs.502 Breton, Lotharingian and West

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501 The idea of the addition of a horizontal stroke to the Paleofrankish shapes in Frankish notations is maintained by Rankin: Rankin, *Writing Sound*, §2.
502 For the East Frankish family I have not included in Table 5.8 other notational solutions that use *episemata* or significative letters, as these do not constitute graphic modifications of the low–high graphs.
Frankish notations, therefore, seem to share a graphic approach that governed both the joining and separating of low–high signs.  

Table 5.8. Shapes for two rising notes, ca. 900.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aquitanian</th>
<th>Nonantolan</th>
<th>Breton</th>
<th>Lotharingian</th>
<th>Frankish West</th>
<th>Frankish East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Shape" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of East Frankish notations, Nonantolan notation did, however, share with other music scripts the concept of a vertical stroke for designating a higher note – derived from the shape of the acute accent – that was employed in the designing of all its low–high signs. Nonantolan notation does not share, though, the splitting of graphs for two rising notes as a way to convey nuances of vocal delivery as in Breton, Lotharingian and West Frankish music scripts: it may be possible to argue that Nonantolan scribes were not aware of a ‘joint’ alternative and developed a way to specify articulation with the use of dashes. Finally, East Frankish notation developed rather independently, possibly drawing on the fundamental Paleofrankish notational convention of representing a low–high melodic movement with a single graph.

The ‘torculus argument’ rests on the evidence that Nonantola does not possess a single graph for low–high–low movement. Such a melodic gesture is expressed in Nonantolan notation by a sign for a single note, always a connected dot, followed by a high–low sign. All other music scripts possess, instead, a single ‘joint’ sign for high–low–high, with the exception, again, of the Aquitanian, which consistently features a punctum followed by a clivis. As demonstrated above, all Nonantolan signs for two descending notes derive from the basic downward vertical stroke with added articulation signs (<thead 1
| Data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aquitanian</td>
<td>Nonantolan</td>
<td>Breton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Shape" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image12" alt="Shape" /></td>
<td><img src="image13" alt="Shape" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contrary to Cardine’s argument, I believe the two virgae written in vertical sequence used – rarely – in East Frankish music script cannot be considered to be a disjoint shape of the pes but is a different sign altogether. See E. Cardine, ‘Sémiologie grégorienne’, Études grégoriennes 11 (1970), pp. 19, 21.

503 I adopt this terminology, i.e. ‘joining’, ‘separating’, from the work of Professor Susan K. Rankin (Cambridge).

504 See §4.2.10.
expressing emphasis – and then write the downward stroke for high–low with a curving movement of the pen originating from the upward axis of the connected dot and directing the eye of the reader through the turning gesture: \( \hat{n} \). The *coupure neumatique* in other notations between the first and second notes could be achieved in Nonantolan notation only through the apposition of an *apostrophus* at the top of the downward stroke for two descending notes: \( \hat{\text{L}} \).

As convincingly demonstrated by Charles Atkinson, the shape of the Paleofrankish *torculus* ‘\( \circ \)’ derived from that of the circumflex accent ‘\( \Upsilon \)’, as formed by the signs for an acute ‘\( / \)’ and grave ‘\( \backslash \)’ accent. This shape ‘\( \circ \)’ in Paleofrankish notations can be found alongside the alternative one of a dot followed by the downward stroke (grave accent) for two descending notes: ‘\( \cdot \backslash \)’. The former shape ‘\( \circ \)’ may have been the one reproduced by notators in Carolingian Francia for the creation of their low–high–low graphs, with the addition of an added horizontal stroke. However, such a convention may never have reached Nonantola, and the latter shape ‘\( \cdot \backslash \)’ may have been the one adopted, instead, by Po Valley notators as the basis for the designing of low–high–low signs. This implies that, if the use of the circumflex accent should be sought in Nonantolan notation, it would not be the sign for low–high–low.

Although Donatus does not describe the accents strictly in terms of their pitch inflections, Isidore and Martianus Capella do. Isidore defines the acute accent as ‘lifting up’ a syllable and the grave as ‘depressing’ and ‘pushing down’; as for the circumflex accent, ‘beginning from the acute, it ends in the grave, and thus a circumflex is made because it both ascends and descends’:

\[\text{Acutus accentus dicit, quod acuat et erigat syllabam, gravis quod deprimat et deponat. Est enim contrarius acuto.}
\]
\[\text{Circumflexus, quia de acuto et gravi constat. Incipiens enim ab acuto in gravem desinit, atque ita dum ascendit et descendit, circumflexus effectus} \] (Etymologiae, I §18)

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505 Ibid., p. 171–172.
506 Ibid., p. 169.
507 Atkinson demonstrated also that ‘the melodic gestures referred to by the terms *acutus accentus* and *circumflexio* or *circumvolutio* in the [Aurelian’s] *Musica disciplina* and represented by the graphic signs of the Paleofrankish script [...] are one and the same’. See Atkinson, *The Critical Nexus*, pp. 106–113.
509 See above, note 117.
511 Translation in *ibid.*, p. 43.
It is clear from Isidore’s descriptions that the acute and grave accents represent each a single *tonus*, while the circumflex consists of both acute and grave and thus of two pitches. In fact, such inflections are described more in terms of movement than strictly ‘pitch’: the acute moves to the top ☇ (acuat et erigat), the grave moves to the bottom ☈ (deprimat et deponat), and the circumflex falls from the top to the bottom ☉ (incipiens enim ab acuto in grave desinit). Furthermore, in the description of the shape for the acute and grave accents Martianus Capella employs the word *virgula*, while the circumflex accent is defined as a *sigma*.\(^{512}\) The difference in Isidore and Donatus in the use of, respectively, the words *linea* and *nota* in the description of the shape of the circumflex accent may be more significant, in this context, than previously considered:

Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum* I, §19

*De figuris Accentuum. [...] Περισπωμένη, id est circumflexus, *linea* de acuto et gravi facta, exprimitur ita: ∧ [...]*

Donatus, *Ars maior* I, §5

*De tonis. [...] circumflexus *nota* de acuto et gravi facta ∧ [...]*

The Carolingian definition of *linea*, drawn from the *Liber glossarum*, is that it *induct* quam cum querem (‘connects something with something else’), while that of *nota* describes a written mark or, more often, a complex graph composed of more than one element.\(^{513}\) This reading opens up the possibility that the description of the shape for the circumflex accent may have been interpreted quite literarily by Nonantolan scribes, perhaps from Isidore’s description, as a *linea de acuto et gravi facta*, and interpreting *acutus* and *gravis* not as the accents’ shapes but in terms of movement, particularly the direction of the pen’s stroke (ψ), thus being represented graphically as a downward vertical line 1. Such *linea*, designating a descending inflection of two toni (de acuto et gravis constat, atque ita dum ascendit et descendit), may have been ultimately employed in Nonantolan notation as essential element of high–low graphs.\(^{514}\)

This interpretation may be corroborated by a comparison with the description of the shapes for the acute and grave accents by Martianus, Donatus and Isidore. It is evident that these definitions share the importance of the slanted, oblique axis of such signs as a fundamental graphic feature:

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\(^{512}\) In the manuscript tradition of *De numptiis, notae* do not appear integrated in the text. Only later glosses demonstrate that Martianus’ *sigma* was to be represented as a circumflex accent. See Atkinson, *The Critical Nexus*, pp. 61–5.

\(^{513}\) The definition of *linea* was drawn from the eighth-century copy of the *Liber glossarum* in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 11530 (f. 63r), *CLA* V 611. As argued by many scholars, the meaning of *nota* in the ninth century was mainly connected to the shorthand system of Tironian notes and not to musical notation.

\(^{514}\) See §4.2.7–8.
— acute vetica: *a sinistra parte in dexteram ascendente* (Martianus); *per obliquum ascendens in dexteram partem* (Donatus); *a sinistra parte in dexteram partem sursum ducta* (Isidore);

— grave vetica: *a sinistra ad dexteram descendens* (Martianus); *nota a summo in dexteram partem descendens* (Donatus); *linea a summo sinistræ in dexteram deposita* (Isidore).

By contrast, the direction of the circumflex accent is specified only by ‘high’ and ‘low’, *de acuto et gravis* (Donatus, Isidore) (Table 5.9). Clearly, the writers were referring to the shapes of the two accents. However, in a description of an accent’s *figurae*, where much precision was put into illustrating the pen’s movements for their realisation, it is not unlikely that a reader might have found such terms ambiguous and might interpret them as directions rather than as descriptions of the accents’ shapes. Furthermore, the vertical placement of signs and the axis followed in their writing was certainly an important feature of Nonantolan music script, to the extent that their modification may have resulted in an alteration of meaning. Thus a vertical downward stroke may have been perceived as inscribing a different meaning in comparison to the slanted ones of the acute and grave accents.

The main issue with, and possible objection to, this hypothesis is that Donatus and, certainly, Isidore did not limit themselves to a verbal description of the shapes of prosodic accents, but also included examples in order to clarify their descriptions visually.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>acute accent</th>
<th>grave accent</th>
<th>circumflex accent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martianus</td>
<td><em>virgule a sinistra parte in dexteram ascendente</em></td>
<td><em>a sinistra ad dexteram descendens</em></td>
<td><em>sigma super ipsas litteras de vescum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donatus</td>
<td><em>nota per obliquum ascendens in dexteram partem</em></td>
<td><em>nota a summo in dexteram partem descendens</em></td>
<td><em>nota de acuto et gravi facta</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isidore</td>
<td><em>linea a sinistra parte in dexteram partem sursum ducita</em></td>
<td><em>linea a summo sinistræ in dexteram deposita</em></td>
<td><em>linea de acuto et gravi facta</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

515 These include a late eighth-century palimpsest manuscript from Bobbio in Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 64 Weiss. (f. 12v) (CLA IX 1386; BK 7409a), one of the oldest sources in Lindsay’s edition of ‘B Familia II (Italicae sive Contractae)’. See *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, ed. W. M. Lindsay, Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911), pp. ix–x. A copy written possibly in Verona in the eighth century, and possessed by Reichenau (Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, *Aug. Perg. LVII*), could have been very useful in this context, but it is incomplete at the beginning.
The transmission of the first book of Isidore’s *Etymologiae* in manuscripts of the late eighth century and the ninth features the graphs for each sign preceded by *fit ita* (‘it is done like this’).\(^{516}\) As ambiguous as the above descriptions of the circumflex accent may have been perceived in this context, it is very unlikely that the ‘\(\checkmark\)’ shape could have been ignored by any attentive reader of a complete and carefully compiled copy of these texts.\(^{517}\) This critique, however, rests only on the idea that the learning of such shapes was based on a *written* rather than an *oral* transmission.\(^{518}\) As pointed out above, in the absence of an example of a circumflex accent, its definition might have been interpreted differently, for example as describing the shaping of a vertical stroke.\(^{519}\) It is thus possible to infer that Nonantolan notation shares with Paleofrankish music script the convention of a downward vertical stroke designating two descending notes, but that the origin of such signs were different: in Paleofrankish, the high–low sign was doubtless derived from the shape of the grave accent ‘\(\backslash\)’, while in Nonantolan notation two descending notes were represented by a downward vertical stroke, perhaps as a local graphic interpretation of the circumflex accent. Thus in the case of the sign for low–high, a direct derivation of Nonantolan from Paleofrankish script – as transmitted in surviving sources – may still be questioned.

In order to further assess the hypothesis that, in the notation of the Benedictine abbey, the acute accent was employed for designating a higher note, while that of the circumflex accent represented a high–low melodic movement, it is necessary to ask how the shape and meaning of the grave accent was interpreted in Nonantolan notation. In the previous chapter I have considered the transposition of the grammatical grave accent to the shape of the downward stroke as the sign for two descending notes, in line with the results of previous scholarship. I will now present the possibility of a different interpretation, aiming at understanding how such an accent shape was translated in Nonantolan notation.

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516 See Lindsay, *Isidori Hispaliensis*, Book I, xix.
518 On this issue, Leo Treitler states that the only way accent shapes could have influenced the idea of neumes would have been through written transmission: ‘the idea of neumes would have to be taken from the treatises, and [...] at a time when the treatises were not much in circulation, before the Carolingian era. With the recirculation and new composition of grammatical treatises in the Carolingian era, it is not implausible that the inventors of notation would have been influenced by them.’ This idea, I believe, fails to take into account the pivotal role of oral transmission in teaching in the early Middle Ages. See L. Treitler, ‘Reading and Singing’, p. 183.
519 At least one example of a different shape for the circumflex accent in the transmission of Isidore’s text is found in St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 237 (p. 19), copied at the abbey in the first half of the ninth century; here the circumflex accent is represented by two strokes, the first almost horizontal and the second slanted, descending and thicker. The manuscript was dated by Bischoff to the first half of the ninth century and was certainly copied in St Gall; see BK III 5675. The manuscript is in Lindsay’s family ‘Hispanicae sive interpolate’; see Lindsay, *Isidori*, p. xi.
The grammarians’ description of the shape for the grave accent is of a ‘line descending from top left to right’ (linea a summo sinistrae in dexteram deposita, Table 5.9) and representing a tone that ‘depresses and pushes down’ (deprimat et deponat), thus being ‘the opposite of the acute’ (contrarius acutus). The only sign to comprise all these features in Nonantolan music script is the sublinear connected dash. Despite having the same graphic shape of the interlinear (connected) dash in isolation on a syllable (\( \bar{L} \)), or that placed on top of the acuta in combination (\( \bar{I} \)), the shape and meaning of the sublinear (connected) dash (\( \bar{J} \)) is coherent with the grammarians’ description of the grave accent as a lower sound represented by a linea a summo sinistrae in dexteram deposita. A low note, therefore, may have been represented in Nonantolan notation by a downward oblique stroke \( \diagdown \) connected, following the usual technique, to the syllable from the sublinear space. Effectively, the graph for a sublinear (connected) dash and, particularly, its placement is to every extent contrarius acutus.

As evidence in favour of this interpretation it is possible to compare the same use of a rightward descending dash for a lower note in nota romana notations. For example, the sequence for the first Sunday of Advent Ecce iam Christus (f. 1r) in the Old Roman gradual from Santa Cecilia in Trastevere features dashes written horizontally for unisons and obliquely, from left to right, for lower notes (Figure 5.14).\(^{520}\) Virgae are employed for a higher note and the graph we called ‘hook with dot’ was used for articulation on accented syllables of particular words (Christus, prophetaverunt, nobis) and melodic contexts, usually following a unison and preceding a lower note.\(^{521}\) The specification of movement as expressed by the virgae and the oblique dashes may be considered to be accessory in a fully diastematic context. Therefore, despite the later date of compilation of Bodmer 74 compared to Sess. 96, it may be possible to consider these features as remnants of the older nota romana that have been transposed on these lines.

\[\text{Ecce iam Chris-tus quem san-cti pa-tres pro-phe-ta-ve-ru nt ad-ve-niet no-bis}\]

Figure 5.14. Use of horizontal and oblique dashes (Bodmer 74, f. 1r).

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\(^{520}\) Lütolf lists five types of tractulus: see Lütolf, Das Graduale, p. 25.

\(^{521}\) Lütolf calls these signs virgae: see ibid., p. 25. For the ‘hook with dot’, see above, §5.5, pp. 222–224.
There are also many examples of such a use of the dash in the Beneventan notations of *nota romana*, especially from early sources but also from as late as the twelfth century. In the fifteenth volume of the *Paleographie musicale*, the *Étude sur la notation bénéventaine* defines this shape as deriving from the grave accent and calls it *accent oblique*.

A problematic aspect of this hypothesis is that analysis of the notation has shown that the dash in early Nonantolan music script corresponds only to a note with a rhythmical emphasis – possibly a lengthening – regardless of whether it was connected to the syllable in the interlinear or sublinear space, or supported by the *acuta* when employed in combination. Ferretti, Moderini and Albarosa identify the use of the grave accent not in the sublinear connected dash but in a particular graph only present in the *membra disjecta* of a gradual now in Monza and Milan and corresponding – in terms of use rather than shape – to the sign we called comma.

Is it possible, then, that when written in the sublinear space, the sign ` embedded both the meaning of a *lower* note, as derived from the shape of the grave accent, and that of a nuance in delivery? Moreover, just as a *higher* note is always represented by an *acuta* only in combination, why would a *lower* note in the sublinear space be designated, instead, both by a sublinear connected dot and as well as by a dash? The shape, use and meaning of a downward-left oblique dash in Nonantolan notation and *nota romana* bears striking connections to the writers’ descriptions of the grave accent; these connections should not be disregarded, but further investigations will be needed in order to provide an answer to these questions.

A few final remarks concern the relationship between the music script employed at Nonantola and the Italic *nota romana*. The starting point is that these scripts share the very distinctive use of the *apostrophus* and of the ‘hook with dot’, in addition to that of the oblique dash and a comparable attention to the treatment of pitch. The question arising is thus: why are all these elements found in Nonantolan notation at least a century before the earliest notated sources of *nota romana*? Certainly, it may be possible to argue that the notation from the Benedictine abbey could not have exerted so much influence as to shape traits of the *nota romana* and consequently of Beneventan notations, especially in view of the fact that the use of these signs is not identical though very similar. These ideas would have had to reach Rome and the South and then be re-elaborated in those territories, eventually resulting in the forms featured in

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522 The oblique dash is considered to be a *punctum* in *Paleographie musicale* 15, pp. 118–119.
524 The dash itself does not express movement and that is why, in combination, an *acuta* is added to specify directionality. See §4.2.4, p.148.
526 See above, §5.4.
surviving notated manuscripts. This scenario is difficult to sustain and almost impossible to prove. Instead, it appears more useful to think about the possibility of an influx of some musicographic conventions of the *nota romana* on Nonantolan music script as early as the mid-ninth century. In other words, could it be possible that certain notational devices were in use by Roman singers who travelled to Nonantola or, vice versa, that a *cantor* from the Benedictine abbey acquired such knowledge during a visit to Rome?

As argued by Boe, it is unlikely that Rome and the South did not possess a type of musical notation until as late as the early eleventh century.\(^5\) This argument is based on the liturgical tradition transmitted in the earliest notated sources for Old Roman chant that could be traced back to at least the late eighth century, since we do not possess any surviving evidence of a Roman ninth-century music script that may definitely validate this claim. However, if we suppose that certain notational conventions were indeed circulating in Rome by the second half of the ninth century, would it then be conceivable that the Nonantolan use of such conventions may be the earliest surviving written testimony of the *nota romana*? At this point, if a set of musical signs did exist and was used among Roman singers, we should be wondering what exactly was taken from it for the creation of the Nonantolan music script. If the influence was restricted to those articulation signs it would imply that the *base* derived from prosodic accents was a transalpine import, which was further enriched with such elements for the representation of the nuances of vocal delivery. If, instead, the legacy of *nota romana* to Nonantolan music script was the complete *base*, subsequently merged with graphic ideas about the treatment of text and pitch elaborated in the Po Valley Benedictine abbey, we may be led to conceive that musicographic conventions reached Rome from the centre of the Carolingian Empire some time in the first half of the ninth century and, from there, travelled north reaching Nonantola. Alternatively, as proposed above, the individual(s) responsible for the designing of an institutional method for the visual representation of sound in Carolingian Nonantola could have drawn on the outcomes of contemporaneous experimentations on both sides of the Alps. Further investigation of the ‘pre-history’ of the type of music script associated with the Lombard foundation is surely intriguing; however, it is far beyond the scope of the present study.

\(^5\) ‘Notation entered central Italy [...] perhaps coming into very occasional and tentative use at Rome some time after 800 but probably not until late in the ninth century’. See Boe, ‘Music Notation’, p. 41.
Conclusions

The first chapter of this work reconstructs the early history of the abbey of St Sylvester in Nonantola, from its foundation to the early eleventh century. In particular, the institution’s political and administrative roles, as well as its relations with the Frankish court, are highlighted in an investigation of the historical context in which Nonantolan notation originated. The second section of the chapter is the study of the creation and growth of the abbey’s book collection, the first phases of manuscript production in the abbey and the history of the text script used in the ninth-century *scriptorium*.

The abbey’s relationships with the Carolingian court began soon after the fall of the Lombard kingdom, with Charlemagne involved in the political process of the return of Anselm, the abbey’s founder, from Cassinese exile and in the granting of privileges and exemptions to him. Anselm’s successors were active and prominent participants in the political life of the Frankish empire: both Peter I and Ansfrith were sent as ambassadors to Constantinople, in 813 and 828 respectively. The monastery’s prestige had already been increased a few decades earlier by the *translatio*, in 754, of the relics of St Sylvester, and the number of monks began to rise rapidly. Nonantola was wholly involved in the political and administrative activity of the Carolingian empire as well as in the cultural life of centres both south and north of the Alps. At the same time, however, the monastic community always claimed its independence and was engaged in the preservation of tradition. Because of Nonantola’s geographical position – separated from the rest of the empire by the Alpine range and bordering the Byzantine Ravenna – Frankish administration particularly favoured the Benedictine abbey in order to strengthen ties with the court in Aachen. The Po Valley was also far from being a peripheral area of the empire, for northern Italian monasteries were often a stopping-point on the route to Rome and the papal court. Alemannic monks, therefore, were sent to the monasteries in the Po Valley for a twofold purpose: to establish and reinforce connections and to be trained in the rich libraries of the northern Italic peninsula. Finally, the presence of Alemannic abbots and monks in Nonantola is attested by both the *libri memoriales* and the *Catalogus abbatum nonantolanorum*. Their presence was the result of Nonantola becoming fully part of the Carolingian empire and engaging in the establishment and consolidation of the Frankish political and cultural enterprise.

Nonantola certainly had an active scriptorium from the last years of the eighth century, and very soon those producing manuscripts began elaborating the abbey’s particular type of minuscule, which eventually became fixed during the first two decades of the ninth century, at the time of abbot Peter I. This type of script was especially crafted in order to fit into contemporary
northern Italian production; it also constituted a continuation of the Lombard graphic tradition. The adoption of features common to various types of pre-Caroline minuscules in use throughout the Regnum may have been perceived as the perpetuation of the ‘national’ script of the kingdom under which the abbey was established, but it was also thought of as a way of forging a part of the abbey’s identity. Many volumes were imported as part of the acquisitioes of the first abbots: Anselm, Vigilantius, Peter I and Ansfrith. The most significant for recent scholarly debate were the acquisitions made by St Anselm from the southern Italian abbey of Montecassino. More frequent, and possibly more conspicuous, were the acquisitions made by later abbots from nearby northern Italian centres, as well as from scriptoria across the Alps. During the first half of the ninth century, a manuscript exchange was taking place between Nonantola, alpine and transalpine centres – e.g. Chur, Reichenau, St Gall – providing other emerging monastic foundations with essential texts. It is probably thanks to this constant book trade (that of the libri memoriales is very significant) and movement of persons (the conspicuous presence of Frankish and Alemannic monks in Nonantola is remarkable) that the Benedictine coenobium had access to the first specimens of Caroline minuscule, possibly as early as the second quarter of the ninth century. In the second half of the century, modified shapes and graphic criteria that approached Caroline canons – e.g. fewer ligatures, dimorphism for a (cursive/half-uncial) and d (uncial/half-uncial) – led Nonantolan minuscule to a gradual phase of ‘decadence’ (BienoFF) until it became an ‘impoverished’ script. However, although other centres like Verona had been employing the Frankish canons since the 830s, the abbey sought to maintain a certain graphical tradition and scriptorium practice by preserving the old, traditional shapes even in high-grade production. Caroline minuscule was not adopted in the scriptorium until manuscript production resumed, sometime in the tenth century, after the desolation caused by the destruction of the monastery in 899.

The purpose of this lengthy discussion of the history of the abbey and the library of Nonantola is to shed new light on the political, ecclesiastical and cultural context in which Nonantolan notation originated and developed during its early phases. It is difficult to imagine that such an influential and powerful monastery would not have had a similarly well-developed and vital liturgical practice as well as a solid chant tradition. It is also rather unlikely that the experimentations in music writing that were taking place in the centre of the Carolingian empire would not have reached the ninth-century northern Italian abbey. Rather, it is conceivable that the movements of monks and influential figures would have brought along new ideas and techniques in music writing, reaching – possibly around the third quarter of the ninth century – the Benedictine abbey, where a distinctive and institutional notational type was eventually elaborated at Nonantola. However, unlike the corpus of surviving manuscripts from the library
collection, there is a total lack of liturgical manuscripts and especially those for chant. No antiphonarium – which at that time consisted, in most cases, of a collection of chant texts with no distinction between Office and Mass – survive from the early ninth-century abbey. That the 899 fire – and indeed later ones – contributed to the obliteration of the liturgical sources of Carolingian Nonantola may be a possible explanation.

The point of departure for the study of the Nonantolan music script has been the earliest surviving notated manuscripts, the oldest of which are a dozen palimpsest folios in Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Pal. lat. 862 (ff. 68–108). By examining the scriptio inferior in the Vatican palimpsest – which, according to Bernhard Bischoff, should date to ca. 900 – in light of the events in the history of the Benedictine abbey, it has been possible to confirm its dating to the ninth century, shortly before the destruction of the abbey in 899, thus placing the compilation of Pal. lat. 862 in the last quarter of the century. The solution of the codicological case, rendered particularly complex by a heavy erasure and a chaotic reuse of the original folios, was made possible by the employment of the latest techniques of digital image restoration: this process revealed, for the first time, considerably more detail about the content and notation of the Nonantolan palimpsest. The second early Nonantolan notated source is the last gathering of the composite manuscript Rome, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Sess. 96, ff. 314r–319v. The features of the script in combination with the particular content of the gathering, entirely devoted to the liturgy for St Benedict of Nursia, and with the history of the Benedictine institution suggest a dating to the first decade of the tenth century: it was thus possibly compiled during the repopulation of the abbey – begun probably around the year 911 – in order to fill a lacuna left by the Hungarian destruction of the monastic library. No other music manuscript survives from the tenth century, a fact that may be seen to confirm the relative inactivity of the Nonantolan scriptorium during that period, making Sess. 96 the most important testimony of the music script at the Po Valley abbey before the eleventh-century ‘renaissance’. What this study has shown is not only that Nonantolan notation may now enter the group of known ninth-century music scripts, but also that the production of notated liturgical manuscripts began in the Benedictine centre as early as the late Carolingian period.

The liturgical contents of Pal. lat. 862 and Sess. 96 are examined in Chapter 3. The Vatican palimpsest preserves traces of the chants for Advent and Holy Week (Triduum). In particular, the presence of the Gloria trope Pax sempiterna for Christmas was pivotal for establishing the provenance of Pal. lat. 862. This trope has been considered to be of Italic origin, and its absence from the earliest south Italian chant books may circumscribe the area of its composition to the north of the peninsula. The order of verses matches that in later Nonantolan tropers; moreover, the presence of a particular version of the prosula Regnum tuum, found only in
three Italic tropers, two of which are from Nonantola, strengthens the localisation of the provenance of the Vatican palimpsest to the Po Valley Benedictine abbey. The limited diffusion of the *Regnum tuum* prosula written in Pal. lat. 862 and the strong association of its transmission with the abbey of St Sylvester led to the hypothesis that this particular version may have been composed at Nonantola, indicating that the idea of the Italic peninsula as mere ‘reception zone’ of the trope repertory may be questioned. Furthermore, the presence of *Pax sempiterna* showed that by the end of the ninth century tropes were being included in graduals at Nonantola, and that the compilation of tropers was to be only a later development, possibly connected to the considerable growth of the repertory in later centuries.

The contents of Pal. lat. 862 also include computistical texts, a calendar and a table for the calculation of mobile feasts. This selection of texts has been considered as possibly relating to the figure of the abbey’s *cantor*, the second highest role in the monastic hierarchy. The *cantor* was in charge of the liturgy, its music and the administration of the abbey, perhaps also including duties as librarian. The manuscript Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, 123 (A123), written in Bologna in the second quarter of the eleventh century, shares many features with the Vatican palimpsest, such as the presence of texts for the reckoning of time, a calendar, a table and a gradual containing tropes – in the case of A123 also sequences. Moreover, the presence of a similar iconography and decoration for the opening of the series of processional antiphons for the *Adoratio crucis* on Good Friday may suggest that this type of compilation began to be conceived in the Po Valley as early as the late ninth century and that the scribes of the later A123 may have drawn on that tradition.

The chants for the Office for St Benedict of Nursia (21 March) in Sess. 96 are ordered by their type rather than the liturgical order: the gathering starts with the responsories and concludes with the antiphons; within these two groups, the chants follow the order of the monastic *cursus* of the Divine Office. There are no exact correspondences in the choice of chants and their order with any other analysed manuscript preserving the office for St Benedict, which implies that the sequence in Sess. 96 may have been elaborated at Nonantola. A collation with Gregory the Great’s *Vita Benedicti* showed that some of the chant texts are closely based on Gregory’s *Vita*, some are re-elaborated, and some are composed *ex novo* as summaries of particular chapters. The chants for the Mass, by contrast, are presented in Sess. 96 following the liturgical order, but the choice of chants does not match that of any other early source of the mass for St Benedict, presenting, again, the possibility of a sequence associated particularly with Nonantola. Finally, the presence of the *Ite missa est* trope (*Ite* *Laudantes* annotated in the upper margin of f. 320r shed light on the later life of Sess. 96 and on that of the northern Italian Benedictine abbey. The *Ite missa est* was sung only in masses on feast days and Sundays when the Gloria was sung and its
tropes are not frequently encountered, their diffusion being mainly associated with the Germanic area. For example, the *Ite* trope *Laudantes* is accompanied by a rubric in the manuscript St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, 382 (p. 70), indicating its use on *maioris festum*. The text in Sess. 96 is written by a late tenth-century hand in a corrupted Latin, but the textual variants confirm a relationship with Germanic sources for the trope. Furthermore, in the left margin of f. 316v the same hand writes the Alleluia *Eripe me* in a type of Nonantolan notation mixed with East Frankish shapes. These annotations may be seen to confirm that Sess. 96 was still consulted for liturgical practice in the last decades of the tenth century, which corroborates the suggestion that its original compilation should be placed earlier in the century. They also tell us about the presence of a German monk in Nonantola in a period when the abbey was under the influence of the Ottonians, who may have contributed to the enriching of the liturgy for the *maior festum* for St Benedict at the Po Valley Benedictine institution.

In Chapter 4 the study of the music script is based on the chants for the Mass of St Benedict transmitted in Sess. 96 (ff. 318v–319v), along with the observation of shapes in the notation of chants for the Office (ff. 314r–318v) and the visible traces of music signs in Pal. lat. 862. The guiding approach of the analysis has been the study of the signs employed at Nonantola without projecting absolute categories from other music scripts and differentiating between notational conventions and written realisations by individual scribes in particular manuscripts. The concept of *neume*, as emerging from previous scholarship, and the Latin terminology connected to it have also been considered unsuitable for the study of Nonantolan notation, where a fundamental distinction was drawn between *graphs* and *signs* signifying, respectively, a particular written shape and its use in the notation to carry a precise musical meaning. Two main graphic features differentiate the notation of the Po Valley Benedictine abbey from all other early music scripts. The first is that signs are always linked graphically to the vowels of the syllables in the text by a connecting trait. This characteristic is peculiar of Nonantolan notation and expresses visually the close connection between the chants’ text and their music. The virtual removal of the connecting trait, therefore, provided access to the shapes of basic graphs and to an understanding of the signs’ meanings and functions. The second feature is that both the interlinear and sublinear spaces are used in the representation of intervallic relationships. The chants’ text thus forms an inextricable part of the notation, which could not have been written in the absence of the text. The study also showed that the treatment of pitch in Nonantola is comparable to that of the Paleofrankish family of notations – especially Breton and Lotharingian – as opposed to that of the Frankish family such as East Frankish and Germanic types.

Nonantolan notation made use of a range of signs that may be found in isolation and/or in combination, written in sequence for the representation of larger melodic movements. In some
cases their shape or placement might be modified following a principle of contrasting meanings such as high/low, ‘short’/‘long’, cursive/articulated, etc. Nonantolan notation does not employ *litterae significative*, and it expresses rhythm and articulation chiefly by the use of contrasting shapes and their modification, rather than *coupure*. Several of the signs’ shapes are unique to Nonantolan notation, such as those for high–low and high–low–high melodic movements in combination, particularly in their use of elements such as the left-facing semicircle or the hook with dot to specify different types of articulation; the graph for the *quilisma* is also distinctive of this music script, comprising two vertical dots. The notation of the abbey of St Sylvestre shares with other early music scripts many conventions for the representation of sound and nuances in delivery. Nevertheless, some distinctive traits of the design and use of its musical signs set the Nonantolan apart from other notational types, showing the abbey’s degree of independence in the establishment and development of its institutional music script.

The last chapter aimed to explore different ways of thinking about the graphic base of Nonantolan music signs and to assess whether any direct relationship existed between the notation of the Benedictine abbey and other early music scripts. The fundamental idea was to approach Nonantolan notation as a written manifestation of a system of communication, drawing the methodological as well as conceptual framework from Latin palaeography. From the analysis of musical signs in Chapter 4, three successive phases of development are identified as originating from a *matrix*: base, design and script. The graphic reduction of signs into their essential elements exposed the repertory of graphs that may have constituted the base of Nonantolan notation. These elements were, then, shaped in the phase of design by the particular Nonantolan approach to the representation of sound, as well as by graphic ideas, possibly influenced by the contemporary practice of cursive script and the shorthand system of Tironian notes. The base comprised some essential elements shared with other early music script (Paleofrankish, Frankish, Breton and Lotharingian), while the use of additional articulation signs is present only in the central/southern-Italic *nota romana* and its relation, Beneventan notation. Such signs may be connected to grammatical accents, as described by late antique grammarians and early medieval theorists. In particular, the left-facing semicircle has been compared to the *apostrophus*, while the sign here referred to as the ‘hook with dot’ may have originated from the shape of the *dieresis*. The reconstruction of the possible base of Nonantolan music script led to the conclusion that no direct relationship to Paleofrankish notations, as preserved in surviving sources, may be established. The arguments in favour of this hypothesis are the complete absence in Nonantola of joined shapes for low–high or low–high–low signs, suggesting that the theorists’ descriptions of the acute and circumflex accents may have been interpreted at the Benedictine abbey as designating, respectively, a higher note and two descending notes. Finally, the connection
between Nonantolan and *nota romana* music scripts may also be seen in the use of the shape of the grave accent for a lower note, as a preliminary comparison of the notation in Sess. 96 with manuscripts from Rome and Benevento seems to suggest.

To sum up, Nonantolan notation has hitherto been neglected by most scholarship on early music scripts, mainly because of the paucity of surviving music manuscripts and their limited geographical diffusion. A new study was needed in order to develop an understanding of the abbey’s role and importance in the first phases of development of the writing of music in the early Middle Ages. A Lombard foundation, the abbey of St Sylvester in *Nonantula* soon acquired much of its prestige from the links with the Carolingian court as early as the late eighth century. These established relations were not only with the political centre of the empire but also with influential transalpine institutions such as Reichenau and St Gall. From the first decades after its foundation, the Po Valley abbey benefited from an active *scriptorium*; this shaped a local type of text script that endured until after the fall of the Carolingian empire in the late ninth century, when the abbey, including most of its library, was destroyed by the Hungarian invasion in 899. The study of the earliest surviving notated manuscripts revealed that, by that time, Nonantola had already developed an institutional type of musical notation, making it the earliest known music script ever to be written in the Italic peninsula and, thus, among the earliest in Carolingian Europe. The unique design and use of musical signs show that this northern Italic notation developed for the most part independently from a basic repertory of graphs derived from grammatical accents. Finally, observations of the influences of the central Italic *nota romana*, which this study only began to explore, opened up the possibility that Nonantolan notation may preserve the oldest traces of graphic conventions for the representation of sound that can be associated with the city of Rome. Placed between the northern and southern fringes of the Carolingian empire, the Benedictine abbey of Nonantola played an important role in the early history of music writing, and this study contributes to the breaking of new ground for further explorations.
Appendix I


**VESPER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Recessit igitur scius et sapienter indoctus.</th>
<th>[CAO 4574]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Prolegomena. PL LXVI, 126B</em></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**MATTINS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th>Preoccupemus faciem domini in confessione sanctorum.</th>
<th>[CAO 1117]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ps</em> Venite exultemus domino iubilemus.</td>
<td>[Ps 94]</td>
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</table>

**FIRST NOCTURN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th>Fuit vir vitae venerabilis gratia Benedictus.</th>
<th>[CAO 2906]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ps</em> Beatus vir.</td>
<td>[PL LXVI, 126A]</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th>Nurpscie provincie hortus rome liberalibus litterarum studiis traditus a parentibus fuerat.</th>
<th>[CAO 3982]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ps</em> Quare fremuentur.</td>
<td>[Ps 2]</td>
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<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th>Relicta domo rebusque patri soli deo servire sanctae conversationis habitum quesivit.</th>
<th>[PL LXVI, 126A]</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ps</em> Cum incovarem.</td>
<td>[Ps 4]</td>
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<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th>Ab ipso puericie sue tempore cor gerens senilem etatem quippe moribus transiens nulli animum dedit voluptati.</th>
<th>[CAO 1204]</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ps</em> Domine dominus noster.</td>
<td>[Ps 5]</td>
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<tr>
<th>AN</th>
<th>Dum in hac terra esset quod temporaliter libere uti potuisset iam quasi aridum mundum cum flore despexit.</th>
<th>[CAO 2457]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ps</em> Domine dominus noster.</td>
<td>[Ps 8]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

528 [*] = *Ex*; hortus = *exortus*; a parentibus = [*].
529 patri = *patri*; servire = *placere desiderans*. The textual variant makes this antiphon a unicum.
530 [*] = *adhibe*; dispexit = *despexit*.
531 Conpassus nutricis prestari = [*]; [*] = *quod super mensam incanante de relictum*. This antiphon is a unicum.
Fuit vir vitae venerabilis, gratia Benedictus et nomine, ab ipso puero suae tempore cor gerens senile. Actatam quippe moribus transiens, nulli animum voluplati dedit. [PL LXVI, 126A]

\[ \text{VR} \text{ Recessit igitur scienter nescius et sapienter indoctus.} \]

Recessit igitur scienter nescius, et sapienter indoctus. [PL LXVI, 126A]

**R** Domine non aspicias peccata mea sed fidem huius hominis qui rogit resuscitari filium suum et redde in hoc corpusculo animam quam abstulisti et completa oracione revixit et sanum reddidit patri suo. [CAO 6502]

Domine, non aspicias peccata mea, sed fidem huius hominis, qui resuscitari filium suum rogit, et redde in hoc corpusculo animam quam abstulisti. Vix in oratione verba compleverat, <…> et eum patri viventem atque involvem dedit. [PL LXVI, 192C]

\[ \text{VR} \text{ Et regrediente anima ita corpusculum omne contremuit ut sub oculis omnium qui aderant appareret.} \]

Et regrediente anima ita corpusculum pueri omne contremuit, ut sub oculis omnium qui aderant apparuerit. [PL LXVI, 192D]

**R** Initio consilio venenum vino miscuerunt quo accepto signavit sicque confractum est ac si pro cruce lapidem dedisset. [CAO 6969]

Initio consilio, venenum vino miscuerunt. <…> sicque confractum est, ac si pro cruce lapidem dedisset. [PL LXVI, 136A]

\[ \text{VR} \text{ Intellexit protinus vir Dei quia potum mortis habuerat, quod portare non potuit signum vitae.} \]

Vir autem Dei in hac voce substitit, dicens: Nunquid ego filium tuum abstuli? Cui ille respondit: Mortuus est. Veni, resuscita eum. [PL LXVI, 192B]

**R** Quidam rusticus defuncti corpus filii in ulnis ferens, orbitatis aestuans, ad monasterium venit, Benedictum patrem quaevisit. [CAO 7495]

Quidam vero rusticus defuncti filii corpus in ulnis ferens, orbitatis aestuans, ad monasterium venit, Benedictum patrem quaesivit. [PL LXVI, 136B]

**AN** Electus a fratribus invitus obtinuit quod scienter scivit se illorum moribus convenire non posse. [CAO 2626]

Electus a fratribus invitus obtinuit quod scienter scivit se illorum moribus convenire non posse. [PL LXVI, 134C]

\[ \text{PS} \text{ Domine quis habitabit.} \]

Domine quis habitabit. [Ps 10]

**AN** Cumque sibi conspiceret illicita non licere asueta relinquere quo nati sunt de eiusmod morte tractare. [CAO 2073]

Cumque sibi sub eo conspicerent illicita non licere, <…> adsueta relinquere, <…> tractare de eiusmod morte conati sunt. [PL LXVI, 136A]

\[ \text{PS} \text{ Domine in virtute.} \]

Domine in virtute. [Ps 20]

**AN** Puer quidam parvulus elephantino morbo percussus ad deis hominem est adductus pristinam sanitatem recepta incolomem remeavit ad propria. [CAO 4413]

Puer quidam parvulus elephantino morbo percussus ad deis hominem est adductus pristinam sanitatem recepta incolomem remeavit ad propria. [XXVI. De puer a morbo elephantino curato, PL LXVI, 184A]

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532 completa… suo = *Vix… dedit*. The text of the responsory is based partly on the *Vita* and is partly a reworking of the passage in the following verse (*et regrediente…*), which is instead taken almost verbatim from Gregory’s text.

533 [*] = pueri; vivus = [-]; appareret = apparerit.

534 quo accepto signavit = [-]; si pro signo = pro cruce.

535 haberet = habuerat; invase = [-].

536 [*] = vero; [*] = orbatus rusticus.

537 The text is not found in the *Vita* but is a reworking of various passages, realised through imitation of Gregory’s style and expressions.

538 illicita = illicita; asueta = adsueta; quo nati = conati.
Domini est terra. [Ps 23]

Orabat sanctus Benedictus domine ne aspicias peccata mea sed fidem huius hominis qui rogat resuscitari filium suum et sub oculis omnium viventem puerum reddidit patri suo. [Ps 232:33; CAO 4173] Domine, non aspicias peccata mea, sed fidem hujus hominis, qui resuscitari filium suum rogat, ut sub oculis omnium qui aderant, et cum patri viventem atque incolunmum dedit. [§XXXII. PL. LXVI, 192C–D]

Exaudi Deus deprecationem. [Ps 60]

Tantam gratiam dei virtus divina contulerat ut sub uno solis radio omnem mundum collectum conspicercet. [Ps 60:5; CAO 5105] omnis etiam mundus, velut sub uno solis radio collectus

Exaudi Deus orationes cum tribulationem. [Ps 64]

Cumque in specu posito submitti panem diabolus conspiceret iactavit lapide et tintinnabulum fregit. [Ps 133:3; CAO 2062] De capisterii fracti reparatione,

Te decet hymnus. [Ps 64]

Domine non aspicias peccata mea sed fidem hujus hominis qui rogat resuscitari filium suum et redde in hoc corpusculo animam quam abstulisti et completa oracione revixit et sanum reddidit patri suo. [Ps 64:5; CAO 6502] Viventem qui aderant, vivum appareret.<...> et regrediente anima ita corpusculum pueri omne contremuit, ut sub oculis omnium qui aderant<...>

Et regrediente anima ita corpusculum egressam in columbe specie coeli secreta penetraret. [Ps 64:5; CAO 6502] Factumque est ut reverentissimum virum Germanum episcopum his qui missus fuerat iam defunctum repperit.

Qui tante ejus glorie congaudens omnipotenti deo gratias reddidit, eiusque obitum fratribus denunciavit. [Ps 64:5; CAO 6502] Factumque est, et reverentissimum virum Germanum episcopum is qui missus fuerat iam defunctum repperit.

Cumque sanctus benedictus in cellam consistens elevatis sursum oculis vidit sororis sue animam de eiis corpore egressam in columbe specie coeli secreta penetrare. [Ps 64:5; CAO 6659] Eodem vero anno quo de hac vita erat exiturus quibusdam discipulis secum conversantibus quibus a longe manentibus sanctissimi sui obitus denunciavit diem.

Orabat sanctus Benedictus = [-] ; viventem = qui adherat ; puere reddidit patri suo = eum patri viventem et sub oculis omnium dedit.

The responsory's text is based on the same passage from the Vita as the antiphon Orabat sanctus Benedictus, but has here been differently reworked.

acie = aciem ; habere viseretur = inisseter ; deferri = ferri.

Cumque sanctus benedictus = [-] ; sursum = in aera ; egressa = egressam ; penetraret = penetrare.
VR Presentibus indicens ut audita per silentium tegerent absentibus indicans quale eis signum fieret quando eius anima de corpore exiret.\textsuperscript{544} [CAO 6659]  
\textit{Presentibus indicens ut audita per silentium tegerent, absentibus indicans quod vel quale eis signum fieret, quando eius anima de corpore exiret.}  
\textsuperscript{[§XXXVII. PL. LXVI, 202A]}

**THIRD NOCTURN**

AN Vix obtinui apud deum omnipotentem ut ex hoc loco mihi animae cederetur.\textsuperscript{545} [CAO 5482]  
\textit{Vix autem obtinuere potui, ut mihi ex hoc loco animae cederetur.}  
\textsuperscript{[§XVII. PL. LXVI, 168B]}

R Intempesta noctis horavit beatus benedictus fusam lucem desuper cunctas noctis tenebras effugasset tantoque splendore clarescere ut diem vinceret lux illa.\textsuperscript{546}  
\textit{intempesta noctis hora respiciens, vidit fusam lucem desuper cunctas noctis tenebras exfugasse, tantoque splendore clarescere, ut diem vinceret lux illa.}  
\textsuperscript{[CAO 6659]}

VR Omnis eciam mundus velut sub uno solis radio collectus et ante eius oculos adductus est.\textsuperscript{547}  
\textit{Omnis etiam mundus velut sub uno solis radio collectus, ante oculos eius adductus est.}  
\textsuperscript{[§XXXV. PL. LXVI, 198B]}

R Erat vultu placido canis decoratus angelicis tantaque circa eum caritas excreverat ut in terris positus in celestibus habitaret.\textsuperscript{548}  
\textit{Erat vultu placido canis decoratus angelicis tantaque circa eum caritas excreverat ut in terris positus in celestibus habitaret.}  
\textsuperscript{[CAO 6665]}

VR Vir autem domini Benedictus plenus spiritu sancto fuit.\textsuperscript{549}  
\textit{Vir iste spiritus istorum omnium plenus fuit.}  
\textsuperscript{[§VIII. PL. LXVI, 150B]}

R Ante sextum vero exitus sui diem aperiri sibi sepulturam iubet qui mox correptus febribus agri cepit dolere fatigari usque ad mortem.\textsuperscript{550}  
\textit{Ante sextum vero sui exitus diem, aperiri sibi sepulturam iubet. Qui mox correptus febribus, acri coepit ardore fatigari.}  
\textsuperscript{[CAO 6105]}

VR Cumque per dies languor ingravesceret.\textsuperscript{551}  
\textit{Cumque per dies singulos languor ingravesceret.}  
\textsuperscript{[§XXXVII. PL. LXVI, 202A]}

R Sexto namque die portari se in oratorio a discipulis fecit ibique exitum suum dominicis sacramentis munivit atque inter discipulum manus exalavit.\textsuperscript{552}  
\textit{Sexto die portari se in oratorio a discipulis fecit, ibique exitum suum dominici corporis et sanguinis perceptione munivit, a et inter discipulorum manus inbecillia membra sustenit.}  
\textsuperscript{[CAO 7646]}

VR Erectis in celum manibus stetit et ultimum spiritum inter verba oracionis efflavit.\textsuperscript{553}  
\textit{Erectis in coelum manibus stetit, et ultimum spiritum inter verba oracionis efflavit.}  
\textsuperscript{[CAO 7255]}

R O beati viri Benedicti sancta preconia inaestimabilis dilectio caritatis quidum seculi pompa contempsit eterne vite coniunctus est.\textsuperscript{554}  
\textit{Cui vivere Christus est et mori lucrum.}  
\textsuperscript{[Phil. I, 23], §III. PL. LXVI, 140A]}

\textsuperscript{544} \textit{[\ldots]} = \textit{quod vel.}\n
\textsuperscript{545} obtinui apud deum omnipotentem = \textit{autem obtinuere potui} ; cederetur = \textit{cederetur.}\n
\textsuperscript{546} This responsory is a unicum. Effugasset = \textit{exfugasse.}\n
\textsuperscript{547} This responsory verse is a unicum. Eciam = \textit{etiam} ; velud = \textit{velut} ; est et = \textit{[-].}\n
\textsuperscript{548} The only expression from the \textit{Vita is vultu placido} [§III. PL. LXVI, 136B], inserted in what is otherwise a reworking of passages from Gregory’s text.\n
\textsuperscript{549} \textit{Ibid.}\n
\textsuperscript{550} Cumque per dies singulos languor ingravesceret.\n
\textsuperscript{551} dominicis sacramentis = \textit{corporis et sanguinis perceptione} ; manus exalavit = \textit{inbecillia membra sustentat.}\n
\textsuperscript{552} fuit = \textit{est} ; coniunctus est = \textit{[-].} CANTUS n. 007255a, Toledo, Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares, 44.1 (ca. 1020–1023), f. 111v.
LAUDS

AN Hic itaque cum iam relictis litterarum studiis petere deserta decrevisset nutrix que hunc arcius amabat secuta est. 553

Hic itaque cum iam relictis litterarum studiis petere deserta decrevisset, nutrix quae hunc arcius amabat, sola secuta est.

PS Dominus regnavit decorem.

AN Predicta nutrix illius ad purgandum triticum a vicinis mulieribus praestari sibi capisterium petiit co

Preditic nutrix illius ad purgandum triticum a vicinis mulieribus praestari sibi capisterium petit, quod <...> casu accidente, fractum est

PS Jubilate deo.

AN Qui dum heremum pergeret romanum monachum obviavit cuius cum desiderium cognovisset et

Qui dum fugiens pergeret, monachus quidam, Romanus nomine, <...>. Cuius cum desiderium cognovisset, et secretum tenuit et

PS Deus deus meus ad te.

AN Initio consilio venenum vino miscuere quo accepto signavit sicque confractum est ac si pro signo

$\ldots$ initiio consilio venenum vino miscuerunt. $\ldots$ sicque confractum est, ac $\ldots$ pro cruce lapidem dedisset.

PS Benedictice omnia.

AN Benedictus dei famulus magnum fecit miraculum primum in parte divisum reiunxit capisterium.

Benedictus dei famulus magnum fecit miraculum primum in parte divisum reiunxit capisterium.

PS Laudate dominum de celis.

IN EVANGELIUM

R Pater sanctus dum intenta oculorum acie in splendore corusce lucis habere videretur vidi Germani

Qui venerabilis Pater, dum intentam oculorum aciem in hoc splendore coruscae lucis infigeret, vidit Germani Capuani episcopi animam in

PS Dicit [sic] dominus.

Exitus sue anime et sancte Scolastice et Germani episcopi vidit per sanctum spiritum.

Exitus sue anime et sanete Scolastice et Germani episcopi vidit per sanctum spiritum.

PS Confitebor.

SECOND VESPERS

AN Beatus Benedictus per spiritum sanctum indagine prenoscens que ventura sunt omnia. 558

AN Exitus sue anime et sanete Scolastice et Germani episcopi vidit per sanctum spiritum.

An Exitus sue anime et sanete Scolastice et Germani episcopi vidit per sanctum spiritum.

PS Confitebor.

553 [-] = sola.
554 co = quo.
555 heremum = fugiens ; romanum monachum = monachus quidam Romanus nomine ; obiavit = [-].
556 quo accepto signavi = [-] ; signo = crucem. In the margin quo oblat (f. 317v).
557 Pater sanctus = Qui venerabilis pater. See note 84.
558 This antiphon is a unicum.
AN Aqua de montis vertice ferrum profundi gurgite et Placidum de flumine traxit perpensile. [CAO 1468] 
[V, De aqua viri Dei oratione in montis vertice ex petra producta. PL LXVI, 142C–144B] 
Ps Beatus vir. [Ps 1]

AN Frater Maure curre velociter quia puer Placidus in Amnem mergitur. [CAO 2895] 
[VII, De Mauro ejus discipulo qui super aquas pedibus ambulavit. PL LXVI, 146A–C] 
Ps Laudate pueri dominum. [Ps 112]

AD MAGNIFICAT

AN Hodie sanctus Benedictus per viam orientis tramite videntibus discipulis celum tetendit Hodie erectis manibus inter verba oracionis migravit Hodie in gloria ab angelis susceptus est. [CAO 3115]
Appendix II.

ROME, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sess. 96, ff. 318v–319v.
non fraudatis

Quóniam præsumi est, "um in bens dic
ciones", "dulce", "dans N

Postulás, "super ea sit in", "M" co

roin sa", "m deba, pidem precid"

Oraclo mea mundae est et idem po to
ut de turlo cu subitem ince, lo
qui aihis et iudex me us "et con seur
meus in ser fnum discis in dat
a dde minum dprod cacione a

N Pro bauit me de minun si
cur a, "urui", m yas est, custos di
a, et apres d pris, nus no
discit sit A De Qui untr uenira post
me, a breget semper sum et tollat.
Seopus quipque
nora beati benedicti abbatis
exempla humilitatis notam munda
le ter ostendisti. Daquir ut uia nobipla
cite oboedientia quae ipse in levis
incessit nor pelaris eius meritis in
errore subre quamur:腭
Sacrificat
acribus ducta hostias suppositas: se be
neditus quis salutem ne quis proua
mire deporcat.

Bunq: eximas donum
honorandi passionis
benedicti celebrantes diem in quo hoc
terste secule despecter: adecelestis parv
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