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An Unknown Tenth-Century Martyrs' Trope Collection

Abstract

In the blank space of the recto side of a folio in a ninth-century Frankish manuscript, now Paris, BnF, Lat. 2846, a mid-tenth-century scribe entered a set of troped mass chants – an introit, an offertory and a communio – to be used in martyrs' masses. Not much later to judge by the script, two other scribes added yet more annotated troped introits to the verso of the same folio. Of the five trope sets adjoined to the five chants, one is now completely erased and illegible, another is found in two earlier sources, but, as this article shows, three of the trope sets here pre-date by about half a century the previously known sources. The comparison of our early source of tropes against those edited in the *Corpus Troporum* series, combined with paleographic and philological analyses and evaluation of its relationship with perishable and poorly understood trope *libelli*, reveals the importance of these previously unnoticed minitexts for the early history of tropes.

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Scavenging in the treasure trove of early medieval manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris [henceforth BnF], the MINiTEXTS project has discovered a remarkable, previously unnoticed and early collection of tropes for martyrs, written on fols. 96r-v of manuscript latin 2846. This composite volume contains no less than five codicological units over a total of 181 folios, transmitting theological texts, patristic writings and a lectionary. Bischoff localises the first codicological unit in Northeastern France and the remaining four in Northern France, dating them from the third quarter of the ninth century (the fifth and last unit, fols. 178-181), to the late ninth or early tenth century (the first one, fols. 1-96)[1]. The trope collection is on the final folio of the first unit, which contains writings by Paulinus II, patriarch of Aquileia, a prominent Carolingian scholar (d. 802 or 804). Disconnected as they are from the contents of any unit, the tropes are legitimate 'minitexts' devoid of any meaningful relation with the whole book. On the basis of the palaeographic analysis of the three hands that I offer below, I date their entry from mid-tenth century at earliest to early eleventh at latest, putting some 30-80 years of distance between the redaction of tropes and that of the host codicological unit.

The BnF *Catalogue général des manuscrits latins* and MANNO, a project studying French neumatic notations in manuscripts of the BnF, provide the sole notices so far of this minitext[2]. Both transcribe the incipits of the tropes on f. 96r alone, while MANNO also analyses the few neumes present and gives bibliographic references. The BnF catalogue proposes the dating of «XIᵉ s.», MANNO of «IX/X». However, the BnF catalogue offered the trope incipits in the effort of its systematic description of all manuscripts in the BnF Latin collection, while the focus of MANNO was rather on French neumatic notations as such. Thus, this minitext collection remained scholarly unassessed

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1 Bischoff 2014, p. 84, entries no. 4244-4248. Complete manuscript description with links to digital reproduction at https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/.

2 Porcher 1952, pp. 153-154; https://manno.saprat.fr. I wish to thank one of the project curators Dr. Christelle Cazaux (Muzik-Akademie Basel) for her kind help and for personally sharing the documentation of BnF Lat 2846 with me in a period when the website was temporarily down (Oct. – Nov. 2024).

Fig. 1. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 2846, fol. 96r. Reproduced with kind permission of the BnF.
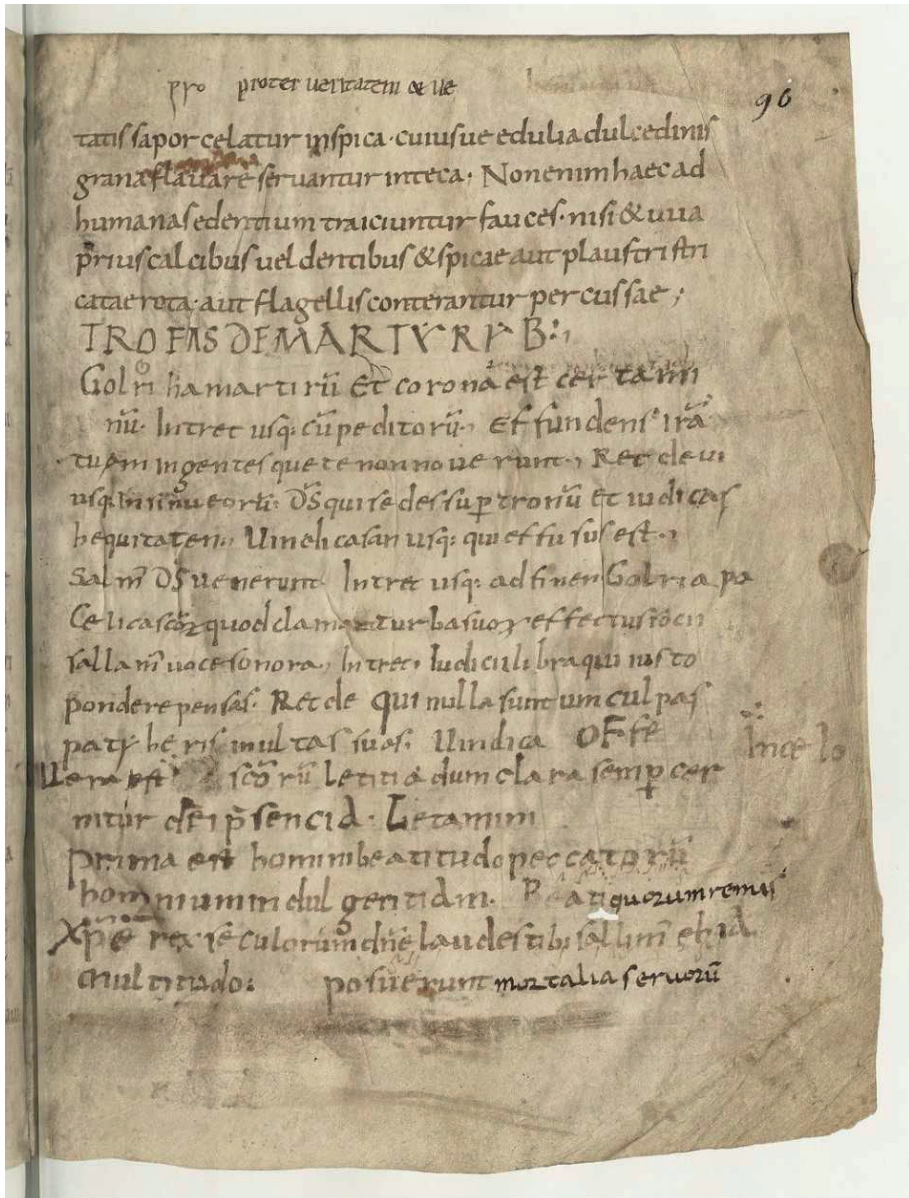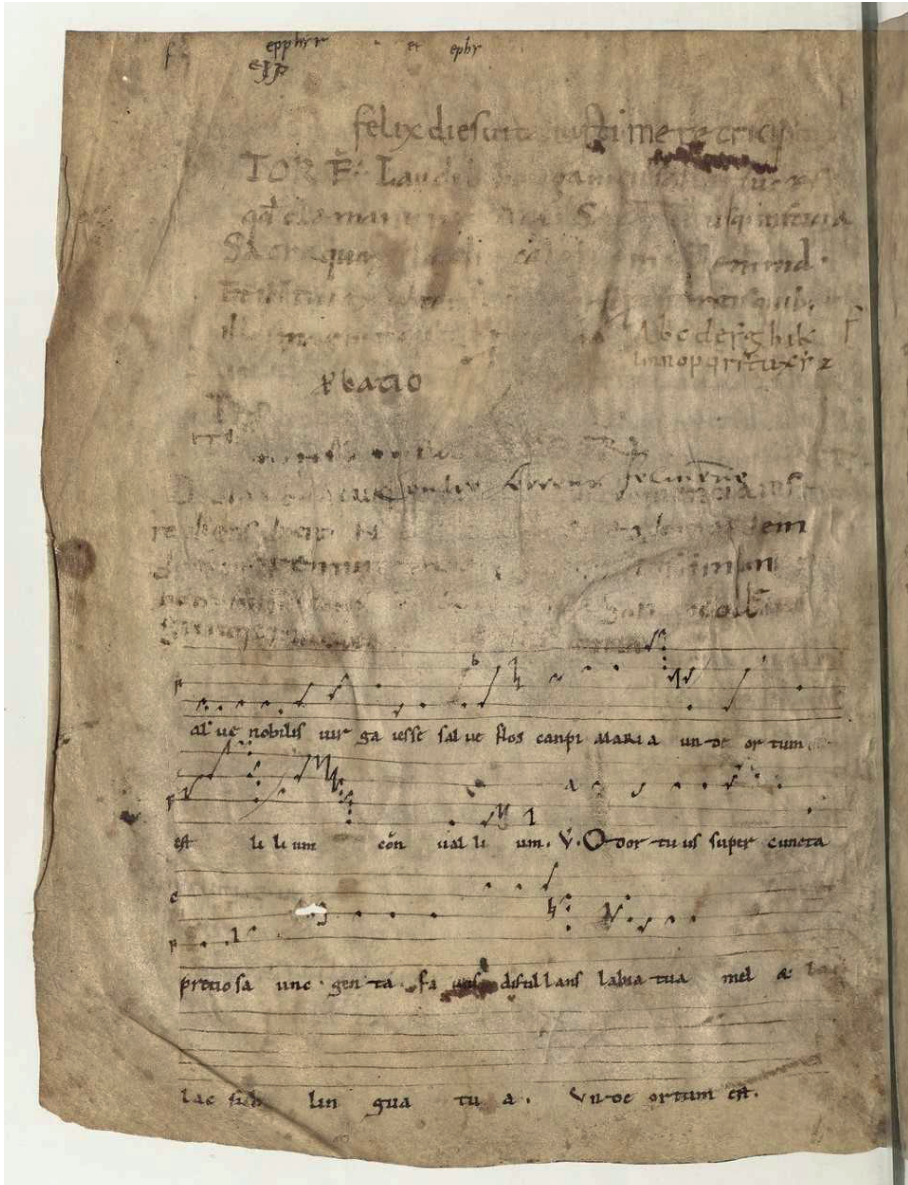
Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits. Latin 2846

Fig. 2. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 2846, fol. 96v. Reproduced with kind permission of the BnF.

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until now. Consisting of tropes for five Proper chants for the Common of Martyrs, it proves to be a precious piece of evidence for the early dissemination of tropes in marginal spaces of Carolingian manuscripts. Indeed, of all genres of liturgical music developed from Carolingian times onwards, tropes seem to be that whose spread relied the most – and most characteristically so – on the circulation of ad hoc, unbound and materially short-lived *libelli*. Internal evidence to be assessed over the course of this essay allows to interpret this mini-text as a fascinating and very rare link in the chain of editorial acts between the compilation of circulating *libelli* and of finished trope collection books known as 'tropers'.

But before starting the discussion of this minitext, it will be useful to give a general description of what a trope is, and to briefly discuss the importance of *libelli* as means of dissemination of chant repertoires.

As for the former, it will be apt to cite the definition of Andreas Haug:

In a music-historical context, the term "trope" refers to any textual or melodic figure that is added to an existing chant without altering the textual or melodic structure of the said chant. The boundaries between the original chant and the added figures remain recognizable. ... In the succinct formulation of Adémar de Chabannes (ca. 1030), tropes, then, are "inserted chants" ("inserta cantica")[3].

It is also appropriate to refer to a more specific definition of the particular repertoire of tropes contained in our minitext, specific to mass Proper antiphons (i.e. introit, offertory, communion). This is taken from the tenth volume of *Corpus Troporum* [henceforth *CT* X], the reference editorial work on trope texts begun in 1975 at the university of Stockholm[4]. In the words of Ritva Maria Jacobsson, the editor of this tenth volume, tropes are

Latin chants – words and music – embellishing the Medieval mass chants; those of the proper concern the antiphons of the moveable feasts. Their verses were sung as introductions to and interpolations between those of the introit, the offertory and the communion[5].

As for *libelli*, many more have come down to us for saints' offices than for tropes – another reason for the relevance of this minitext. For example, two *libelli* containing saints' offices from the first half of the eleventh century have been consecutively bound at the end of BnF Lat. 1240, a composite volume mostly

3 Haug 2018 p. 263.

4 Corpus Troporum i-xii, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1975-2014.

5 *CT* X, p. [4]. This tenth volume is freely available via the Stockholm University repository at https://su.diva-portal.org/.

known for its tropary: on fols. 183r–188v the first *libellus* presents an office for St Foy and on fols. 189r–193v the second *libellus* presents another office for St Margaret. I invite the reader to visually assess both at the provided link[6]. The stitching, the patently different contents, scripts and chronology, as well as the general alterity with regard to the rest of the composite volume all communicate very clearly the quality of what must have been typical chant *libelli*[7]. Scholars have posited the existence of trope *libelli* on the basis of external evidence rather than on direct documentary observation because of how few have come down to us. References in *epistulae*, philological assessments of the trope repertoire and codicological analysis suggest that travelling *libelli* were among the main means of disseminating chant repertoires. For one thing, sections of tropers often begin on a new quire, suggesting that each was a copy of a different *libellus*[8]. Yet *libelli* for tropes, as said, are so exceedingly rare that the history and analysis of tropes has almost exclusively rested on post-facto, retrospective collections, mostly from the second half of the tenth century[9]. Andreas Haug has provided a useful list of the twenty extant known sources of Mass Proper tropes written before the year 1000 (to which, however short, our minitext in BnF 2846 can now be added)[10]. Of these twenty, only two date to ca.900, both lacking musical notation (Verona, Biblioteca capitolare, MS XC (85) and München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14843); five date to before or around the second half of the tenth century and, of these, only Wien, ÖNB [henceforth Wi] 1609 is a legitimate *libellus,* one merely a binio long[11]. The mid-tenth century Sankt Gallen, 484 and 381 were intended from the beginning to have a substantial focus on tropes and sequences, the two genres of Carolingian music *par excellence*[12]. Together with London, British Library, Add. [henceforth Add.] 19768,

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6 Digital reproduction available at https://gallica.bnf.fr.

7 On the philological interplay of *libelli* and finished chant books see Parkes 2015, pp. 33-88, discussing a tenth-century collection of versified music that he calls "a book in motion" (p. 33). On the role of *libelli* in regards specifically to trope repertoires and tropers see Huglo 1979 and 1986. See also Varelli 2016, pp. 74-90 for the discussion of a *libellus* likely from Nonantola containing an office for St Benedict; and Varelli 2022, especially pp. 15-18 for a discussion of the role of *libelli* for the dissemination of musical notation in the tenth century.

8 Huglo 1979, 1986.

9 On the early history of tropes see the excellent *vue d'ensemble* in Planchart 2009, xii-liv.

10 Haug 2018, p. 271 fn. 26.

11 Weakland 1958 provides an useful overall discussion of Wi 1609, but does not touch upon the status of this source as a *libellus*.

12 On the concept of Carolingian music, see Rankin 1993. On SG 484 and 381, see Arlt - Rankin 1996.

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they carry the largest number of tropes among tenth-century sources[13]. And yet tropes seem not to have defined the earliest books that contained them. The relationship between what we now retrospectively call tropers «[is] a question plagued by all kinds of circular uncertainty and obstructed by the famously unusual features of [these] books». [14] In fact, time and time again musicological studies through the last fifty years have proven that the transmission of tropes is a thorny matter. Not incidentally, this is entirely in line with the historical trajectory of newer Carolingian musico-liturgical genres as observable from the marginalia studied by the MINiTEXTS project. New genres hardly fitted previous liturgical procedures, and they found neither space in standard liturgical books, nor official recognition – so much so that they were often outright forbidden by councils and ecclesiastical figures[15].

    After this brief overview on the early history of tropes and of the role of *libelli* in this history, we can now turn to the minitext trope collection. While it does not clarify the overall picture, it nonetheless provides an uncommon perspective, since it represents a middle stage between a liminal *libellus* and a finished musical book with tropes.

    Our minitext is the product of three main scribes (which I will call Scribes A, B, C). A fourth added a few lines of neumes on recto (Scribe D) and a fifth added only a few words (Scribe E). It appears as if Scribe A – the only main hand on recto – wanted to record tropes for all three mass Proper antiphons in a martyrs' mass[16], as suggested by the heading in capitals that opens the minitext 'Trofas de martyrybus'[17]. He must have found some issues when it came to the final communio and its accompanying trope(s), but apart from that, his editorial programme of providing one trope-set for each of the martyrs' introit, offertory and communion chants is clear. Some time after and likely in the same institution, two other scribes added two more troped introits on the verso of the same folio. The two troped introits on verso faced heavy erasure that

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13 On Add. 19768 see Parkes 2015, pp. 31-87.

14 Parkes 2015, pp. 38, 62.

15 Planchart 2009, pp. xii, xxix-xxx.

16 Introit, offertory and communion are the Mass Proper chants that receive tropes, whereas gradual and alleluia usually do not. Planchart 2009, pp. xxxii-xxxiii discusses the very few exceptions of gradual and alleluia tropes.

17 I could not find any record elsewhere of the same spelling for the word 'trope' in Latin. The second main scribe uses the heading 'Torf⌐' with a abbreviation mark on top of 'f', an equally idiosyncratic spelling as far as I can tell. It is also noticeable that the straightforward spelling *tropum* appears twice in the non-musical context of the main text by Paulinus of Aquileia on f. 95r. On the naming of tropes in early sources see Odelman 1975.

now severely impacts their legibility[18]. The reasons for such erasures are hardly guessable, but clearing space for the Marian responsory added later in the twelfth century on the lower half of the page cannot be one, for several other inscriptions (late tenth century: '*probatio*'; eleventh century: an abecedary) were clearly written on top of what by then had already been erased[19]. Nonetheless, I could still reconstruct a good portion of both trope-sets by confronting the few readable words or portions of words with the texts edited in *CT* X. A major difference between the work of Scribe A and that of Scribes B and C is that the former clearly meant to provide a complete introit-offertory-communion set, whereas the latter two added their own introit set prompted by what they must have found on the recto. A fourth scribe was responsible for West Frankish musical notation added above the initial word of the offertory verse *Beati* and above the (more problematic) word *Posuerunt*. Whereas the neumes on *Beati* match the melody commonly found for this offertory verse, those on *Posuerunt* do not relate to the communion *Posuerunt* nor to any other chant with the same incipit[20], a detail to be further addressed later. To judge by the different tone of the ink of the neumes and by their very thin width, Scribe D did not otherwise write any other text. Lastly, Scribe E added the words *quorum remis<sionem>* and *mortalia servorum* to clarify two words that Scribe A left as cues, *Beati* and *Posuerunt*. *Beati* is the first word of the offertory verse, *Posuerunt* is related in unclear ways to the communion chant and its trope(s), as we shall see.

Several instances of misspelling also suggest that at least Scribe A might have been writing under dictation. Other than instances such as *Golriha* for *Gloria* and *hequitaten* for *equitatem*, the reading *nulla suntum* for *nullas sontum* is especially vocal with its agglutination of the final and initial 's' across the two words. The change of *sontum* into the meaningless but apparently plausible *suntum* also indicates a *lectio facilior* for which Scribe A might have misinterpreted the sound of the vocal 'u' for that of an 'o'. If writing under dictation is a correct hypothesis, it is easy to envisage a companion dictating from a *libellus* containing tropes. Unfortunately, as both texts on verso are almost completely illegible, it is impossible to say whether misspellings were present that would betray the same dynamics for Scribes B and C, too[21].

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18 UV reproductions obtained from the BnF did not improve readability.

19 I disregard other minor inscriptions on the verso as irrelevant for my current purposes.

20 After a query on https://cantusindex.org.

21 On medieval scribes writing under dictation see Nardini 2012. Nardini focuses on musical scribes, but provides ample further bibliography pertaining to iconography and textual scribes as well.

Palaeography

A grounded palaeographic analysis is only possible for Scribe A since his entry – with the exception of the last erased and now irretrievable line – has survived almost intact and perfectly legible. As for scribes B and C on verso, their heavily effaced entries only allow for very general observations.

The writing of Scribe A is of a *Schulstil* that is far from rigorous, typical of many if not most minitexts in Caroline minuscule[22]. Such a *Schulstil* makes dating more difficult, although some elements of his writing do allow for a cautious evaluation. This scribe clearly puts attention into respecting a four-line system based on the pre-existing ruling of the page and is certainly consistent in using one way only to write virtually all his letters. The 'a' is uncial, although he executes it three times with a much taller shoulder, perhaps as an embellishment (lines 13, 15, 16[23]). His 's' goes below the dry line in two instances only, in both cases being the last letter of the line. In the first instance he even adds a second downward stroke to emphasize the effect (lines 5, 10). All other 's' and all 'r' and 'f' do not descend below the writing line. The cursive 'r(um)' ligature is retained, appearing twice in line 8. The rising elements of 'd', 'l', 'b' and capital 'I' conclude with a pressing of the quill towards the left, resulting either in a slanting or in a thicker end that is also slightly tilted. Only in very rare cases letters such as 'i', 'm' and 'n' have the conclusive oblique element that is characteristic of stiffer and later Caroline script. The inclination is slightly tilted towards the right, and the overall disposition of the text is somewhat wavy, especially so towards the end. Word separation is rather inconsistent, in some lines being so little that these almost appear as if written in *scriptio continua* (e.g. lines 5, 8, 16), in others being quite ample (lines 3, 6, 7, 14). All these things considered, I would put Scribe A's entry around the central decades of the tenth century, perhaps 940 - 970. The lack of the final oblique element on 'n' and 'm', the rather restrained separation of words and the absence of sensible compression of letters seem especially telling of a writing style that is perhaps more at home in the central decades of the tenth century, than in the final ones.

As for Scribes B and C, very little can be said given that their entries are very barely visible, and that no more than five words can be clearly discerned in their entirety, all in the entry of Scribe B. This scribe is certainly closer to

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22 On the 'hierarchy' of accuracy in writing styles (from which I also take the term *Schulstil*), see AUTENRIETH 1978.

23 Here and elsewhere I count lines starting from the first visible line of each minitext scribe, including majuscule headings.

Scribe A in his writing style – and quite possibly chronology – than Scribe C is. The features that Scribe B shares with Scribe A are the same tilting to the right, the 'm' and 'n' similarly lacking the final oblique elements, a very similar 'a' in its uncial form – also including one single instance with a taller shoulder (line 4) –, and the few visible 'r' that do not descend below the writing line. Word separation seems to be even less than what seen for Scribe A. No space is left in line 3 between *Sacra* and *qua*[*m*] and *celebremus* and *sollemnia*; in line 4 at *Et sanctis tui*; in line 5 at *illos magnificas*[*ti*]. All the letters appear regular in their character, quite uncompressed and well-formed. Certainly, the most versed of the three, Scribe B can be said to be contemporary to Scribe A – or at most slightly later for the simple reason that his entry follows on verso what was already on recto.

As for Scribe C, his entry is the worst preserved of the three, and no single complete word is discernible. Still, one notes a general verticality and compression, at least two 'r' and one 's' that go below the writing line (line 3 *rediens*, line 6 *nostri*), and very pronounced final oblique elements in 'm' (line 3 *custodem*, line 4 [*co*]*nstantissimum*, line 6 *ma*[*ligni*]. These elements, however grounded on very little visible material, should be sufficient to put the entry by Scribe C in the last quarter of the tenth or first years of the eleventh century.

Contents and repertoire

This minitext is the earliest witness for all the tropes entered by Scribes A while the tropes that Scribe B entered were only known until now from a single later English manuscript, the mid-eleventh-century 'Cotton' troper bound as the first (fols. 1-36) of three fragmentary volumes now LONDON, British Library, MS Cotton Caligula A. XIV [Henceforth Lo 14]. The tropes entered by Scribe C are the only ones for which earlier testimonies exist. These tropes are also significantly more common and widespread than the trope-sets of Scribes A and B. I think however that Scribes A and B – or people in their immediate proximity – were not themselves the authors of the tropes and that we are not confronted here with autograph original compositions. The fact that three different scribes added tropes in the margins of a book not pertaining to music in three different moments (however proximate in time they are) and that the third wrote a trope-set also found in sources earlier than his entry, also suggests that these are distinct moments in the accumulation of circulating tropes. Table 1 presents the relevant information of the entire minitext collection at a glance.

Table 1.

Folio	Scribe	Tentative Date	Mass Proper	Proper chant	Trope-set formula	Concordant sources	Regional diffusion
96 r	A	940–970	Introit	INTRET IN CONSPECTU	8a 9d 10fp ax 18a 19d 20f	6	Aquitaine
96 r	A	940–970	Offertory	LAETAMINI	10a 11p (12 from Off. *Constitues eos*)	Tr. 10-11: 3 Tr. 12: 2	Frankish but rare
96 r	A	940–970	Commu-nio	MULTITU-DO(?)	N/A	N/A	N/A
96 v	B	940–980	Introit	SACERDO-TES TUI	(35 from Off. *Confessio*)a (36-*Conf.*)d (37-*Conf.*)e [...]	1	Previously only in Lo 14
96 v	C	970–1010	Introit	NUNC SCIO	13a 14[d] 15[e] 16[f] [...]	13	Frankish

I now come to analyse each of the five trope sets with the support of the tenth volume of *Corpus Troporum*. For each set I propose formulas similar to those of *CT* editions that indicate the succession of single tropes in each set. This should help to identify the matrices, diffusion and earliest instances of the trope-sets found in the minitext. In these formulas, each number indicates a single trope, while the letter that follows indicates the section of the original chant. Numbers in round brackets indicate tropes that *CT* records as pertaining to chants different than those in this collection. Any portion of a formula in square brackets indicates sections of the text whose presence I infer by comparison with *CT* X editions but of which not even a letter can be ascertained. After formulas, a transcription follows of the entire chant as it appears in the minitext. I indicate line breaks with forward slashes, whereas all other conventions are based on *CT* typesetting conventions: pre-existing *Proprium* chants are in small caps, scribal editorial information with italicised small caps, headings in minuscule text inside of angle brackets, text that scribes abbreviate in round parenthesis. The most frequent editorial information that scribes A and B provide is 'usque', that is, 'until'. Therefore, what reads as "IN-TRET USQUE CUMPEDITORUM" is to be understood as "INTRET IN CONSPEC-TU TUO DOMINE GEMITUS CUMPEDITORUM"[24]. I cite whenever possible the

24 More common customs for this cue typical of tropes are either a middle dot instead of *usque* (i.e. INTRET • CUMPEDITORUM), or to write just the first word of the original chant, standing for the entire portion (i.e. INTRET).

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provenance and dating forwarded by Andreas Haug in his abovementioned essay[25]; if a source is not mentioned there, I take its dating from *CT* X.

Introit - Intret in conspectu

Edition: *CT* X volume A, pp. 224-225.
Formula: 8a-9d-10fp ax 18a-19d-20f.
Scribe: A, 940-970.
Transcription:

Table 2.

« Trofas de Martyribus »	
8	Gloria martyrum et corona est certami/num.
a	Intret *usque* compeditorum.
9	Effundens iram / tuam in gentes quae te non noverunt.
b	Redde vi(cinis) / *usque* In sinu eorum.
10	Deus qui reddes super tronum et iudicas / hequitatem.
f	Vindica san(guinem) *usque* Qui effusus est. /
p	*Salmus* Deus venerunt.
a	Intret *usque ad finem.*
x	Gloria pa(tri). /
18	Celica sanctorum quod clamat turba suorum effectus socii / sallamus voce sonora.
a	Intret.
19	Iudicii libra qui iusto / pondere pensas.
d	Redde.
20	Qui nullas suntum culpas / patyheris in ultas suos.
f	Vindica.

This introit and its two trope-sets 8-10 and 18-20 provide the following overall structure of 'Troped introit with psalm verse' > 'Untroped introit with doxology' > 'Troped introit'. Out of the thirty sources that record *Intret in conspectu* in *CT* X, six provide both sets 8-10 and 18-20. Twelve sources carry set 8-10 without set 18-20 while three carry set 18-20 without 8-10. Set 8-10 is found both in Frankish and Aquitanian sources, each zone having its own melodies for this set; finally, set 18-20 is found only in Aquitanian sources: Björkvall

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25 Haug 2018, p. 271.

even refers to it as «spécifiquement aquitaine»[26]. Our minitext now becomes the only non-Aquitanian testimony to set 18-20. All the six Aquitanian sources that have both sets 8-10 and 18-20 invariably present set 18-20 before 8-10, as well as adding other sets either before (as in BnF, Nouvelles Acquisitions Latines, MS 1871: 24-27 > 18-20 > 8-10), or in-between (as in BnF Lat. 909: 18-20 > 21, 17, 22-23 > 8-10). BnF Lat. 1118 is the earliest of these six sources, dated ca. 1000. On the other hand, our minitext is the only source in which the two sets are not accompanied by other trope-sets, as well as being the only one in which set 8-10 precedes set 18-20.

Which melody was Scribe A familiar with for the trope-set? A cross-checking of *CT* X with digitised sources indexed in Cantus Database shows that set 8-10 was sung to two separate melodies, one Aquitanian and one Frankish[27]. This geographical division of melodies for set 8-10 poses some questions. As set 18-20 was previously only known from Aquitanian sources, did our scribe have in mind the same Aquitanian melodies, or would he have known a different Frankish melodic tradition for set 18-20, as is the case for set 8-10? Here I offer three hypothetical relationships:

1. Set 18-20 originated in Aquitaine and reached Francia via a *libellus*. The Frankish redactors disregarded the Aquitanian melodic tradition and provided the set with local melodies, generating the same geographical distinction as seen in set 8-10.
2. Set 18-20 originated in Francia and then reached Aquitaine. The melodies now seen in Aquitanian sources for set 18-20 are the original Frankish ones. This hypothesis, chronologically possible given the dating of currently available documents, would also be in line with Huglo's 'Loi des doublets': when more than one liturgical composition is found for the same occasion, the newest tend to be superimposed over the older one(s), as if to give emphasis to its novelty[28].
3. Set 18-20 originated in Francia and then reached Aquitaine. The Frankish melodies were discarded in favour of a local style once they arrived.
    The question must remain open for now.

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26 *CT* V, p. 167.

27 See https://cantusindex.org/id/g01310. Aquitanian mss. consulted: BnF Lat. 903, BnF Lat. 1118, BnF Lat. 909 (unnotated). West Frankish mss. consulted: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 473, BnF Lat. 9448, BnF Lat. 13252, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 1169.

28 This seems to be especially valid for tropes. See the very clear, convincing scheme in Huglo 1979 p. 78. Huglo first illustrated the 'Loi des Doublets' in regards to musico-liturgical documents in Huglo 1971, p. 296.

Offertory - Laetamini

Edition: *CT* X vol. A, pp. 232-233.
Formula: 10a 11p (12 from Off. *Constitues eos*).
Scribe: A, 940-970.
Transcription:

Table 3.

« Offe »	
10	Vera est in celo sanctorum letitia dum clara semper cer/nitur Dei presencia.
a	LETAMINI.
11	Prima est homini beatitudo peccatorum / homnium indulgentiam.
p	BEATI (later hand:) QUORUM REMIS(SIONEM).
12-*Constitues*	Christe rex seculorum Domine laudes tibi sallimus ehia.

The tropes 10 and 11 for the offertory *Laetamini in Domino* are quite rare, appearing as a combined set in just three sources other than our minitext: Add. 19768, from Mainz, and the Aquitanian Apt 17 and 18, with the last two being related to each other. The Aquitanian manuscripts BnF Lat. 903 and BnF Lat. 887 have only trope 10 for the offertory since they lack its verse. After the offertory verse and its trope 11, our minitext calls for *Christe rex seculorum*, a trope that *CT* X records as number 12 for the St Peter offertory *Constitues eos*. This trope is in itself very rare, only appearing in the two Frankish sources PARIS, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal [henceforth PaA] 1169 and BnF Lat. 9449, respectively from Autun (996-1024) and Nevers (1050 ca.)[29]. In both sources the space allotted for music was left blank[30], probably a sign of difficult transmission for the music of this particular trope. Indeed, if and how Scribe A came in contact with whatever melody *Christe rex seculorum* had is yet another question that must remain without an answer for now. But given that the text of *Christe rex seculorum* has a very general tone of thanksgiving to God and no relation to St Peter whatsoever, and that our minitext is earlier than the chronologically closest source PaA 1169, the hypothesis can be offered that the minitext records an earlier state in which this trope was not specifically attached to St Peter. The assignment of *Christe rex seculorum* to St Peter in the only two previously known sources might be better explained as the result of common transmis-

29 *CT* X tome A, pp. 201-202.

30 See PaA 1169, f. 46r and BnF Lat. 9449, f. 60v at https://gallica.bnf.fr.

sion lineages across PaA 1169 and BnF Lat. 9449 than as an actual linking of the trope *Christe rex seculorum* to the figure of St Peter, since a text created for St Peter might reasonably be expected to refer to him.

Communion

Edition: N/A.
Formula: N/A.
Scribe: A, 940-970.
Transcription:

Multitudo posuerunt (later hand:) mortalia servorum / [...][31].

Unravelling the philological problems of the communion chant and its trope(s) proves virtually impossible. Three, perhaps intertwined, issues are evident. Firstly, two dots follow the word *Multitudo* and then, after more space than needed, the word *posuerunt*. Both the words *Multitudo* and *Posuerunt* begin two different and widespread communion chants for several martyrs[32]. Secondly, Scribe D added a few neumes over the word *posuerunt* and Scribe E added the words *mortalia servorum* after *posuerunt*. Thirdly, the line following was completely and successfully erased.

Two hypotheses seem at least logically plausible, although far from fully convincing. Let us assess first the word *posuerunt*. Taken as is, it could either be the first word of a trope for the communion *Multitudo* (read: *Posuerunt <...>.* Multitudo.), or the first word for the communion *Posuerunt* (read: <...>. Posuerunt <mortalia servorum>. If *posuerunt* were the first word of a trope for Multitudo, we would then be faced with an otherwise unrecorded trope. If so, the erased line could have been what came after *posuerunt* and the neumes above could have recorded the melody of this trope (although this is doubtful, set as they are in a continuous string rather than above each syllable). Then Scribe E, faced with this unknown trope, might have wanted to erase the unfamiliar words in the second line, adding *mortalia servorum* so as to link that initial word to an actual, well-known chant. The change in the eyes of Scribe E of the word *posuerunt* from an unrecorded trope to a communion chant could

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31 I omit small caps in this transcription since it is uncertain which section of the text was intended to indicate the communion and which the trope. On the opposite, I indicate the erased line of text in square brackets since it is evident from the minitext layout that it must have had some sort of connection with the preceding line.

32 See https://cantusindex.org/id/g00043 (Co. *Multitudo languentium*) and https://cantusindex.org/id/g00472 (Co. *Posuerunt mortalia servorum*).

explain why the neumes added by Scribe D over it do not match the melody of the communion *Posuerunt mortalia servorum*.

The second possible hypothesis would have the erased line be the incipit of an actual trope for the communion MULTITUDO (read: MULTITUDO. / <...>.), albeit oddly placed after the chant incipit rather than before. Corpus Troporum reports two possible tropes for this chant: n. 1429 *Sedens in monte* and n. 1474 *Summa dei proles*[33]. *Sedens in monte* is recorded in seven sources from Aquitaine and England, *Summa dei proles* in three Eastern ones. Hence, *Sedens in monte* would be the expected trope here based on this regional division. But the portion of the letter only feebly discernible at the beginning of the erased line cannot be the 'S' or 's' of either *Sedens* or *Summa*, and I am rather inclined to see it as the initial minim of either 'm' or 'n'. Could it then be that, unsatisfied with the trope he saw or selected, or noting how the trope beginning with 'm' or 'n' was not the expected *Summa dei proles*, Scribe A erased the entire line and proposed another communion – *Posuerunt* – to be troped altogether instead of *Multitudo*? This too however is difficult to argue, since *Posuerunt mortalia servorum* is not recorded in *Corpus Troporum* as a communion receiving tropes and also since, as said, the neumes above *posuerunt* do not match the usual melody of the Communion chant *Posuerunt*.

Whatever the hypothesis for what trope(s) came with what communion, the issue remains unsolved. Scribe A surely imagined a communion chant to be present in order to have a full set for an entire Martyrs' mass, but whereas the introit and the offertory chants posed no problem, the communion chant did. Perhaps he himself regarded whatever arrangement he penned as unsatisfactory, in which case the erasure further obscures a situation that he himself already considered garbled. (It is also possible that the person who erased the last line on the recto was the same person who cleared all of the verso. If this were the case, it would be equally unclear why they only erased the single last line of the recto.)

Introit - Sacerdotes tui

Edition: *CT* X Vol. A, pp. 259-260.
Formula: (35 from Off. *Confessio et pulchritudo*)a (36-*Confessio*)d (37-*Confessio*)e [...].
Scribe: B, 940-980.
Transcription:

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33 Respectively in *CP* X vol. B, p. 430 and p. 444.

Table 4.

« Torf »	
35-*Confessio*	Laudibus organicis sallamus voces / quod clamant prophetica.
a	Sᴀᴄᴇʀᴅᴏᴛᴇs *usque* ɪᴜsᴛɪᴄɪᴀ. /
36-*Confessio*	Sacra quam hodie celebremus sollemnia.
d	ᴇᴛ sᴀɴᴄᴛɪs ᴛᴜɪ ᴇxᴜʟᴛᴇɴᴛ [...].
37-*Confessio*	[Premia] pro [me]ritis quibus / illos magnificasti.
e	Pʀᴏ[ᴘᴛᴇʀ...]. /
[...]	[...]

Although badly erased – especially so towards the centre and the end – the first of the two troped chants on the verso is identifiable as the introit *Sacerdotes tui*, paired with a set of at least three visible trope elements. Scribe B almost certainly wrote a total of four or five tropes, since the introit would otherwise be structurally incomplete and because one more line of text to account for is now completely illegible. As said above, the *Laudibus organicis* trope-set was only previously known from the English troper Lo 14, where it was used for a different chant genre altogether, the St Lawrence offertory *Confessio et pulchritudo.* Ritva Jacobsson surveyed this and other unicum trope-sets in Lo 14. As a new and older source for the *Laudibus organicis* trope-set, our minitext allows for consideration that will link with and clarify her trope-sets.

Laudibus organicis is the second of two trope-sets for St Lawrence present in Lo 14. The first one, *Adest alma dies*, is also found in the Winchester tropers Cᴀᴍʙʀɪᴅɢᴇ, Corpus Christi College, MS 473 and Oxғᴏʀᴅ, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl. 775. Jacobsson was quick to notice how both *Laudibus organicis* and *Adest alma dies* are of a «completely conventional [tone], without any mention of the particular category of saint occupied by Laurence. ... One gets the impression that they were just assembled casually from stock phrases[34].» This, together with other considerations pertaining to «style, versification and linguistic character of the unique tropes [in Lo 14]» brought Jacobsson to conclude that the scribe and compiler of Lo 14 had «access to a vast continental repertory [that ...] also includes much French material[35].» Jacobsson denies the unicum trope-sets in Lo 14 the status of original compositions, interpreting them as assemblages from previous «anthologies, ... *libelli*, or small sheets con-

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34 Jᴀᴄᴏʙʙsᴏɴ 1993, pp. 31-32.

35 *Ibidem*, pp. 43-44.

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taining single tropes or groups of tropes». Clearly, the discovery of *Laudibus organicis* in our minitext proves her right in this hypothesis and allows us to observe an exemplar of such fleeting anthologies of the exact nature that Jacobsson had supposed. Moreover, in our minitext this trope-set serves a different chant from a different genre altogether – the generic Martyrs' introit *Sacerdotes tui* as opposed to the St Lawrence offertory *Confessio et pulchritudo* of Lo 14. The different destination – from several saints to one – is also reflected here by the use of the plural form *illos* instead of *illum* seen in Lo 14. Finally, it is also interesting to note how the two chants share a final on E, allowing from a melodic point of view, too, this transfer of a trope-set from one chant to another.

Introit – Nunc scio

Edition: *CT* X Vol. A, pp. 243-248.
Formula: 13a 14[d] 15[e] 16[f] [...].
Scribe: C, 970-1010.
Transcription:

Table 5.

« T[rofas ... Pet]ri » (?)	
13	Divina beatus [Petrus ereptus c]lemencia in se / rediens dixit.
a	N[UNC]
14	[Custo]dem / defensorem vit[e mee].
d	[...]
15	[Co]nstantissimum / nominis suis.
e	[...]
16	Sancti colle/gii nostri mali[gni pervasoris].
[f]	[...]

The introit for St Peter *Nunc scio* is the second chant on the verso and the last of the minitext altogether. Just as with the preceding chant and perhaps even more critically, its text is only very feebly legible. Most of what has survived after a very heavy erasure is in the two lateral areas, likely because the person who erased this text did so in a circular motion, concentrating the scraping towards the centre. Circumstantially, these lateral areas happen to report tropes but none of the original introit text. The single initial 'N' of 'NUNC' is the only visible element of any introit text. As a result, tropes 13 to 16 and the first letter of the chant are factually visible, but introit sections 'd', 'e', and 'f' must be assumed from the fact that tropes 13 to 16 are invariably bound to sec-

tions 'a' to 'f' in their thirteen occurrences in *CT*[36]. The redaction might also be incomplete, since not enough text seems to be visible, scraped or not, that would accommodate the concluding section 'g' of the introit and its trope.

Of the thirteen sources of tropes 13-16, seven are roughly contemporary or slightly later than Scribe C; Add. 19768 and BnF Lat. 1240 are however earlier, being respectively dated to 950 and 930 circa and produced in Mainz and Limoges. It follows that tropes 13-16 to *Nunc scio* are the only ones in our minitext also recorded in earlier sources. Could this fact help to localise the region of origin for all of our minitext tropes? I do not think so, for while it is true that the entries of Scribes A and B stands closer overall to the Aquitanian source BnF 1240 than to the German Add. 19768, it still cannot be inferred that the origin of this minitext collection – or any of its single tropes – is directly linked to Aquitaine. For example, tropes 13-16 for *Nunc scio* were also circulating in Frankish regions at times even earlier than the date of BnF Lat. 1240 and Add. 19768. Wulf Arlt, in a thorough study on the troping of *Nunc scio*, concludes that the trope-set 13-17 must have originated in a zone between the Rhine and West Francia, but that it also soon reached Aquitaine[37]. To which tradition Scribe C is indebted is impossible to say with certitude, since he did not provide musical notation – the melodies of the West Frankish and Aquitanian trope-set are different – and also because if he wrote anything after trope 16, it cannot be reconstructed today, whereas the two traditions split after trope 17. All things considered, and also when taking into account the repertoire of tropes provided by the two previous scribes, it seems possible to suggest that the presence of tropes 13-16 for *Nunc scio* is one more indication of a broadly understood West Frankish localization for the origin of the entire collection and the sourcing of its materials.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding its humble, even jumbled, looks, this minitext proves to be an important early document for the practice of troping for at least two reasons. For one thing, it is the oldest testimony for the tropes of three out of the four identifiable chants. Our minitext as a document fits the rapidly expanding process in the tenth century of additions to the sanctoral calendar in the West Frankish zone where it was produced[38]. Another notable reason is that, as

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36 *CT* X vol. A, pp. 243-244.

37 See ARLT 1993, pp. 13-93, esp. 45-49.

38 On this aspect see GOUDESENNE 2002.

an addition in an unrelated, non-musical host manuscript, our minitext represents a medial stage between a transitory trope *libellus* and a well-organized trope repertory recorded in an actual troper (or a section dedicated to tropes within a larger music book). It cannot be demonstrated whether the tropes recorded here went on to be re-written at the same institution in one such specific trope book, or if they just served the performances of the cantor(s) they were written by or for without serving as models for further written recording. Yet whether they became part of an actual book of music or not, the argument does not change. This is a quintessential example of a minitext recording new music in the margins. It is easy to see how these new, cutting-edge compositions, travelling across the Frankish empire via perishable *libelli*, reached the institution where our minitext was produced and found favour with the cantors who eventually decided to include them in their chant 'portfolio'. The inexact spelling of the genre in the capitalized headings of Scribes A and B – *torfas* and *trofas* – and the insurmountable difficulties Scribe A seems to have had when it came to recording the communion tropes speak for the novelty, perhaps even unfamiliarity, of the practice of troping in the eyes of those involved in the creation of this document. Following the palaeographic assessment that posits that Scribes A and B were more or less contemporary and that Scribe C was writing some decades later, the history of this minitext collection would then result as follows. Possibly writing under dictation, Scribe A recorded a complete set of tropes for an entire mass for martyrs, making use of random but sufficient blank space left at the end of a codicological unit (whether this unit was yet bound in the current volume or not seems irrelevant). His material must have truly been new at the time of writing, since both of his legible trope-sets are here recorded for the first time as our documentary evidence stands. Scribe B must have entered his trope set shortly after, either because he knew from direct contact with Scribe A that the final folio of this unit or volume contained tropes already, or because he had or because he must have encountered the tropes upon reading and studying the Paulinus main text. He then decided to write a trope-set that he himself knew and whose contents and liturgical destination fitted the ones already present on the recto side. This hypothesis is easier to envisage than personal contact between Scribes B and A. Scribe C, probably writing some decades later, must have also entered tropes he knew and thought appropriate[39].

Moreover, that this minitext collection is the only source outside Aquit-

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39 I offer evidence for a similar case of scribes writing musical minitexts following their private study of the main book contents in MINNITI 2024, p. 157.

aine for the trope-set 18-20 for *Intret in conspectu* is certainly remarkable, but not entirely novel or exceptional when looking at the dissemination of newer chants from a 'marginal' perspective. Working for the MINiTEXTS Project, I have observed several other instances where chants that were previously recorded either exclusively or for the first time in Aquitanian sources actually appear as 'hidden' earlier marginalia in non-musical manuscripts of Central and Northern Francia[40]. This is also in line with details observable from actual tropers that suggest a strong degree of dependence by the Aquitanian corpus of tropes on areas further north[41]. Lastly, the fact that two tropes of a very generic tone chosen here for generic martyrs – the single trope *Christe rex seculorum* for the offertory *Laetamini* and the trope-set beginning with *Laudibus organicis* for the introit *Sacerdotes tui* – became in later sources tropes for St Peter and St Lawrence also seems to suggest a 'properization' of tropes taking place in the late tenth and eleventh centuries[42].

Addendum: a twelfth-century Marian responsory minitext

Sometime in the twelfth century, possibly its second half, a scribe wrote the Marian office responsory *Salve nobilis virga Iesse* with a later, diastematic type of Lotharingian notation on a five-line stave system. This notational family is entirely consistent with Bischoff's localisation of this codicological unit in Northeastern France. As for the chant, it is recorded in Cantus Database in documents from around the same time but circulating exclusively in the Alemannic zone. In the twelfth century it is found in sources from Switzerland, Austria and Germany, whereas in later centuries it spread farther east[43]. Yet this scribe had come across this chant and wrote it down complete with diastematic Lotharingian notation resulting in the only testimony of *Salve nobilis virga Iesse* outside of Eastern Europe and, notably, one contemporary to those same earliest eastern sources. This later minitext and its scribe are thus testimonies to medieval travel, and to the movement of learned people, from the perspective of liturgical music *in the margins*.

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40 See Minniti 2024, p. 158, and Minniti 2025 (forthcoming).

41 See e.g. Evans 1970 (repr. in Planchart 2009), pp. 219-227.

42 I take the term 'properization' from McKinnon 1995 (although his references are Temporale cycles, not the Sanctorale).

43 See http://cantusindex.org/id/007564

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