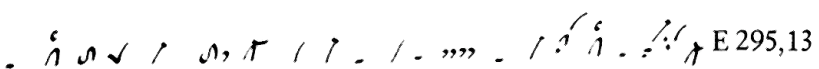


The Rhetorical Component in the Notation of E 121

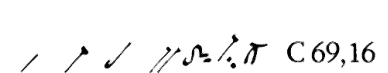
by Godehard Joppich
Translation by Rev. Columba Kelly, O.S.B.

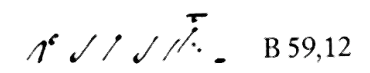
[p.2/120]: It is hardly ever of any importance to see the exact pitches of the melodic movement. Rather, it suffices to perceive the neumes of the St. Gall notational system as symbols for the ebb and flow of the speech art with its tension and relaxation of the reciting voice. If one expresses the text by following the guidance of these notational signs (and one should do that with perceptible changes of voice from example to example) then the additional signs not only function as carrying the understanding of the text, but the variations of loudness in the speaking voice also help to achieve the correct sense of the sentence, for meaning often comes first through hearing a well spoken text. The notes point to the sense of the words. First of all, whoever interprets the words of the text with their notes, finds the sense. However, the act of determining what needs to be added to a note is not an arbitrary matter. The rhythmic-melodic sound lies as if sleeping in the words and by fidelity to the meaning of the text, is awakened by the voice which searches for the sense of the text. For that reason, if the greatest emphasis is placed on speaking the text out loud, one will take advantage of the rhetorical arts as the mediator between the text and the understanding of the reader. Only those who hear a text understand it, that is to say, understanding comes in the attempt to give (audible) shape to the words of a text.

1. Highlighting the sonic energy of the accented syllable

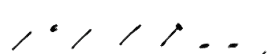
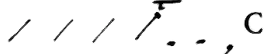
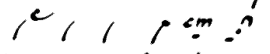
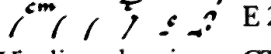
 E 295,13
a verbis tuis formidavit cor meum laetabor ego su-per eloqui-a tu- a GT 530,4

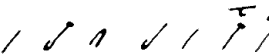
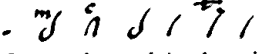
[p.3/120] The important word *cor* in the Co. *Principes* (GT 530/4) is an example of the highlighting of the word accent in order to counteract the danger that the emphasis of an important word would not become sufficiently audible.

 C 69,16
Custodi me GT 304,6

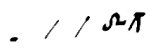
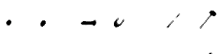
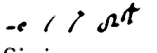
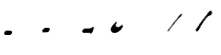
 B 59,12
praevenisti e- um GT 509,1

[p.6/124] The episema used for the accent of *custodi me* (GT 304/6) has the sole purpose of protecting the sense of the statement from possible negative influences that occasionally occur in such contexts. The rhythmic additions in both examples spring either from a mere precaution of the notator or address a particular defect of "his" schola. In each case they show the care given for the primacy of the word in opposition to the musical note.

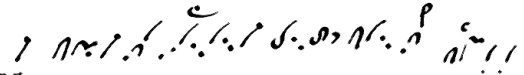
	C 29,5		C 119,15
	E 10,9		E 263,5
Prope est dominus	GT 35,3	Vindi-ca domine	GT 496,1

	C 29,16
	E 13,11
Ostende nobis domine	GT 31,5

[p.7/125] A vocative form normally has a stronger emphasis quality than a nominative. Thus both vocative forms of the word *Domine* (GT 31/5 and GT 496/1) have the addition of the letter *t* in contrast to the case with the nominative form of the word *Dominus* (GT 35/3).

	B 32,2		C 85,2
	E 161,10		B 32 ^v ,3
Si-ti-entes venite ad aquas	GT 114,1	Li-be-ra-tor me-us	E 164,13 GT 121,5

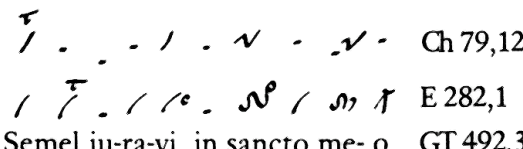
[p.9/127] The question could arise as to why an emphatic strong point like *meus* (GT 121/5) with so large a melisma on its final syllable, would not be highlighted by at least an episema if not even the addition of a *t* on the accented syllable. The question appears typical to us who are accustomed to the visual aspect of music, that is to say, the graphic designs. In material like this, the notators of the old codices saw primarily the meaning of the text. Thanks to over a hundred years of oral tradition, they were thoroughly conversant with the pitches. The notation was understood accordingly as the documentation of a spoken language, spoken according to the ancient rules of rhetoric, in a gregorian mode. So the specific sound of its dramatic re-presentation had to be brought back to this example, *Liberator meus Domine* (now in the ambitus of the Deuterus authenticus mode!). The tremendous emphasis intensity of *meus* expresses itself in the attraction which is exercised on the pretonic syllables and explodes in the melisma on the final syllable. Thus this large group of notes on *meus* should be considered as presupposing a strong emphasis, as well as symbolizing it. In other words: the melisma is proof enough for the size (and emotion!) of this energetic emphasis. The accent syllable does not need an additional sign.

	E 297,7
Vi-tam	pe-ti-it
GT 509,4	

[p.10/128] When there is a strong accent on the first syllable of the first word in a piece (cf. *Vitam* in GT 509/4) an additional sign (e.g.: an episema) must be used to advise the singer of the unusual energy needed at the very start, since the

importance of this syllable has not been prepared by any preceding pretonic syllables.

2. Post tonic syllables as delimiting the emphasis energy



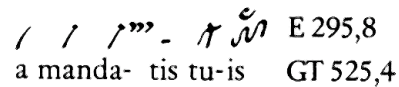
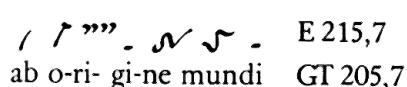
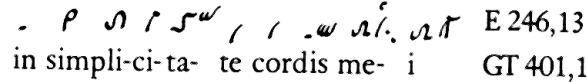
 Ch 79,12
 E 282,1
 GT 492,3

[p.14/132] A further possibility for making the emphasis quality graphically visible exists where a single-note neume is furnished with a corresponding addition over the final syllable of the word in question. The example *Semel iuravi* (GT 492/3) is important and informative for understanding the logic and the economy of the neume notation. The emphasis is drawn immediately to the word *Semel*. Although the melodic line does not draw out this emphasis excessively, the notator, however, hears it as being very important according an understanding of the text which would have it say: “**once for all** I have sworn.” Indeed, the notator has marked this strong emphasis through the addition of a *t* for the final syllable of the word *semel*.

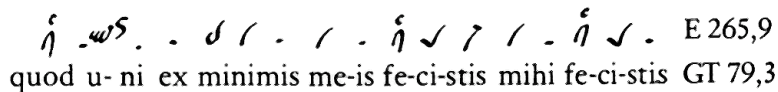
The logic of this writing can be explained by the basic rhetorical rule that the emphasis intensity given to the accent syllable and the duration of sound for the final syllable are related to each other. In other words, the emphasis energy must be absorbed and delimited by the final syllable (or word unit). The greater the range of application for an emphasis, the more clearly it becomes audible. For that reason, each emphasis creates the arrangement and the structuring of the speech. Thus, it is ultimately indifferent as to just how strong the emphasis has been with respect to whether one indicates the weight of the emphasis through a *t* for the accent syllable, as does the notation of Chartres for the word *semel*, or whether one puts the *t* at the final syllable and indicates this emphasis through a delay of the duration as an (almost subsequent) absorbing reaction. Both punctuations reveal the naturalness and the basic logic of good speech in relation to the text, which to begin with, respects the individual word within the sentence according to its logical and semantic function. In other words, the word accent is to be tonally realized in a corresponding way. The economy of such notation is demonstrable: with rare exceptions, which demand a particular strength of emphasis, only one of the two possibilities of punctuation are used, either at the accent syllable or at the final syllable, – not both.

[p.15/133] The basic rhetorical rule of the relation between the accent and the final syllable just mentioned, also proves its validity through the *c* at the final syllable of the word *iuravi*. The letter can only be explained from a natural feeling for the language, which would accordingly like to absorb the emphasis of the word on the final syllable. First of all, since the rhythmic analogy of *Semel* intrudes itself on *iuravi*. Precisely that is what was prevented by the use of the *c*, for to that verb belongs the following prepositional phrase (indeed more clearly

accent. It thereby makes the accent syllable to be more consciously sonorous and therefore the accent can also be sung softly and with a diminished agogic.

	
E 295,8 a manda- tis tu-is GT 525,4	E 215,7 ab o-ri- gi-ne mundi GT 205,7
	
E 246,13 in simpli-ci-ta- te cordis me- i GT 401,1	

In the examples *o-ri-gi-ne* (GT 205.7) and *sim-pli-ci-ta-te* (GT 401.1) the notator calls to mind through the addition of a sign to the pretonic syllable, a particular consciousness for the following accent syllable and with it, the particular meaning of the word in this context. At the same time, the delay of the accent gives the possibility of building up the tension of the melodic line toward the accent that follows.


E 265,9 quod u- ni ex minimis me-is fe-ci-stis mihi fe-ci-stis GT 79,3

[p.26/144] In the example *meis fecistis mihi fecistis* (GT 79/3) it becomes clear with an identical speech/melody, that the episema does not have the function of absorbing the emphasis dynamic produced by its own accent syllable, but by braking and holding back the speech agogic on the final syllable, it increases the emphasis for what follows it. That is the true rhetorical delay. There are only a few examples of this function using an additional sign for a single-note neume that can be found in our codex, since they presuppose a syllabic style musical setting.

4. The diminution of pretonic syllables at the attraction of a strong emphasis

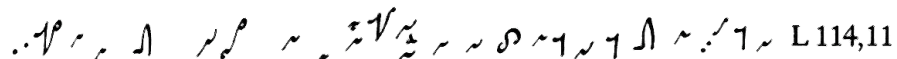
[p.28/146] As has just been shown, the importance of an emphasis can be highlighted by the addition of a sign at the preceding syllable which in turn produces an *allargando*. On the contrary, however, its value can be underlined through an *accelerando* on the pretonic syllable(s). In order to recognize this agogic nuance, the letter *c* (= celeriter) is needed to indicate the attraction which the accent exercises. This is brought about by the diminution of the value for the pretonic syllable. Only the Laon codex and in part, also the Cantatorium can do without the use of additional signs to bring out the diminished value, since they have their own sign, namely the Punctum (.). The Cantatorium, however, uses the Punctum only for lower notes.

5. Sense regulated agogic

[p.40/158] In the preceding sections those added signs were explored which make visible an emphasis quality demanded by the sense context of the words and serve therefore, to **correctly** emphasize a particular word. In both of the following sections those places are explored which along with the added signs, are concerned with the task of emphasizing the **right word** and therefore serve to guide the speech agogic, that is to say, the strength of emphasis needed to draw out the meaning of the word. This can directly happen through references which effect the correct weighting of the emphasis in a word unit (as for example *in domo tua* instead of *in domo tua*), or indirectly through references that avoid either both a false and a too strong emphasis, or misleading emphases or caesuras in the context of a larger phrase. For both of these points, the notator shows proof of a very distinctive feel for the importance of language.

[p.42/160] The delays on prepositions, indicated by a liquescent or an added letter, also convey the emphasis to the goal which is over the immediately following word, that is to say, onto the next accent.

[p.52/169] Concerning the effects of using a Cephalicus or an Epiphonus (whether on a conjunction or a preposition), the following can be said: the Epiphonus appears where it deals with making a correctly sung emphasis audible on the next syllable, which, however, is followed by a still more important emphasis. On the contrary, the Cephalicus appears where the immediately following accent is not nearly as important as the one that follows it.

 L 114,11

 E 232,11

Spiritus..ar-gu-et mundum..de pecca-to et de iustiti-a et de iudi-ci-o GT 233,4

[p.53/171] A conjunction or preposition on a higher pitch than the following syllable almost always serves as a reference for a delay that has the purpose of creating a speech agogic nuancing and serves to differentiate the intensity of emphasis. An example of this is the phrase *spiritus ... arguet mundum ... de peccato* (GT 233/4) that demonstrates an increase in the quantity of the delay and again provides proof for the rhetorical art found in the “gregorian” musical settings.

Summary

[p.59/177] The preoccupation with additional rhythmic signs in the Einsiedeln 121 codex for single-note neumes, shows that the notator of the codex has reacted with these signs exclusively for the sake of the importance of the text, and of course not only with regard to “word and note” generally, but especially with regard to the sense and the emphasis, that is to say, for the correct reading of the text. He does this with such distinctive tact, that in this regard, he exceeds not only the other manuscripts of the St. Gall family, but also the notation of the Laon 239 codex. Through these signs he does not “interpret” the text, but simply

makes visible what is already contained in the “composition” of the pitch material, the “musical setting” of the text. In these signs is contained the causal and sense determining connection between the pitches and the degrees of meaning and also with that, the tension emerging between the value gradations of the individual syllables and the words. While a neume group can create the degree of meaning of a syllable along with the pitch, as well as the duration and density of the sound, and therefore reflect its temporal relationship to the associated area, a single-note neume in the St. Gall notation can only make visible this temporal relationship with the help of additional signs. The agogic which thereby becomes visible (and audible), is not primarily the reflection of a subjective discovery, nor of a more artistically conditioned temperament (as much as such a role may and must play), a pronunciation agogic, but is an objective consequence brought about through the different emphasis energies necessitated by the tension relationships between the syllables and the words, therefore a **speech agogic**.

The notator of the Einsiedeln codex holds the graphic reproduction of these agogic relations of the speech/melody to be also important and necessary as the most exact statement possible of the pitches. As he attempts to specify the vagueness of the adiaSTEMATIC neume notation in reference to the interval relationships through “melodic” additional letters, so he also tries to precise the neutrality of the single-note neumes in reference to the tension relationships through “rhythmic” additional signs and to (graphically) define their respective agogic values according to their meaning in the text.

This fact presents a question. If the “rhythmic” relationships of the single-note neumes are demonstrably speech agogic and not purely musical, if they reflect therefore, logical tension relationships, would that not also have to be correct for the note groups and their movement? It is hardly to be assumed, however, that the pitch and dynamic of the single-note neumes are determined by the logic of speech while the note movement and dynamic of the note groups, on the other hand, are determined by a (purely) musical aesthetic. Therefore, the question is whether the observations made as a part of this contribution do not give occasion to the conjecture that the Gregorian musical settings of necessity follow the laws of the logic of speech and demand that the admired musical aesthetics of Gregorian chant are not necessarily autonomous, but rather that the chant is conditioned by and gives witness to the meaning of the words that accompany it. The references given in the course of this work to one or another neume group and their rhetorical function will already have shown the reader that the author himself tends in this direction.

It appears in fact, that (at least in the schola pieces for the Introit and Communion) certain neume groups exercise certain rhetorical functions, that is to say, they concern the correct meaning in reading the text. They can be understood, almost without exception, as signs that give minute directions for a more accurate recitation in which the meaning of the text guides the performance of the corresponding note and tension arc. These signs are comparable to those with which professional speakers and readers furnish their texts and are thereby

in a position, at any time without further preparation, to recite a text with the correct meaning.

That allows us to explain more easily how it was possible to learn the whole repertory of liturgical chants by heart. At that time, one would not have memorized notes and note groups attached to syllables and words, but one would have “meditated” the words (the Holy Scripture), which is what it was called in the medieval-monastic usage: it was learned entirely as **sung speech**, assimilated as a **sounded reality**. Thus the mediation of the sense of these texts will not be through the “refinement” of musical aesthetics, but rather it will be in the sounding itself of these texts, in their grammatical structure and logical order, according to the coherent rhetorical laws of sound.