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Flos excellens flos beatus

Gb-Ob Rawl. D 1225 ff.128r-129r

Source and Contents

First three pieces are in hands of late s.xii; the rest are in s.xiii hands (a variety of similar scribes, some perhaps the same but writing at different times and with different pens). Described in more detail below.

Notation

Notation hand is less fluid than *Psallat*, but still quite 'relaxed'. Virga and punctum note-forms are distinct but interchangeable, and often different in different versicles. The ligatures are fluid. Virga has stem protruding above head; the head is thicker than *Psallat*'s but not quite square.

The puncta are 'winged' and the wing to the right can be especially pronounced. Clear pattern to use of punctum - always lower than previous note, but virga and punctum are interchangeable in repeated phrases.

Cephalicus has tail to left and the head is slightly sloping and tapered into a short tail to right - only this short tail reaches the pitch below, not the head itself. Occasionally virgae are written with the tail to the left, as if cephalici, but these seem to be slips of the pen as the head-shape is not that of the cephalicus.

Pes usually leans bottom left to top right. Scandicus present. Climacus is 'English conjunctura' style; sometimes a fourth note is added to the climacus, which takes the form of a virga (**1a subLatus**).



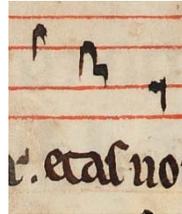


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Clivis - some of these have short tails to right – difficult to tell if they perhaps indicate liquescences, or if this just an occasional slip of the pen (**5b eTAS**).



Doubled notes at ends of some phrases and versicles can be punctum-virga (in which case the punctum is square not oblique) or two puncta (both normal shape, but wings more pronounced on second), both written close together.

Layout

The text hands are transitional. *Flos excellens* is missing its initial and there is no decoration on this page (128r). On ff.128v-129r, however, initials are highlighted in red. The music takes over the width of the writing block from the text preceding, but continues lower into the margin on 128r. Then for the next pages, a wider and longer block is ruled (210x140 from 180x120). Each system is ruled 20mm for each of the two *Flos* pieces, although scribe is different. 4-line staves neatly ruled in red, but not always evenly spaced. The two *Flos* pieces seem to 'fill up' the quire they are in.

References

Corbin, Solange : *Die Neumen* (Volk: 1977).

Frere, Walter Howard, ed. : *Biblioteca musico-liturgica: a descriptive handlist of the musical and Latin-liturgical MSS. of the Middle Ages preserved in the libraries of Great Britain and Ireland*. 2 vols. (London: Bernard Quaritch for the Plainsong and Medieval Music Society, 1901-1932; repr. 1967), p. 336.

Hartzell, Karl Drew : *Catalogue of Manuscripts Written or Owned in England up to 1200 Containing Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press in association with the Plainsong and Medieval Music Society, 2006), no.287, p.496: s.xii (last quarter).

[NB Hartzell lists only *Psallat celum*, *Flos excellens*, and *Flos convallis*, since the other musical additions are later, 'possibly all of s.xiii' and therefore outside his scope.]

Hiley, David : 'The Norman Chant Traditions', PRMA 107 (1980-1), 1-33.



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Kozachek, T : 'Tonal neumes in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman pontificals', *PMM* 6 (1997), 119-41

RISM B IV, pp.573-574.

For further references on this source please see the DIAMM bibliography.

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