



## Receiving and Reshaping Scripture in the Visigothic Liturgy

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### ABSTRACT

Seventh-century Hispania has left us a legacy of work that was widely read and cited in the middle ages, with the writings of Isidore of Seville assuming pride of place. These texts were the products of a cultural renewal among a handful of bishops in seventh-century Hispania, whose ultimate goal was to form a society unified in Nicene belief under the Visigothic kings. Central to these aims was Christian formation through the education of clergy. Isidore, Ildefonsus, and other bishops collected, compiled, and glossed a vast corpus of patristic writings for this purpose. But we know too little about the reach of this project, or how the normative ideals reflected in the bishops' project relate to social reality. Liturgical texts can yield valuable insights into the project: both its aims and intellectual foundations and how it was put into practice. Although it had earlier roots, much of the Visigothic (or Old Hispanic) liturgy was a product of the seventh-century renewal and was carefully designed to work toward its goals. This essay examines liturgical texts as a product of the distinctive culture of textual production that emerged in seventh-century Hispania, beginning with overview of the textual culture itself, then examining how the liturgy relates to it. I then address how the experience of these texts was mediated through melody.

## ESSAY

The seventh century has often been viewed as a period when the composition of new theological texts gave way to florilegia, shorter digests of patristic writings that presented their central ideas in digest form. The seventh-century Iberian bishops followed this model in many respects: Isidore, Taio, Ildefonsus, and others compiled, abbreviated, and rearranged patristic texts in a variety of ways, as exemplified by Isidore's work. Sometimes Isidore employs very concise and explicitly pedagogical modes of discourse, distilling patristic teaching into simple, easily memorized sentences. His *Allegoriae* (or, *De Nominibus Legis et Evangeliorum*) is a list of Old Testament names followed by a brief explanation of their allegorical meaning. For example, "Abraham bears the type of God the father, who gave over his beloved son to be offered for the salvation of the world."<sup>1</sup> These short formulations were most likely intended for clergy who would preach.<sup>2</sup> In Isidore's *Sententiae*, basic instructions in doctrine and moral living are taken from the patristic tradition, but often presented in his own wording.<sup>3</sup> His *Questions on the Old Testament* (*Questiones*) proceeds through the Old Testament book by book, assembling longer patristic citations for each chapter, and his *De fide catholica*, in the tradition of anti-Jewish discourse, is a series of scriptural and patristic citations.

<sup>1</sup> Isidore, *Allegoriae* 20, Patrologia Latina 83, col. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Dominique Poirel, "Un manuel d'exégèse allégorique ou service des prédicateurs: Les *Allegoriae* d'Isidore de Séville," *Recherches Augustiniennes* 32 (2003): 95-107. See also Sergio Feldman, "Exegese e alegoria: A concepção de mundo isidoriana através do texto bíblico," *Dimensões: Revista de História da Ufes* 17 (2005): 133-49. On sacerdotal preaching in Visigothic Hispania, see below.

<sup>3</sup> On this work, see: Pierre Cazier, *Isidore de Séville et la naissance de l'Espagne catholique* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), 70-78, and Pierre Cazier, "Théorie et pédagogie de la religion populaire dans l'antiquité tardive: Augustin, Grégoire le Grand, Isidore de Séville," in *La Religion populaire. Aspects du Christianisme populaire à travers l'histoire*, ed. Yves-Marie Hiliare (Lille: Centre interdisciplinaire d'études des religions de l'Université de Lille III, 1981), 11-27.

Despite their different ways of redacting patristic texts, each of these works functions to convey basic principles of moral living and biblical exegesis. Although all were probably intended for clerical education, the dedication of *De fide catholica* to Isidore's sister Florentina, a nun, hints at a broader educational purpose as well.<sup>4</sup> The paucity of extant manuscripts from Visigothic Hispania, however, makes it impossible to know how widely these texts circulated and whether they were actually used for this purpose. Although the church councils mandate a certain degree of clerical education, they also hint at clerical ignorance and even illiteracy, implying that the bishops' educational program had little impact.<sup>5</sup> The councils, however, also mandate the daily office for clergy. To an extent that unique among the existing western liturgies, the bishops used the liturgy for teaching doctrine, particularly the exegesis of scripture. Liturgy and chant can shed new light on the bishops' methods of implementing their educational agenda and, through this, the formation of a Nicene identity.

The sole Visigothic source for the liturgy is the Orationale of Verona (OV).<sup>6</sup> The manuscript was copied before 732, and its contents are thought to date to the seventh century.<sup>7</sup> Copied in Tarragona and later taken to northern Italy, it contains prayers for

<sup>4</sup> See especially Wolfram Drews, *The Unknown Neighbour: The Jew in the Thought of Isidore of Seville* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2006), 114-16.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, the reference to clerical illiteracy in the Council of Narbonne (589), canon 11. 4 Toledo IV (633), in canons 25 and 26, mandates that priests know the scriptures and canons, since they were tasked with teaching the people, and that newly ordained priests be given a "libellum officiale." The frequent mandates that clergy know basic texts (for example, the psalter, canticles, hymns, and baptismal rite, according to 8 Toledo, canon 8) implies that clerical competence was an ongoing area of concern. *Concilios visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos*, ed. José Vives (Barcelona and Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1963), 148-49; 202; and 281.

<sup>6</sup> José Vives, *Oracional visigótico* (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1946).

<sup>7</sup> Verona, Cathedral, Biblioteca Capit. Cod. LXXXIX. Edition: José Vives, *Oracional visigótico*. (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1946). On the dating of the manuscript and its contents see, *inter alia*: Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, "La fecha de implantación del oracional festivo," *Boletín arqueológico: órgano de la Real Sociedad Arqueológica Tarraconense* 71-72 (1971): 216-43, and Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, "Consideraciones sobre el oracional visigótico de Verona," in *Petrarca, Verona e l'Europa, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi (Verona, 19-23 settembre 1991)*, ed. Giuseppe Billanovich and Giuseppe Frasso (Padua: Antenore, 1997), 13-29.

the daily offices, part of a combined clerical and monastic liturgy. Chant incipits are written into the margins, and most of the prayers are thematically related to these chants. The series of chants preserved in the OV corresponds to those in the Old Hispanic manuscripts with musical notation, which date from the tenth century onward, indicating that much of the existing liturgy was in place when the OV was copied. Many of the prayers in the OV are miniature florilegia, providing exegetical glosses of the chant text, often through patristic citations. The OV is thus an important witness to the culture of patristic learning in seventh-century Hispania. This characteristic emerges most clearly when we place it into dialogue with other patristic texts created within the same milieu.

My first case study is a biblical book and patristic commentary that were used extensively both in the theological works and the liturgy: the Book of Job and Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob*. The *Moralia* had been dedicated to Leander and inspired, according to Gregory, by conversations between them. The two had met in Byzantium in the 580s during Leander's exile and Gregory's diplomatic mission. In seventh-century Hispania, Gregory's fame had become so great that in 649-650, Taio, later to become bishop of Zaragoza, was sent to Rome to procure writings by Gregory that were unavailable in Hispania.<sup>8</sup> In the 650s, Taio compiled his *Sententiae*, a manual for theological instruction based on Gregory's works.<sup>9</sup> Typical of works intended for clerical education, the *Sententiae* is a compendium of patristic and scriptural passages arranged to address particular topics. The *Moralia* was Taio's principal source, but

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<sup>8</sup> See, most recently, Jamie Wood, "A Family Affair," in *Isidore of Seville and His Reception in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Fear and Jamie Wood (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 31-56.

<sup>9</sup> *Patrologia Latina* 80, cols. 719-999.

other works by Gregory also figure prominently. Taio gathered multiple texts addressing each topic, citing them verbatim or with small changes that work them into a coherent text. For example, nearly the entirety of the chapter describing the passion and death of Christ consists of excerpts from the *Moralia* (Example 1). The small gloss Taio inserts at the end merely adds the actual passage from Job that is the basis of Gregory's commentary.

Example 1: *Moralia* excerpts

Taio, <i>Sententiae</i> 2.5 <i>De passione et morte Iesu Christe</i> <sup>10</sup>	Gregory, <i>Moralia in Iob</i> <sup>11</sup>
<p>Passioni Dominus appropinquans, infirmantium in se vocem sumpsit, eorumque timorem ut abstraheret suscepit, dicens: Pater mi, si possibile est, transeat a me calix iste.</p> <p>Et rursum per obedientiam vim fortitudinis ostendens, ait: Verumtamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu. Ut cum hoc imminet quod fieri nolumus, sic per infirmitatem petamus ut non fiat, quatenus per fortitudinem parati simus ut voluntas. Conditoris nostri etiam contra nostram voluntatem fiat.</p>	<p><i>Moralia</i> 12.12.16</p> <p>Passioni quippe dominus propinquans infirmantium in se uocem sumpsit, dicens: pater mi, si possibile est, transeat a me calix iste: eorum que timorem, ut abstraheret, suscepit.</p> <p>Et rursus per oboedientiam uim fortitudinis ostendens ait: uerumtamen non sicut ego uolo, sed sicut tu; ut cum hoc imminet quod fieri nolumus, sic per infirmitatem petamus ut non fiat, quatenus per</p>

<sup>10</sup> Patrologia Latina 80, col. 780

<sup>11</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob, libri xi-xxii*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 143A, ed. Marcus Adriaen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 640; 143, 98; 143b, 1700; 143a, 732.

<p>[Redemptor noster</p> <p>interrogatus passionis tempore, Dei se Filium testatur. Unde et conquirentes dicunt: Quid adhuc egemus testibus? ecce ipsi audivimus blasphemias. Sed contra Deum stulte nil dixit, quia vera loquens, hoc de se infidelibus etiam moriendo intulit quod paulo post Redemptor omnibus resurgendo monstravit.</p> <p>Diabolus confessus fuerat Filium Dei sed tamen purum illum hominem mori credidit ad cuius morte Judaeorum persequentium animas concitavit. Sed in ipso</p>	<p>fortitudinem parati simus ut uoluntas conditoris nostri etiam contra uoluntatem nostram fiat.</p> <p><i>Moralia 2.38.62</i></p> <p>Hunc contra deum sacerdotes et principes locutum stulte crediderunt cum</p> <p>interrogatus passionis tempore, dei se filium testaretur. Unde et conquirentes dicunt: quid adhuc egemus testibus? Ecce ipsi audiuimus blasphemias. Sed contra deum stulte nil dixit quia uera loquens, hoc de se infidelibus etiam moriendo intulit quod paulo post redemptis omnibus resurgendo monstraui.</p> <p><i>Moralia 33.15.31</i></p> <p>Nam quamuis eum filium dei fuerat ipse confessus, uelut purum tamen illum hominem mori credidit, ad cuius mortem iudaeorum</p>
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<p>traditionis tempore tarde jam cognovisse intelligitur, quod illa ejus morte puniretur.</p> <p>Unde et Pilati conjugem somniis terruit, ut vir illius a Justi persecutione cessaret. Sed res interna dispensatione disposita nulla valuit machinatione refragari. Expediebat valde ut peccatorum mortem iuste morientium solveret mors iusti iniuste morientis. Quod quia diabolus usque ad tempus passionis illius ignoravit, quasi more avis illus, divinitatis ejus aqueum pertulit, dum humanitatis ejus escam momordit.</p> <p>Cum ad crucis horam ventum esset, Domini discipulos gravis ex persecutione Judaeorum timor invasit: fugerunt singuli, mulieres astiterunt,</p> <p>de quibus figuraliter recte beatus Job ait: Et</p>	<p>persequentium animos concitavit.</p> <p>Sed in ipso traditionis eius tempore tarde iam cognovisse intellegitur, quod illa eius morte puniretur.</p> <p>Unde et pilati coniugem somniis terruit, ut uir illius a iusti persecutione cessaret. Sed res interna dispensatione disposita nulla ualuit machinatione refragari. Expediebat quippe ut peccatorum mortem iuste morientium solueret mors iusti iniuste morientis. Quod quia leuiathan iste usque ad tempus passionis illius ignoravit, quasi more avis illus, diuinitatis eius laqueum pertulit, dum humanitatis eius escam momordit.</p> <p><i>Moralia 14.49.57</i></p> <p>Sed cum ad crucis horam uentum est, eius discipulos grauis ex persecutione iudaeorum timor inuasit: fugerunt singuli, mulieres adstiterunt.</p>
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<p>consumptis          carnibus,          remanserunt  tantummodo labia circa dentes meos (Job 19,  20).</p>	
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This passage is typical of Taio's work; we rarely find modifications that would yield insights into his own thinking on the subject at hand. By excerpting and topically arranging passages from Gregory's verse-by-verse commentary on Job, Taio has substantially repurposed Gregory's text. Still, the reliance on Gregory is so great that if we were to look *only* at this type of text, we might conclude that by the mid-seventh century, scriptural exegesis in Hispania had completely given way to this kind of compiling and arranging of existing texts. In the liturgy, however, we find a more active engagement both with scripture and with patristic texts. Job is used extensively in the Old Hispanic Lenten and Passiontide liturgies, undoubtedly inspired by the circulation of Gregory's works on the Peninsula. In the prayers of the OV, Job's words are interpreted as being either in the voice of Christ or that of the suffering church, persecuted by their enemies. Some of these interpretations are based directly on Gregory's text, and the *Moralia* is even directly paraphrased at some points in the liturgy. But the *Moralia* also shapes the liturgy in subtle ways that reflect a more dynamic way of working with Gregory. Some of the biblical exegesis within the liturgy, moreover, lacks a known precedent in patristic writing, suggesting that it reflects the bishops' or clerics' own exegetical initiatives.

First, an example of Gregory's direct influence on the liturgical texts (Example 2):

2a. Responsory *Ecce nunc venit* (León 8, f. 157<sup>v</sup>; incipit in OV)

“Ecce nunc venit in me dolor meus, et ad nicilum redacta sunt ossa mea; ruge me testimonium dicunt contra me; libera me, domine.”

2b. Prayer following responsory *Ecce nunc venit* (OV, ed. Vives, 256)

“Domine Iesu, qui *dolorem ecclesiae tuae, quo ad nicilum redacta sunt ossa eius*, pius gubernator intelligis, dum alios extra eam infidelitatis vorago precipitat, alios intra eam temptationum feditas necat: concede nobis, ut, quia tu solus pro nobis et temptatus et passus es, *tu nos, et a temptationibus, et a passionibus nostris solus ipse eripias*; quo testimonium nostrum intra tuam ecclesiam ita sit utile, ut mereamur tibi sine fine placere.”

2c. Gregory, *Moralia in Iob*, 13.7.9, ed. Adriaen, CCSL 143a, 113, 673

“Membra ergo ecclesiae ad nihilum rediguntur quando ex imitatione prauorum in hoc mundo crescentium infirmi quique deterius infirmantur. Quid per rugas nisi duplicitas designatur? [...] Rugae itaque sunt sanctae ecclesiae omnes qui in ea dupliciter uiuunt, qui fidem uocibus clamant, operibus denegant.”

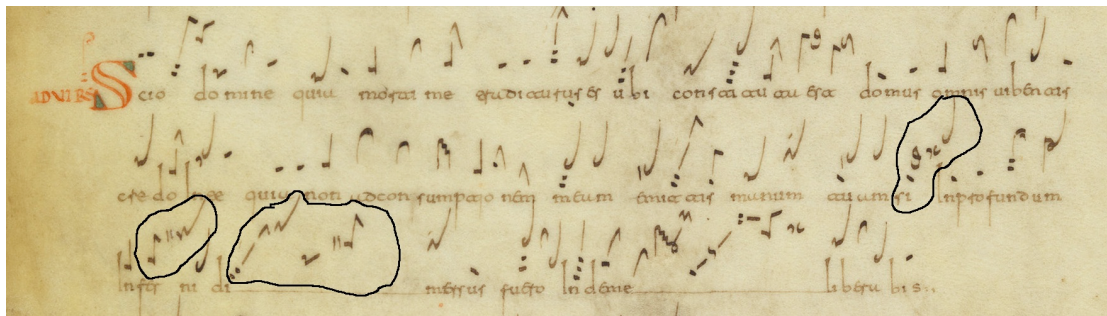
The text for the responsory *Ecce nunc venit* (2a), sung at sext on Tuesday of Holy Week, is taken directly from Job 16:8-9. (The chant text is indicated with an incipit in the OV; the full text is taken from the León antiphoner, León, Cathedral archive 8). Gregory (2c) interprets this passage allegorically, as being in the voice of the church. Her bones are reduced to nothing because her weak members fall prey to temptation, and the wrinkles are the deceitful members of the church. The prayer from the OV (2b), adopting Gregory’s exegesis, attributes the words of Job to the church, tempted by those

outside her: “Lord Jesus, faithful governor, who understands the sorrow of your church, by which her bones are reduced to nothing [...]” (The italicized passages paraphrase the chant.) Reminiscent of the theological digests compiled in seventh-century Hispania, the opening of the prayer conveys an exegesis of the chant text in a simple, direct way. The rest of the prayer consists of standard elements: a remembrance or anamnesis, then an invocation or epiclesis. In typical fashion, the epiclesis invokes the tropological (or moral) sense of scripture, in the form of a plea to be delivered from temptation. Here the liturgy shows us a repurposing of Gregory’s works that is complementary to Taio’s yet performative, experiential, and different in intent. This kind of explicit exegesis of chant texts is typical of the Old Hispanic office, but not of other Western liturgies. Collectively, the prayers also model how to do exegesis. In both ways, the prayers link to the bishops’ project of cultural renewal and clerical education.

Although this prayer shows the direct influence of the *Moralia* on the liturgy, the creators of the liturgy also worked with scripture in ways that appear to be independent of the patristic tradition, guided directly by the liturgical context. In Example 3, the responsory *Scio*, sung on Monday of Holy Week, is based on Job 30:

### 3a. Responsory *Scio Domine* (León 8, f. 156; incipit in OV)

“Scio, Domine, quia morti me traditurus es ubi constituta est domus omnis viventis; credo in te quia non ad consumptionem meam emittis manum tuam; si in profundum inferni dimersus fuero, inde me liberabis.”



Example 3: León 8, f. 156

3b. Prayer following *Scio* (OV, ed. Vives, 251)

“Domine Iesu Christe, qui *traditurum te morti ante mortem prescius predixisti*, et illic, *ubi constituta est domus omnis viventis*, ad inferna utique moriens descendisti: da nobis ut, cum tempus vocationis nostrae advenerit, illic non deveniamus retenturi in penam, quo tu moriens liberator accessisti per gratiam; sed, *emittens manum tuam*, tunc nos *de profundo inferni manifesta potentia libera*, qui solus pro impiis tuam ponere dignatus es animam.”

3c. *Moralia* 20.35 (CCSL143a, 1053)

“Manum itaque suam dominus ad consumptionem peccantium non emittit, cum feriendo a peccatis corripit; et corruentes saluat, dum cadentes ad culpam in salutem corporis uulnerat, ut prostrati exterius, interius surgant, quatenus iacentes corpore ad interiorem statum redeant, qui stantes exterius ab statu mentis iacebant.”

3d. Antiphon *Congrega* (Jeremiah 12:3-4)

“Congrega, Domine, inimicos tuos quasi gregem ad victimam, sanctifica illos in diem occisionis, quia dixerunt: non videbit nobissima nostra.”

3e. Prayer following *Congrega* (OV, ed. Vives, 251)

“*Congrega, Domine, inimicos tuos, quasi gregem ad victimam*, quo aut resipiscentes ad veniam redeant, aut in malis perdurantes eternitatis iudicio contabescant; ut tu solis, qui victima pro nobis munda oblati es patri, victores nos efficias criminis nostri.”

3f. Antiphon *Domine probator* (Jeremiah 20:12)

“Domine probator iusti qui probas corda et renes, videam, quaeso, ultionem de inimicis meis, tibi enim revelavi causam meam.”

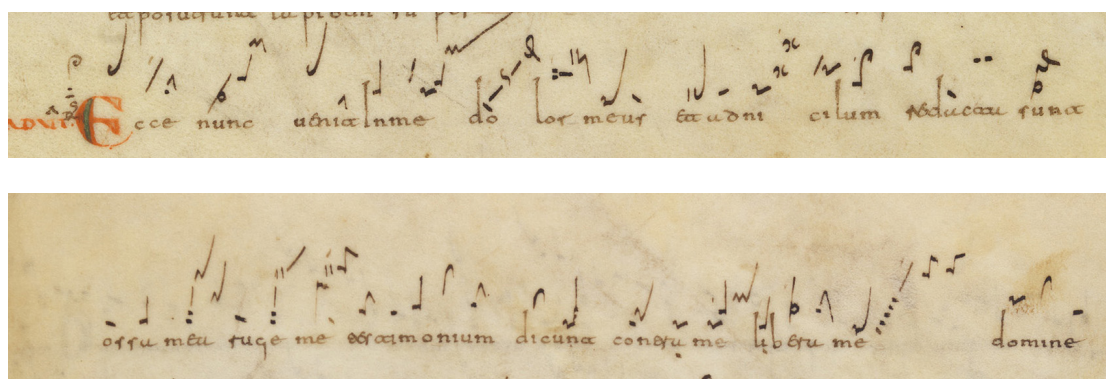
3g. Prayer following *Domine probator*

“*Domine probator iusti qui revelatam tibi causam filii tui, passionis utique suae iniuriam infidelibus puniturus agnoscis: videamus, quaesumus, ultionem de inimicis eius*, ita ut aut resipiscentes ab infidelitate ipsi se penitendo ulciscant, aut perdurantes in perfidia per eius puniantur iustitiam, cuius nunc contemnunt misericordiam manifestam.”

The prayer (3b) begins by identifying Christ as the voice speaking in the chant text, about his death and subsequent descent to the dead. The prayer anticipates the liturgical commemorations of these events on Friday and Saturday of Holy Week. While this interpretation is obviously suited to the liturgical context, it is a departure from the patristic tradition. Gregory interprets the passage cited at the beginning of the chant, Job 30:23, very differently: in the historical sense, Job spoke the words because even the righteous were not saved before the coming of Christ; and, in the allegorical sense, the passage is in the voice of the church’s weaker members who give in to their

desires.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the interpretation of this passage presented in the OV diverges from Gregory and instead hints at a direct engagement with scripture and its interpretation, responding to the needs of the liturgical moment. This and many other liturgical texts show us a more active way of working with scripture in seventh-century Hispania than we generally find in the theological texts alone.

The same holds for the reception of patristic texts. In the liturgy, the influence of patristic texts can extend beyond the direct influence we saw in *Ecce nunc venit* (Example 2). Take the office in which *Scio* and its prayer (Example 3) were said. As we have just seen, the prayer is not based on Gregory's interpretation of the Job text in question. The *Moralia*, however, provides an underlying shape for the entire office in which this chant was sung (sext on Monday of Holy Week). In the Old Hispanic office, the series of chants and prayers within a single office are often interrelated, and the biblical texts are chosen and glossed in a way that creates clear thematic trajectories. In this case, however, the coherence between the different liturgical elements is not immediately obvious. Rather, they are linked through the exegetical tradition that unfolds in the *Moralia*.



Example 4: *Ecce nunc venit* in León 8, f. 157<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> *Moralia* 20. 34, CCSL 143a, 1052-53.

Although the prayer for *Scio*, as we have seen, interprets the chant in a way that is not thematically related to Gregory's commentary, Gregory's interpretation of this passage of Job shapes the rest of this short office, influencing both the selection of biblical passages in the chant and the ways they are interpreted in the prayers. The two antiphons that follow *Scio* are shown in Examples 3d and 3f. Both ask for revenge on the speaker's enemies. At first glance, neither of these texts seems particularly connected with the elements that precede them in the liturgy, since *Scio* and its prayer focus on Christ's death and descent to hell. The three chant texts, however, are closely linked through the exegetical tradition developed in the *Moralia*, and the prayers make this clear. For Gregory, Job 30:24 ("you have not stretched out your hand to my consumption [...]") cited at the end of *Scio*, refers not to Christ's passion, but to God's judgment and the reforming effects it has on the sinner (Example 3c). This theme seems to have guided the selection of text for the two subsequent antiphons. Both of these antiphons, *Congrega, domine* and *Domine probator*, are interpreted in the prayers that follow them (Examples 3e and 3g) as being about the judgment and reform of the sinner, precisely the theme of Gregory's commentary on the Job source of *Scio*, the first chant in the series. In Jeremiah 20:12, the source for *Congrega, domine* is cited in a later passage of the *Moralia*, where it has exactly the same interpretation. Thus, the *Moralia* seems to have guided the choice of texts in this small office, and it provides an underlying coherence in which two potentially disparate themes, Christ's death and descent to hell and God's judgement and reform, are closely tied together. Together, the texts and the prayers weave an intricate web of biblical interpretation and liturgical meaning. Crucially, they suggest an engagement with scripture and Gregory's writings that extends beyond mere citation and compilation. Rather, this example and many others show an integrated understanding and repurposing of both, adapted for the

liturgical context.

In the remainder of this essay, I turn to how liturgical texts were shaped by melodic rhetoric. We do not know what the Visigothic melodies sounded like; we only know that melody was an integral part of how liturgical texts were experienced. The tenth- and eleventh-century manuscripts with musical notation, however, may give us some indirect hints about how melody shaped the Visigothic liturgy. The existing melodies are preserved in neumes, a ninth-century Carolingian invention that was used by northern Iberian scribes to capture and preserve this aspect of their Visigothic heritage.<sup>13</sup> These neumes do not show specific pitches, only the up and down motion of the melody; thus the pitches cannot be reliably reconstructed. The existing melodies, moreover, are not direct witnesses to Visigothic culture, nor are they note-for-note representations of Visigothic melodies. Notated only in the tenth century, they reflect many generations of oral transmission, followed by, most likely, a couple generations of written transmission. It also seems unlikely, however, that the tenth-century melodies were created *ex nihilo*, with no prior foundation. It is more probable that they connect, in however distant a way, to Visigothic practice.

The surviving manuscripts hint at strategies of melodic rhetoric practiced across a culturally diverse peninsula, for many generations before they were copied. The melodic rhetoric connects closely with aspects of textual syntax and meaning. Although the Old Hispanic notation does not show pitch, it does show how many notes there are per syllable. In all of these melodies, some text syllables are lingered over for longer

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<sup>13</sup> On neumes, see, most recently, Susan Rankin, *Writing Sounds in Carolingian Europe: The Invention of Musical Notation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

than others, differentiating them from the normal temporal flow. Some of these changes in pacing can be compared to the speech of a good rhetor, pausing at strategic places to hold listeners' attention. The first chant we examined, *Ecce nunc venit*, exemplifies these changes in pacing (text in Example 2; melody in Example 4). Most syllables have 1-3 notes, but some have up to twelve. We would expect to find such lengthenings at the end of a sentence or smaller sense unit, as we do in most chant traditions. In addition to lengthening, such breaks in the syntax are often marked by standard neume patterns, undoubtedly representing melodic formulas that indicate a caesura. These are called cadences in musical parlance. Here, such a standard neume pattern, with nine notes, occurs "contra me," the end of a sentence. Longer syllables, however, also occur at several other points within the phrase, so that small verbal units are separated by lengthening. We find three such places at the beginning of the chant: *Ecce nunc* (9-note pause) *venit in me* (9-note pause), *dolor* (7-note pause) *meus* (standard cadence). The musical division of the text into smaller units, each temporally separated, helps to articulate its syntax.

Sometimes melodic pacing shapes the text delivery in a fascinating counterpoint with the exegesis. In *Scio*, the responsory examined earlier (see Example 3), the melody seems to underline parts of the chant text that are also stressed in the prayers. In many chants of the responsory genre, most passages have 2-3 notes per syllable, and there are rarely more than 5, until the end of the chant, where we often find a longer, textless passage, called a melisma. In *Scio*, the final melisma occurs on "me." But we also find points of lengthening earlier in the final sentence, at "si in profundum inferni dimersus fuero." First, a shorter rhetorical lengthening (8 notes) occurs at the beginning of the sentence on "si," holding listeners' attention as they wait for the rest of the clause. The

next lengthening occurs on “infernī,” before the end of the sentence. This is followed by 15 notes on at the expected dividing point, on “dimersus” (15 notes). With these three pauses, the entire sentence is set apart temporally from the rest of the chant. As noted earlier, it is precisely this theme, Christ’s power to free the soul from the depths of hell, that is emphasized at the end of the prayer that follows the chant (Example 3b). Thus, the melody and the prayer work in tandem to convey that this passage of the chant is particularly important. This is not an isolated instance; rather, examples abound throughout the Old Hispanic repertory.

In a similar way, melody can underline a particular thematic trajectory that unfolds across particular days and services. During Holy Week, one of these themes is the anticipation of the Resurrection. Interspersed among the more pervasive Lenten themes, the persecution of Christ and the Church, are references to the reign of Christ and his sitting in judgment. For example, one of the prayers said Monday at terce reads, “so that, dying and arising, you will rescue from torments those whom you have freed from darkness, as you judge and reign.”<sup>14</sup>

On Wednesday at terce, the responsory *Facta est Sion* (Example 5a) combines both thematic strands, referring first to Christ’s arrest and murder and then to his reigning and judging:

Example 5a. Responsory *Facta est Sion* and its biblical source, Isaiah 16:1-5

Chant text	Isaiah 16:1-5, Vulgate
	emitte agnum dominatorem terrae de Petra deserti

<sup>14</sup> OV 780, ed. Vives, 250-51.

	ad montem filiae Sion
Facta est Syon sicut	et erit sicut avis fugiens et pulli de nido avolantes
avis volans, de cuius	sic erunt filiae Moab in transcensu Arnon
loco ablatus est nidus;	ini consilium coge
et tu filia Iherusalem	concilium pone quasi noctem umbram tuam in meridie
cogita facere tibi	absconde fugientes et vagos ne prodas habitabunt apud te
tegumentum	profugi mei Moab esto latibulum eorum a facie vastatoris
luctum in tenebris	
meridianis	
quia salvator tuus	finitus est enim pulvis consummatus est miser defecit qui
adprehendetur, et	conculcabat terram
dominus universae	et praeparabitur in misericordia solium et sedebit super eum
terrae morti	in veritate in tabernaculo David
condemnabitur	
et exurgens sedebit in	iudicans et quaerens iudicium et velociter reddens quod
trono ut iudicet	iustum est
adversarios suos.	

Before examining the music, a closer look at the chant text is warranted. This chant illustrates how the compilers of the liturgy reworked scripture, both to clarify its exegesis and make it more explicitly suited to the liturgical occasion. Many of these

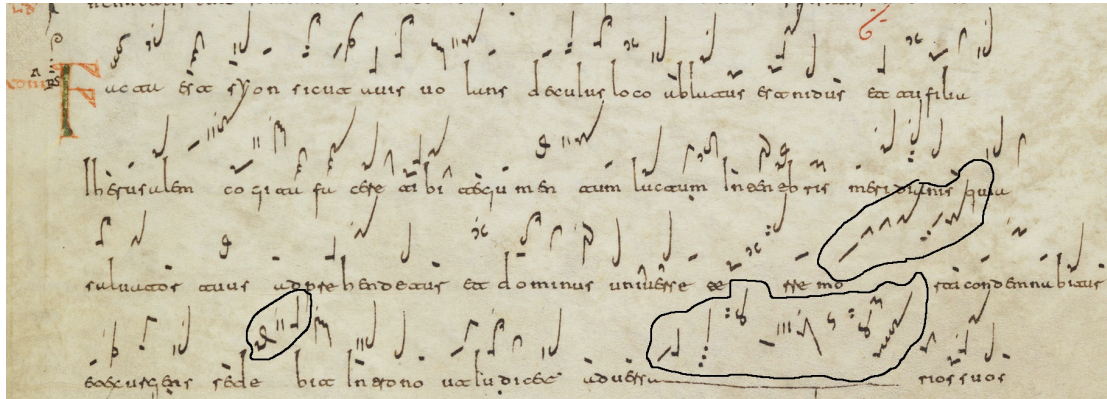
alterations to scripture are, in effect, a form of biblical exegesis. As shown in the example, some of the differences from the Vulgate appear to be rewordings or paraphrases, which implies that the text derives from an unidentified pre-Vulgate version of Isaiah 16. Many passages, however, differ substantially in meaning from the biblical source. The latter part of the chant, for example, appears to be inspired by Isaiah 15:4-5, but the biblical “absconde fugientes et vagos ne prodas” is replaced by a text specific to Christ’s arrest and death, “quia salvator tuus adprehendetur, et dominus universe terre morti condemnabitur,” merging the biblical text with the present liturgical moment. Then the biblical passage “et exurgens sedebit in trono ut iudicet adversarios suos” replaces a more general biblical text, “iudicans et quaerens iudicium,” making the text specific to Christ and linking to the reigning and judging theme that is intermittently articulated throughout Holy Week. Both alterations clarify a general typological meaning that Isaiah 16 had in the patristic tradition. Beginning with Jerome, it was interpreted as being a prophecy of the coming of Christ. Isidore takes up this general interpretative tradition in *De fide catholica*, attesting to its currency in seventh-century Hispania.<sup>15</sup> The changes to the biblical source in *Facta est Sion* underline this general allegorical sense of Isaiah 16 for these specific passages, and in ways that are specific to the liturgical present. Such extensive reworking of scripture is typical of the Old Hispanic chant and comparatively rare in the Roman liturgy. This aspect of the chant is best regarded as product of the bishops’ efforts toward Christian education and formation.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Patrologia Latina 83, col. 466. This passage of Isaiah is cited as a proof of Jesus’s descent from the rod of Jesse.

<sup>16</sup> As I argue in more depth elsewhere. See Rebecca Maloy, *Songs of Sacrifice: Chant, Identity and Christian Formation in Early Medieval Iberia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

In the melodic setting of *Facta est Sion* (Example 5b), rhetorical lengthenings both work in tandem with the changes to the biblical source and underline the importance of the reigning and judging theme.



Example 5b: *Facta est Sion*, León 8 f. 149.

As a whole, this chant is more musically elaborate than *Ecce nunc venit* or *Scio*. The ends of clauses are often marked by 7-8 note melismas on the penultimate or antepenultimate syllables, parsing the textual syntax in a more expansive way. At the end of the *Facta est Sion*, however, melismas also occur at points that are not syntactical breaks. The first, on “morti,” emphasizes the beginning of the clause “morti condemnabitur,” occurring in conjunction with this important change to the biblical source. This long passage of textless music ends with cadence. The melody is thus reading the word “morti” as one musical phrase, separating it from the following completion of the thought, “condemnabitur.” The second melisma, on “sedebit,” and the last, on “adversarios,” also coincide with changes to the biblical source. Together, they frame the last bit of text, “sedebit in trono ut iudicet adversarios suos,” and set it apart temporally from the rest of the chant. In this way, the melody emphasizes the thematic trajectory of reigning and judging, which has appeared in the prayers prior to

this point, but is now being heard for the first time in the chant. The melody works together with the changes to the biblical source to convey how that biblical text relates to Christ and the liturgical present.

To conclude, the liturgy was carefully designed to serve the Visigothic bishops' goals of Christian education and formation. As such, the liturgical texts can serve as a rarely mined source of information about the state of patristic learning among the clerical elites who created them, and about how the bishops' project was carried out. In contrast to many of the theological texts produced in seventh-century Hispania, the liturgy shows us a clerical elite whose grasp and use of patristic learning extended beyond mere citation and compilation. Many of the chant texts reflect exegetical changes to the biblical source, designed to teach Christian interpretations of these texts, and the prayers also function didactically, providing a concise exegesis of the chant. We do not have direct evidence of how liturgical melody may have been used in the bishops' project. Here I have cautiously looked to the surviving tenth-century melodies for clues. The melodies parse and punctuate the text delivery with rhetorical pauses. At times, they do so in ways that link either to topics emphasized in the prayers or to larger thematic trajectories in the liturgy. Through liturgical texts juxtaposed with melody, patristic learning, the basis of the bishops' project, became experiential, integrated into the daily lives of the clergy, monks, and nuns who sang the daily office.

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