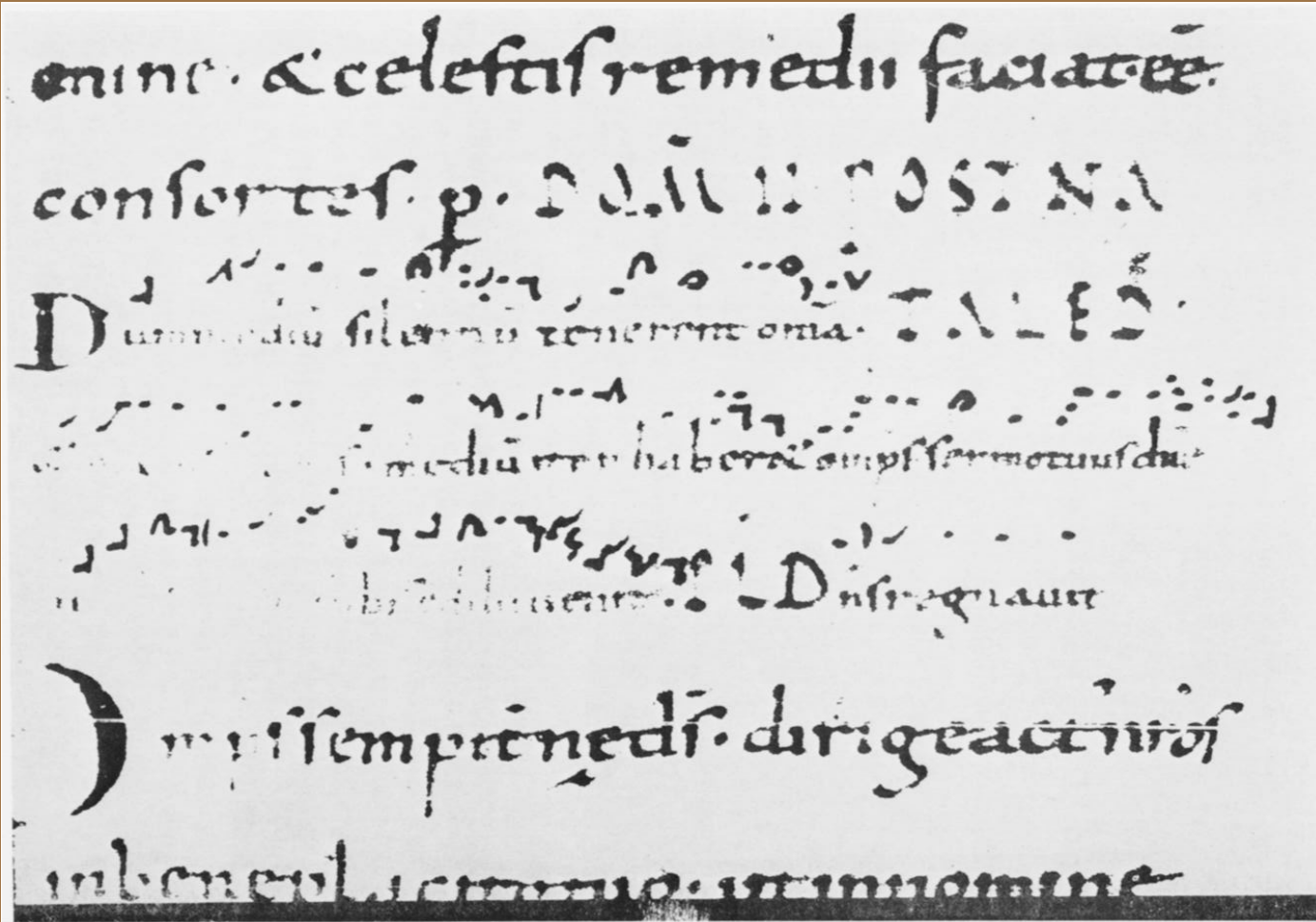




Slashes, Dashes, Points, and Squares: The Development of Musical Notation



Earliest Forms of Neumatic Notation



Meda uita in morte sumus quem querimus
ad uicem nisi te domine qui pro peccatis no
stris uita uia facis.

Vigilate omnes et orate ne scias enim
quando tempus sit. vigilate ergo ne scias enim quan
do dominus ueniat scio an media nocte
an gallicantu an mane et cum uenerit reperit



- ❧ “Written sources originating during that period show many signs of the continuing activities of oral processes along with written ones in the transmission of music, confirmation that writing was for a long time in support of, rather than in competition with, the oral performance tradition.”
- ❧ Leo Treitler, “The Early History of Music Writing in the West”



Heightened Neumes

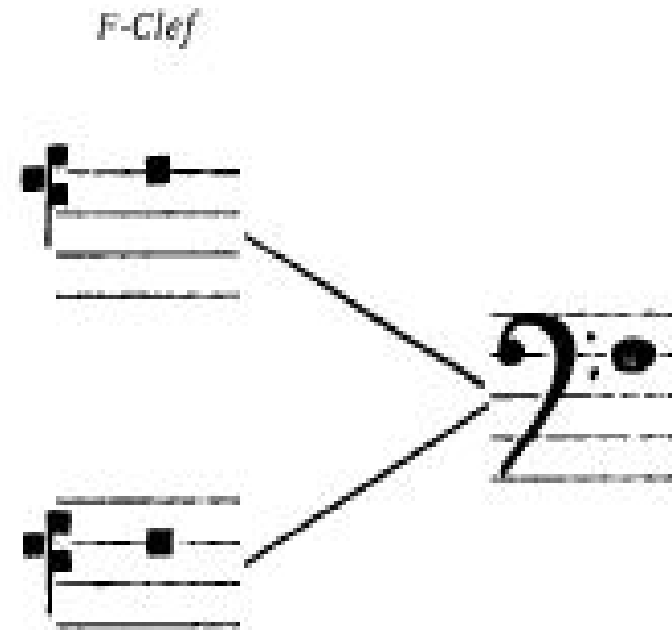
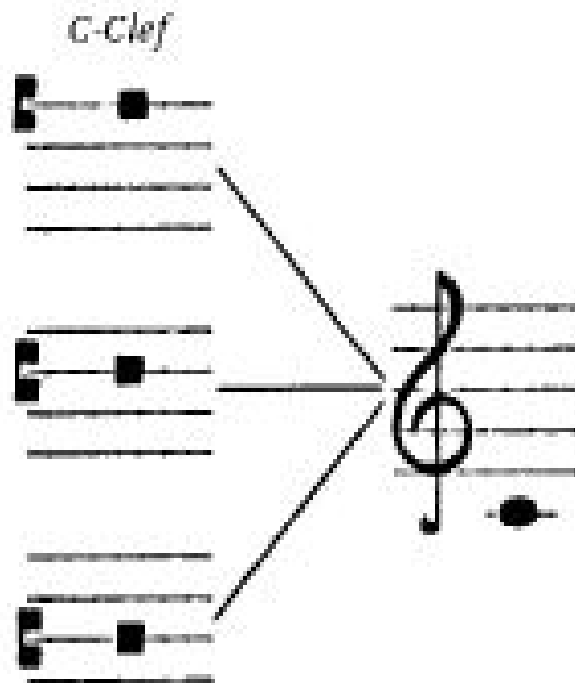
ficium celebrandū subditoyz t̄
corpora mentes q̄ sc̄ificet. p̄. 5

Comedite pingua ⁊ bibite mulsum ⁊ mit
tite partes eis qui non preparauerunt sibi sēs

enim dies domini est nolite contristari gau
dium renun domini est factu do nostra

The image shows a page from a medieval manuscript with four lines of text and corresponding Gregorian chant notation. The notation uses square neumes on a four-line red staff. The first line of text is 'ficium celebrandū subditoyz t̄' with a red 't' above the final 'y'. The second line is 'corpora mentes q̄ sc̄ificet. p̄. 5'. The third line begins with a large decorated initial 'C' and contains 'omedite pingua ⁊ bibite mulsum ⁊ mit'. The fourth line contains 'tite partes eis qui non preparauerunt sibi sēs'. The fifth line begins with 'enim dies domini est nolite contristari gau'. The sixth line contains 'dium renun domini est factu do nostra'. The neumes are square and their vertical height varies, with some reaching the top line of the staff, indicating pitch changes. A red 't' is placed above the final 'y' of the first line. A red 'p' is placed below the end of the second line. A red '5' is placed below the end of the second line. A red 't' is placed above the final 'y' of the third line. A red 't' is placed above the final 't' of the fourth line. A red 't' is placed above the final 't' of the fifth line. A red 't' is placed above the final 't' of the sixth line.

Early Four Line Staffs





- ☞ “Hence, the time-values of the individual notes were indicated in the various shapes of their symbols as rectangles, squares, and diamonds, either by leaving them bare, or else by adding distinctive stems and later even flags.”
- ☞ Curt Sachs, “Some Remarks about Old Notation”



Sign

Mensuration

⊙



○

⊙

○



❧ “With the rise of instrumental music in the Baroque era, musical notation became more accurate and the specifications from the composer on how to perform his musical work became more detailed.”

❧ Per Dahl, *“The Rise and Fall of Literacy in Classical Music: An Essay On Musical Notation.”*



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