



Call for Papers

Alternative Rites. Regional Chant Traditions in Early Medieval Latin Europe

Department of Musicology and Cultural Heritage, University of Pavia, Cremona, 3rd – 4th December 2026
Hybrid format

While most of the surviving sources for early liturgical chant transmit ‘Gregorian’ repertory, the landscape of liturgical chant traditions in early medieval Europe was undeniably plural. Our understanding of these diverse traditions varies significantly depending on the nature of the surviving evidence. While rites, such as the Old Hispanic, are preserved through substantial traces of neumatic notation, others, like the Aquileian tradition, have left virtually no direct musical witnesses, forcing researchers to reconstruct their features indirectly from later sources. Within this multi-faceted framework, the introduction of notation as well as the spread of Romano-Frankish chant represents a critical turning point in the history of these regional repertoires; in this light, the very role of music writing must be reconsidered.

The conference will focus specifically on technologies of music writing within ‘alternative’ liturgical traditions; in particular, it will investigate the various ways in which the writing-down of regional chants sealed a decisive shift whereby some repertoires managed to survive, while others were ultimately lost. We invite contributions exploring music writing as a tool for the transmission and the specific extent of that transmission within non-Gregorian repertoires, the specific methodological challenges of this research, and the complex relationships between notation and these distinct liturgical traditions. Furthermore, we encourage papers that investigate whether and how these regional liturgies can shed light on the earliest stages of development, experimentation, and spreading of neumatic notation itself.

To foster a comprehensive, collaborative, and interdisciplinary dialogue, we highly encourage co-authored proposals from research hubs and working groups. We welcome papers related, but not limited to, the following areas:

- music writing and notation for the transmission of non-Gregorian repertoires;
- liturgy and chant traditions (Beneventan, Milanese, Old Hispanic, Gallican, Aquileian, Old Roman);
- methodologies, digital tools, and research perspectives on regional liturgical traditions;
- palaeography, codicology, and art history of non-Gregorian liturgical books.

We invite proposals (250 words) for 20-minute papers to be sent to **scribemus@unipv.it** by **15th of August 2026**. Speakers will be notified by 1st of September. The conference will be held at the Department of Musicology and Cultural Heritage in Cremona on 3rd and 4th of December 2026 in a hybrid format, allowing for both in-person and remote online presentation and attendance. Please specify in your proposal whether you intend to attend in person or remotely. Conference language: English.

Invited keynote speaker: Prof. Emma Hornby (University of Bristol).

This two-day conference is organized in the framework of the five-year ERC-funded project *SCRIBEMUS: Scribes of Musical Cultures. Decoding Early Technologies of Music Writing in Latin Europe (ca. 900–1100)*.

Regards,

The **SCRIBEMUS project team** – Giovanni Varelli (PI), Giovanni Cunego, Marcus Jones, Patrick S. Marschner, Francesco Orio, and Sara Vrdoljak.

For more information: <https://scribemus.unipv.it/index.php/conference>

