

Laon Level 1 Group 4-2

Three-note Neums – Examples

Transcript

I am going to show you three manuscripts, each of which has some of the neums studied in this unit.

The first of these manuscripts shows the Communion chant *Ecce virgo concípiet*. On the right side of the screen you see the chant as it appears in the manuscript Laon 239, and on the left side of the screen is a modern transcription. By the way, this transcription is not what you will find in the *Graduále Romanum*. It is transcription in which the melody has been restored by the scholar Alberto Turco to conform to the notation of these earlier manuscripts.

QUIZ 1

In this chant there are three examples of the neums studied in this unit: the torculus, the porrectus, and the climacus.

In the modern transcription, the torculus is at the beginning of the chant, here. On the right, in Laon 239, it is here.

On the left, in the transcription, the porrectus is on the second line, here. In Laon 239, it appears in the middle of the second line, here.

Back to the left, the climacus is at the very end of the chant, here. In the manuscript on the right, it is at the end of the third line, here.

However, in Laon 239, this is not a simple, unaltered climacus. The first note is a virga instead of a punctum, indicating a lengthening of this note. As I mentioned in the video explaining these neums, the isolated,

unaltered climacus is extremely rare in Laon 239. Typically, the simple, unaltered climacus is found as part of a larger neum. When the climacus is isolated, like this one, it almost always appears with at least one of the notes altered to show a rhythmic nuance. Again, we will look at these various altered versions of the climacus in more detail in a later video.

(singing) *Ecce virgo concípiet, et páriet fílium: et vocábitur nomen ejus Emmánuel.*

The second manuscript shows the Tract *Sicut cervus*. On the bottom of the screen is the first verse of this tract as found in the manuscript Laon 239. On the top of the screen is a modern transcription.

QUIZ 2

In this chant there are two examples of the neums studied in this unit: the scandicus and the porrectus. In the transcription, they are grouped together at the end of the first line. Here is the scandicus. It is followed by a porrectus, which is followed by another porrectus. On the bottom, in Laon 239, they are also at the end of the first line. Here is the scandicus. It is followed by a porrectus. However, the next neum is not exactly a porrectus. If you look in the very middle of the screen, I'll show you what it is. It appears to be a clivis combined with a podatus, like this. The result is a four-note neum. I'm not exactly sure what the specific pitches would be. Even so, it's a good example of what we will study in the next group of videos: how Laon combines smaller neums to create larger neums.

What we can say for now is that the melodic tradition represented here in Laon 239 is slightly different from what is represented in the modern transcription.

(singing) *Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum: ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. Sitivit anima mea ad Deum....*

The third manuscript example is the Communion chant *Pater cum essem*. On the lower-right side of the screen you see the chant as it appears in the manuscript Laon 239. On the upper-left side of the screen is a modern transcription with no rhythmic markings, and just above the first word in this manuscript is a restored version of the opening melody as most scholars believe it should be.

NEUM IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

On the upper left, in the transcription, there are seven torculi. Take a moment, pause the video, and check your own markings. Continue when you are ready.

Let's see how these compare to the manuscript. Here are the seven torculi in the manuscript. (SHOW) You might want to pause the video, take a moment and compare them. Continue when you are ready. We see that five of these, now circled in blue, are simple, unaltered torculi. The other two, however, are not. On the second line, the torculus over the word *ego* and, on the third line, the torculus over the word *eos* are both altered, and each is altered in a different manner from the other. We will look at these altered forms later.

While we are looking at the torculi in this chant, you might notice that the five unaltered torculi are all essentially the same. Yet, when we compare them to their corresponding torculi in the modern transcription (or the restored opening), we see that they represent torculi at different pitch levels and with different intervals between the

notes of the neums. This is just another reminder that, for the most part, this notation is not pitch specific.

Now let's go back to the transcription, and see how you did marking the porrectus. There is only one, on the second line, here. And here it is in Laon 239.

(singing) *Pater cum essem cum eis, ego servábam eos, quos dedísti mini, allelúia: nunc autem ad te vénio: non rog out tollas eos de mundo, sed ut serves eos a malo, allelúia, allelúia.*

SUMMARY

REFERENCES