

St Gall Level 1 Group 5-2

Four- and Five-note Neums – Examples

Transcript

Since, there is no one single chant with examples of all the neums in this unit, I will show you various appearances of these neums in several different chants. We'll start with the scandicus flexus.

Here is the Introit *Dum clamárem*. On the right side of the screen you see the chant as it appears in the manuscript Einsiedeln 121. On the left side of the screen is a modern transcription. Take a look at the manuscript on the right. On the fifth line, over the accented syllable of the word *humiliábit*, we see a scandicus flexus. It has two letters next to the top of the neum, an “s” and a “c.” Now, just to the left of the manuscript, I have copied this neum with its letters and made them a little larger, so you can see them a little more easily.

On the left, in the transcription, the scandicus flexus is on the third line, here. We see that the scandicus rises for three notes, *and* that the third note is a skip above the second note. That is certainly why the scribe wrote the letter “s,” which stands for *sursum*, or “higher.” He is reminding the singer that the scandicus is not one of three step-wise notes, but one in which the third note is a skip from the second note, or “higher.” Then, the neum reverses direction for one lower note. Here, the scribe wrote a “c,” which stands for *celeriter*, or “quickly,” most likely to remind the singer that the top of this neum is not lengthened, as are the tops of the neums before and after this one.

The recording is just of the text *et humiliávit eos*.

(Singing) ... *et humiliávit eos*....

Now let's take a look at the Offertory chant, *Pérfice gressus meos*. On the right side of the screen you see the chant as it appears in the manuscript Einsiedeln 121. On the left side of the screen is a modern transcription. Take a look at the manuscript. Here on the third line, over the word *inclína*, we see a scandicus flexus, but it's a slight variation of the neum from how we normally see it. Instead of three puncti with a clivis, it is two puncti with a torculus. The meaning is the same. The scandicus flexus also has an "l" next to the torculus and the letter "e" preceding the neum. The letter "e" stands for *equaliter*, or "the same." It is an indication that this neum begins on the same pitch on which the previous neum ends. We'll discuss the "l" in a moment.

Here is the neum and its letters copied just to the left of the manuscript so you can see them a little more clearly, and here is the standard scandicus flexus copied below this so you can see the difference.

On the left, in the transcription, the scandicus flexus is on the third line, here. We see that the scandicus rises for four notes, *and* that the third note is a skip above the second note. This may be why the scribe chose to use a torculus for the top three notes, that is, to show the intervallic break between the second and third notes. In any case, just to be sure, he wrote the letter "l," which means *leváte*, or "lift up," next to the torculus, to remind the singer of the skip that occurs here. Then, after the rise of four notes, just as we expect, the neum reverses direction for one lower note.

While we are looking at this manuscript, there is also an example of a porrectus subbipunctis. On the right, in the manuscript, it is at the end of the first line, here. It is accompanied by the letters "c" and "i." The "c," which stands for *celériter*, as we have just seen, means that this neum moves along quickly; it is not lengthened. The "i" stands for *iussum*, or "lower." In this case, it may be a reminder that the first note of the neum is lower than the last note of the previous neum, or it may

be a reminder that the second note of this porrectus drops a third and not just a second.

Here is the neum with its letters copied just above the manuscript to make it a little clearer for you.

On the left in the transcription, the porrectus subbipunctis is at the beginning of the second line, here. We see it has the high note, low note, high note pattern of the porrectus, followed by two lower notes.

(Singing) *Pérfice gressus meos in sémitis tuis, ut non moveántur vestígia mea: inclína aurm tuam, et exáudi verba mea: mirífica misericórdias tuas, qui salvos facis sperántes in te, Dómine.*

Here we'll take a look at a torculus resupinus. This is the Communion chant *Veníte post me*. On the right side of the screen, once again, we have the chant as it appears in the manuscript Einsiedeln 121. On the left we have a modern transcription. In the manuscript, on the first line, over the word *fáciar*, we have a torculus resupinus. It is preceded by the letter "e," for *equáliter*, because the first note of the neum is the same note as the last note of the previous neum.

Here is the neum and its letter copied above for clarity's sake.

In the modern transcription, this torculus resupinus is on the first line, here. We see the low, high, low pattern of the torculus, followed by a single higher note.

(Singing) *Veníte post me: fáciar vos piscatroes hóminum: at illi, relíctis rétibus....*

Lastly, this is the Introit, *Laetétur cor*. Here on the right, we have the chant as it appears in the manuscript Einsiedeln 121. On the left we

have a modern transcription. In the manuscript, on the third line, over the first syllable of the word *Dóminum*, we have a porrectus flexus. Here it is copied to the left in a little larger size.

In the modern transcription, it is on the second line, here. Note the high, low, high pattern of the porrectus, followed by a single lower note.

Now, as for the remaining neums of this unit, the longer scandicus, the longer climacus, and the scandicus subbipunctis, they are extremely rare in unaltered, isolated forms. Typically, they are either altered to show rhythmic nuances, or they are part of larger, melismatic figures.

For example, there is one of these neums in this chant. If you look at the manuscript, over the last line, over the end of the word *eius*, there is a scandicus subbipunctis here. In the transcription, it is on the last line, here. We see the pattern of the three ascending notes, followed by two descending notes.

However, this scandicus subbipunctis is really part of a larger neum of eight notes that is created by joining a clivis, a scandicus subbipunctis, and a virga.

In this particular instance, the scandicus subbipunctis has a “c” over the highest note, for *celériter*. The last six notes of this figure are a very common cadence formula, in which, the vast majority of the time, this highest note is lengthened. Here, probably because it is not the actual cadence, but just prior to the cadence, the scribe put the “c,” precisely to indicate not to lengthen this note, because it is not the standard cadence. Rather, it occurs just before the cadence.

(Singing) *Laetétur cor quaeréntium Dóminum: quaérite Dóminum, et confirmámini: quaérite fáciem ejus semper.*