

St Gall 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 Einsiedeln 121. On the left side of the screen is a modern transcription. By the way, this transcription is not what you will find in the Graduale Romanum. It is A transcription in which the melody has been restored by the scholar Alberto Turco to conform to the notation in Einsiedeln 121.

QUIZ

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 Einsiedeln 121, it is here. You'll notice that it is accompanied by two abbreviations, the letter "i" and a three-letter abbreviation, "vot." The "i" stands for *iussum*, meaning "lower." The scribe is reminding the singer that the first note of this neum is lower than the preceding note. "Vot" stands for *volubiter*, meaning "flexibly" or "pliantly." The scribe is giving the singer instruction on how to sing the neum.

In the transcription on the left, the porrectus is on the second line, here. In Einsiedeln 121, 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 on the third line, here.

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

The second manuscript shows the Tract *Sicut cervus*. On the right side of the screen is the first verse of this Tract as found in the manuscript St. Gall 359, the famous *Cantatorium*. On the left side of the screen is a modern transcription.

QUIZ

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 in the middle of the second line. Here is the scandicus. It is followed by a porrectus, which is followed by another porrectus. On the right, in the *Cantatorium*, they are also in the middle of the second line. Here is the scandicus. By the way, the neums above it belong to the previous syllable. It is followed by a porrectus, which is followed by another porrectus.

Now, if you look closely at this second porrectus, it seems as if there may be an episema, a horizontal line, placed on the last note. If so, it would indicate a lengthening. However, none of the scholarly restorations of this chant treat this neum as if it has an episema. They seem to think that it is just a blobbing of the ink at the end of the quill stroke rather than an intentional episema.

How would one know the difference? Largely, the decision about this comes from comparing several manuscripts to discern whether or not the notation is consistent among several sources. In this case, scholars agree that an episema here would not be consistent with other

manuscripts, and, therefore, the mark is more likely an ink blob than it is an episema.

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

The third manuscript example is the Communion chant *Pater cum essem*. 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.

NEUM IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

On the 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. We see that a couple of them have letters with them. For example, the first one has the letter "s" over it. The "s" stands for *sursum*, or "higher." Most scholars agree that this "s" is telling the singer that the second note of the torculus is a skip and not a step, as we see it in the *Graduále Romanum*. Most likely, it is indicating this notation.

The second torculus in Einsiedeln 121 has the letter "t" over it. The "t" stands for *tenéte*, or "hold." It is an indication that the last two notes of this torculus are longer than the first note.

On the fourth line, near the end, the last torculus has a slightly unusual shape. Its lines are more angular than the lines of the other torculi we have seen. This is an altered torculus. We will study it more specifically

in a later video, but, essentially, it is a way of indicating that all of the notes of this torculus are lengthened.

While we looking at the torculi in this chant, you might notice that, with the exception of the last one, all of them are essentially the same shape or form, even though the torculi in the transcription have different intervals between the notes. These torculi, now circled in blue, all represent torculi that have stepwise motion between all the notes of the neum, even if the steps are between different pitches in different neums. However, these two torculi, now circled in green, have skips between certain of the notes of the neum – and not the same intervals, and not between the same notes.

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 third line, here.

In Einsiedeln 121, the porrectus is also on the third line, here. Notice that it has the letter “l” over it. The “l” stands for *leváte*, which means “lift up.” The scribe is reminding the singer that the first note of this neum is a skip above the last note of the previous neum.

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

SUMMARY

REFERENCES