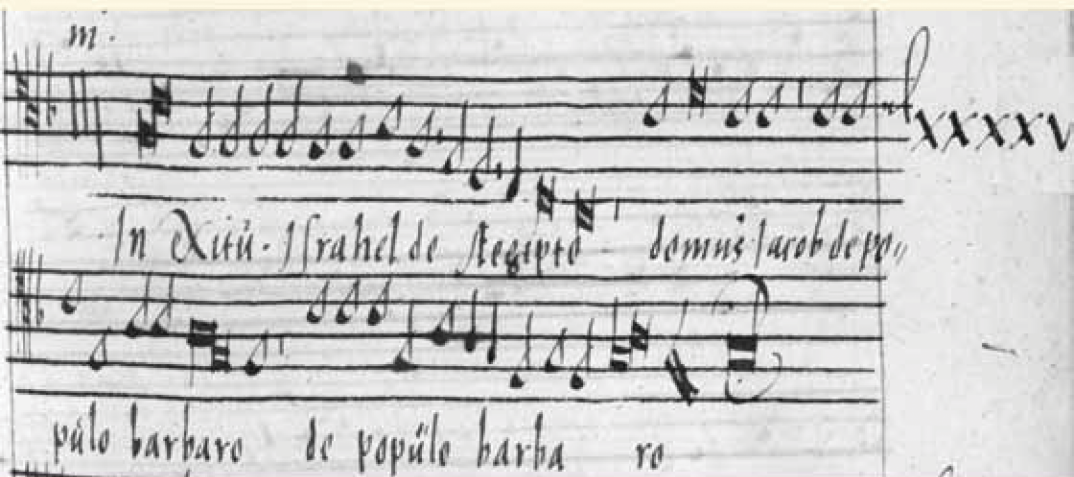


Tonus Peregrinus: The History of a Psalm-tone and its use in Polyphonic Music

Mattias Lundberg



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OF A PSALM-TONE AND ITS USE IN
POLYPHONIC MUSIC

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MATTIAS LUNDBERG

*University of Uppsala, Sweden and
Swedish National Collections of Music*

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Preface

About a decade ago I began to devote special attention to the deviant psalm-tone that is the topic of this book. This investigation has subsequently taken me through a vast body of repertoire and literature, as I made a number of attempts to trace how, when and why this psalm-tone had been used in Western Church music; how it has been affected by the musical theory and practice of different periods; and how, in turn, it may have come even to affect polyphonic practices that themselves were only indirectly related to it. This book covers the polyphonic settings of the *tonus peregrinus*, beginning with its appearance in one of the first known examples of notated polyphony and progressing to recent times through a large number of works from different periods and contexts (in a number of which the presence of the psalm-tone has not previously been examined or even noted). The chronological ambit thus exceeds 1,000 years, taking in around 100 works but only a single melody (or, better, family of melodies). I realize, of course, that a typical music monograph would have exactly the reverse proportions: if not a single year, then at least a single shorter historical period, around 100 works and over 1,000 melodic items. Although the scope of this book is consequently very narrowly focused in a musical sense, I venture to suggest that giving it a melodic (rather than, say, a historical, biographical, cultural or geographical) focus fits in rather well with the concept of a *cantus prius factus* from a historical and analytical perspective.

Countless scholars have, through their interaction with one aspect or another of the *tonus peregrinus*, significantly helped to improve the outcomes of my research by exchanging ideas and reading and commenting on my results. Lack of space prevents me from mentioning each individual colleague separately here (specific acknowledgements appear in the notes), but there are three scholars to whom I am particularly indebted for their scrutiny of my work and their valuable candour, which ultimately enabled this book to come to fruition: Michael Talbot (Professor Emeritus, University of Liverpool); Robin Leaver (Professor Emeritus, Westminster Choir College, Rider University) and John Harper (Professor, Royal School of Church Music and International Centre for Sacred Music Studies, University of Bangor).

During the course of my work I have of course also benefited from the kind assistance of a large number of members of staff in archives and libraries the world over. The importance of such scholars working on a daily basis in the midst of their respective collections – not merely for projects like the present one but for the future of musical scholarship as a whole – cannot be overstated. I also wish to thank the staff at Ashgate and especially my publisher, Heidi Bishop, for their

professional assistance, patience and encouragement at all stages of the production of this book. Finally, I must express my infinite gratitude to my family and friends for their love, encouragement and continuous inspiration.

To all those mentioned above belongs much of what may be found good in this book – any obscurities or lacunae remain, of course, entirely my own responsibility.

Mattias Lundberg
Uppsala
May 2010

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Chapter 1

Theory, Method and Conventions

As one might expect, the subject matter of a historical-analytical study determines its nature and the methods used. An investigation of the *tonus peregrinus* from a comparative, analytical and historical viewpoint inevitably calls for flexible methods informed by the music theory, terminology and historical circumstances proper to each example discussed. Each piece studied must be compared with a considerable number of similar works based on different melodic formulae. This conforms essentially to what has sometimes been termed *Musikgeschichte in Analysen* or *Problemggeschichte des Komponierens*.¹ The theoretical and epistemological framework is thus rooted in a belief that sources of music, music theory and liturgy carry information about historical circumstances that are not accessible elsewhere, and that the intellectual context in which specific musical items are studied is accessible only through the philological study of large quantities of interrelated contemporary sources. This perspective does not exclude theoretical and methodical perspectives from later contexts (it certainly could not, since musicologists are trained in a variety of modern analytical disciplines), but these are given only secondary importance in order to avoid any anachronistic or unduly teleological tendencies.

The breadth and openness of this study is reflected in the deliberately wide-ranging question: ‘What is the *tonus peregrinus*?’ However, the following more specific questions were identified at an early stage of the research:

1. What was the practical approach to a psalm-tone without a mode in the liturgies of the Western Church? What role did the *tonus peregrinus* have in music theory from about 800 to 1700?
2. To what degree has the *tonus peregrinus* affected the general development of polyphony?

¹ Both terms have been used for studies such as Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, *Studien zur musikalischen Terminologie* (Mainz, 1968); Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, *Musik im Abendland: Prozesse und Stationen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich, 1991), as well as for the essays in the *Festschrift* in his honour – with contributions by Wulf Arlt, Carl Dahlhaus, Friedhelm Krummacher, Erich Reimer and others (Werner Breig, Reinhold Brinkmann and Elmar Budde [eds], *Analysen: Beiträge zu einer Problemggeschichte des Komponierens. Festschrift für Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht zum 65. Geburtstag* [Stuttgart, 1984]). A similarly orientated analytical tradition is represented by Jacques Chailley, *Traité historique d’analyse musicale* (Paris, 1951); Jacques Chailley, *Formation et transformation du langage musical*, vol. 1: *Intervalles et échelles* (Paris, 1961).

3. How many polyphonic settings of the *tonus peregrinus* have been preserved and from which musical and liturgical contexts? What properties do these share, and what common features set them apart, at a technical level, from other comparable settings from the same period?
4. How have regional variations in theological traditions and liturgical/musical practices shaped the way in which the *tonus peregrinus* has been applied to polyphony?

It is my hope not only to provide clear answers to these questions but also that they fit into the wider context of Western Church music. Naturally, various other unforeseen matters of considerable substance arose during the research, but it seems, in retrospect, that the original aims of the research turned out to be both an effective demarcator of the project and a fruitful stimulus towards knowledge of the music in its proper context.

Needles from the polyphonic haystack: research methodology for source identification

The search for polyphonic occurrences of the *tonus peregrinus* involved a thorough examination of all repertory of Christian polyphony that is in any way extant and accessible. Sifting through this enormous corpus of music was a constant process throughout all stages of the research. The special nature of the object sought – polyphonic occurrences of the *tonus peregrinus* – means that the research results are deep and narrow, whereas the method – a restricted search of monumental scope – was broad and shallow. Given the vast quantity of manuscripts and printed sources of European music before 1800, it is unavoidable that some, and possibly even many, occurrences of the *tonus peregrinus* were not identified. As for the many *tonus peregrinus* settings that have been identified, they are scattered over sources so diverse that a minute examination and description of them all could not readily be justified in a book centred on the analysis of compositional procedures. Moreover, within each tradition, the works are often too numerous and too similar for them all to be discussed separately without tedium. For this reason, few particulars of source, provenance, collation, printer, scribe, history and so on are given in the chapters covering the separate musical and liturgical traditions.

Where an item appears in several sources, there has often been no alternative but to study only one of them. Cases where it has proved extremely difficult to obtain manuscripts or original prints have at times necessitated recourse to modern editions. In order to ensure that the works selected for analysis represented a broad spectrum of all possible occurrences of the *tonus peregrinus*, the search could not be limited to a single approach: five strategies have therefore been used to identify sources for the *tonus peregrinus*:

1. scholarly report
2. title or textual content
3. liturgical function
4. theological connection
5. musical browsing

Scholarly report

A substantial proportion of the *tonus peregrinus* settings collected have been identified from descriptions by other scholars, either published or unpublished. In the first case, the starting point is typically a mention in a monograph on a composer or in some other kind of musicological study. Exceptionally, the writings of Carl-Heinz Illing and Rhabanus Erbacher provided reports of occurrences of psalm-tones with a wider scope.² In many cases where an occurrence of *tonus peregrinus* was suspected but the source was not readily available, experts in the relevant fields were contacted. With great generosity, scholars have often been able to confirm or rule out the presence of the *tonus peregrinus* in the work in question, or at least to offer an informed guess at the likelihood of the presence of plainsong. Gratitude for this valuable correspondence is hereby expressed collectively, as space does not allow for specific mention of individual scholars.³ This search strategy includes not only direct reports of the *tonus peregrinus* but also indirect reports of works with a relevant textual content. Consequently, this category and the next sometimes overlapped.

Title or textual content

The various passages of Scripture connected with the *tonus peregrinus* in different traditions – Psalm 113 (*In exitu Israel*: Vulgate numbering; Pss. 114, 115 in Protestant Bibles) and the Benedicite (from the Song of the Three Children, an apocryphal addition to Dan. 3) in Roman Catholicism; the Magnificat (Lk. 1:46–65) and verses from Psalm 67 (*Gott sei uns gnädig*) in Lutheranism; various canticles in the Anglican Church – collectively offer a starting point for an informed search for possible occurrences of the *tonus peregrinus*. This method certainly accounts for more findings than any other. Large quantities of *In exitu Israel* or *Meine Seele erhebt den Herren* settings have been accessed, but the sheer amount of psalmodic music from the era when the *tonus peregrinus* declined in the Roman Catholic repertory (c.1650–c.1750) meant that selection had to be made at the analytical stage, since combing that repertory would otherwise be a lifelong task.

² Carl-Heinz Illing, *Zur Technik der Magnificat-Komposition des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Wolfenbüttel and Berlin, 1936); Rhabanus Erbacher, *Tonus peregrinus: Aus der Geschichte eines Psalmtons*, 2 vols (Münsterschwarzach, 1971).

³ A list of correspondents is given in Mattias Lundberg, ‘The Tonus Peregrinus at the Polyphony of the Western Church’ (Ph.D. diss., University of Liverpool, 2007), pp. 4–5.

The search for music with specific textual content is greatly facilitated by the catalogues and databases of the Répertoire International des Sources Musicales.⁴ Where archive and library catalogues are available, these can also be very valuable, especially regarding manuscript details and pagination. On occasion, information was obtained from unexpected sources. A conspicuous example of this is the mention of Francisco Guerrero's motet *In exitu Israel* in Francisco Pacheco's *Libro de descripción de verdados retratos de ilustres y memorables varores*, which was originally accessed for reasons unrelated to the present research.⁵ Titles such as *Missa In exitu Israel* and *Missa ad tonam peregrinam* were also identified using this strategy.

Liturgical function

The liturgical functions of the *tonus peregrinus* are already to some extent reflected in the title and textual content. It is not sufficient, however, to restrict the search to the more or less 'official' applications represented by the above works. This would risk overlooking much music that is liturgically pertinent to the *tonus peregrinus*. The value of this method can be exemplified by Pedro Vaz Rego's *Credidi*, a work with no outward connection to the *tonus peregrinus*, which would have been overlooked, were it not for a liturgical connection: it is a setting of Psalm 115, which is close to Psalm 113 in the *Officium*, the liturgy of the hours, and which has its normal place in Monday Vespers (and Sunday Vespers of the duplex feast of Apostles and Evangelists).⁶ By paying extra attention to psalms with an allocated place in Vespers, it was possible to identify Vaz Rego's work as a composition based on the *tonus peregrinus*. Likewise, some works based on antiphons connected with the *tonus peregrinus* were located with the aid of a similar liturgical search method.

Theological connection

Whatever definitions may be given to the concepts of *devotio moderna* and 'abstract religious music', there should be wide agreement on the overriding significance of theological exegesis in all sacred polyphony before 1650 and most before 1700. Since this aspect appears to be particularly significant for music based on plainsong, searching for occurrences of *tonus peregrinus* by way of theological connection became another research strategy. The theological concepts of pilgrimage, exile

⁴ Especially series A/I (Kassel and Basel, Bärenreiter, 1971–1999), series A/II (CD-ROM database, Baltimore, National Information Services, 1997–) and the constantly updated A/II database.

⁵ Francisco Pacheco, *Libro de descripción de verdados retratos de ilustres y memorables varores* [1599], ed. P.M.P. Ramirez and R. Reyes (Seville, 1985).

⁶ See John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 248, 258–259.

and covenant remained, throughout the various contexts and periods covered in this book, the chief textual images of the psalm-tone, appropriately reflected in Psalm 113.⁷ Predictably, occurrences of *tonus peregrinus* were found in works that are theologically connected with these concepts.

One example of such a connection is *Die Fürsten verfolgen mich ohn Ursach* by Heinrich Schütz, where a theological connection between the psalm in question (Ps. 119) and Psalm 113 and the concept of pilgrimage led to the detection of *tonus peregrinus* (regardless of whether or not this was a connection intended by the composer). Within already identified works, this strategy led to further understanding of how the *tonus peregrinus* was applied in relation to individual passages of text. This search strategy was guided first and foremost by the study of theological texts contemporary with the musical sources under examination.

Musical browsing

Hitherto, we have discussed cases where there is a clearly intelligible and predictable connection between the *tonus peregrinus* and a polyphonic work. We must now consider a few exceptions. In a small number of cases there is no such extra-musical connection and these works would not have been identified as settings of *tonus peregrinus* had we not stumbled upon them or found them through a purely mechanical search. This happened either arbitrarily, in the process of going through manuscripts for other reasons, or systematically, in the course of browsing through tenor parts in sources where Gregorian *cantus firmi* were to be expected. Several of the works discussed in the chapter on the *tonus peregrinus* in Zarlinian theory were located by this method of source browsing. The *In exitu Israel* setting in *De musicae laudibus oratio* (1540) by Georgius Libanus was unexpectedly found by a similar route.

Regardless of how individual occurrences of the *tonus peregrinus* were found, they were all identified by the strategies that have been outlined here. Given the amount of labour expended on the fifth strategy, it is not likely that the other four, more structured, methods should have biased the selection in any single direction. Rather, any works that were overlooked exist only in relatively remote sources or in miscellanies exceptionally lacking in internal indexation. This book is not concerned primarily with the historical importance of isolated ‘masterpieces’ (even if some of the works discussed have been granted that epithet by generations of musicologists). The routine character of much psalmodic music in fauxbourdon and similar idioms is likely to have been the single biggest obstacle in the search for occurrences of *tonus peregrinus*. In comparison with many other idioms in Western polyphony, considerable quantities of music based on psalm-tones have either not been preserved or are inadequately catalogued on account of the perceived inferior historical importance of this repertory.

⁷ Lundberg, ‘Tonus Peregrinus’, pp. 52–63.

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Chapter 2

Historical Background of the *Tonus Peregrinus* in Monophonic Practice

General definitions of psalmodic structure

In order to examine and discuss the use of the *tonus peregrinus* in the liturgies of the Western Church, some definitions of psalmody must be established. To do so, one of the regular psalm-tones and then an archetypal form of the *tonus peregrinus* will be used as examples. Only when a common terminology has been determined can discussion of the separate variants of the *tonus peregrinus* commence. This will be done primarily with the aid of selected characteristic examples drawn from liturgical and theoretical sources and secondly by reference to other sources with similar readings.

The very term *tonus* is possibly confusing to the modern mind. The reason for this nomenclature is that a psalm-tone typically consists of one single recitation note. Since this is not the case with the *tonus peregrinus*, another psalm-tone, V, can serve as a more typical example (Example 2.1).

Example 2.1 The sections of psalm-tone V



The pitch at which the bulk of the psalm text is recited is *c*. This is therefore called the *tenor*, *dominant* or *repercussa* in Latin theory and *tuba* in German. Within a statement of the psalm-tone the *tenor* occurs twice. The division is marked in the example by a bar line between the first and second semi-verse. The *tenor* represents the remnants of monotone declamation to which have been added several elements of ornamentation. The first of these is formed by the two notes that lead up to the *tenor* of the first semi-verse. This figure is called *initium*, *inchoatio*, *intonatio* or *incipit*. The first recitation is rounded off by a *mediante*, *medium*, *mediatio* or *elevatio*, which in turn is followed by a small caesura. The second recitation commences likewise with an *incipit*. It is concluded by a *terminatio*, *finitio* or *finalis*, which has a more important structural function than the *mediatio*.¹ In the first semi-verse the *tenor* may be subject to a *flexio* (*flectio*) or *flexa*: a short

¹ *Finalis* is a term best avoided as a description of the closing figure as a whole. It is also employed, often without clear distinction, to denote the final note of the psalm-tone,

inflection, as represented by the pitch *d* in this example. It was mainly used for longer psalm verses and predominantly in the first semi-verse.

Here the terms *first incipit*, *first tenor*, *flexa*, *mediatio*, *second incipit*, *second tenor* and *terminatio* are used rather than any of their equivalents. The reason for this is that they are not only the most commonly used terms throughout the history of music theory but also conform to the same Latin terminological tradition and are thus often found together. The terms are not always – in fact not even most often – given in the grammatical form in which they are presented here. In early psalmodic theory they are often used as verbs, either in the active or the passive mood. Statements such as the following often appear as complements to a psalm-tone in notation: *Primus tonus sic incipit, et sic flectitur, et sic mediatur, atque sic finitur*: ‘Psalm-tone I begins like this, is inflected like this, is divided in half like this, but is finished like this.’²

Each of the eight regular psalm-tones appear in three different basic forms, used with three different purposes: (1) psalms, (2) canticles – notably the Magnificat, the Nunc dimittis (Lk. 2:29–32), the Benedictus (Lk. 1:68–79) and the Benedicite – and (3) *introitus* psalm verses. In addition, there are special tones for the invitatory, the singing of Psalm 94 (*Venite exultemus Domino*) at the opening of Matins. These are normally in ternary form and several of them include changes of recitation degree. With psalms within the liturgical hours, the normal *minores* forms of psalm-tones were used, whereas canticles, often referred to as *psalmi maiores* were chanted to a more melodically elaborate (occasionally even melodically different) variant.³ *Introitus* psalmody occurs in the Mass when the celebrant and the ministers approach the altar after having entered the church: it is typically only a fragment of a psalm with its antiphon. Also the forms of the psalm-tones used for *introitus* psalmody in the Mass are more elaborate, but since the *tonus peregrinus* is not used for this purpose, it shall not be discussed at length here. The following chapter will examine the use of the *tonus peregrinus* with both psalms and canticles in the *Officium*. Suffice it to say here, that when the *tonus peregrinus* is prescribed for use with a canticle, it has, unlike the eight other psalm-tones, no special *maioris* form. Example 2.2 is an archetypal form of the *tonus peregrinus*, along with our established terminology.

which is often described as the fundamental pitch of a mode. It will be used with the latter meaning in this book.

² Jacobus of Liège, *Speculum musicae* (*sexus liber et septimus*) [c.1330], in E. de Coussemaker (ed.), *Scriptorum de musica medii aevi (nova series)*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1867; repr. Milan, 1931), p. 334.

³ The author of the *Commemoratio brevis* states that the former is used when the psalmody is slower, and the latter for swifter recitation. This may either actually refer to a desired difference in the tempo of chanting or to the mere fact that a more straightforward melodic contour led to a swifter rendition of the text (*Commemoratio brevis de tonis et psalmis modulandis* [c.900], in M. Gerbert [ed.], *Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica sacra potissimum*, vol. 1 [St Blasien, 1784; repr. Hildesheim, 1963], pp. 213–229).

tonus peregrinus. Even so, the *tonus peregrinus* underwent little alteration during the period in which it was a natural element in polyphony, and the earliest notation is in fact more detailed as regards antiphons than psalm-tones (which suggests a stronger oral tradition for the latter). Therefore, investigation of the psalm-tone variants should be guided not by chronology but by geography.

Two main types of *tonus peregrinus* occur in the sources available – one with the *incipit a-b₂-a* and another with the *incipit a-c-a*: the latter, on account of its predominance in northern Europe, is sometimes referred to as the Germanic dialect; the former is known as the Roman dialect. The predominance of the Germanic *incipit* in northern European sources is remarkably clear-cut. The rare contrary instances are found in outlying regions and may have been copied ‘out of area’ by itinerant scholars. In the cases where we know the provenance of the source or the author, we can see that there are hardly any exceptions to the norm that the Roman *incipit* was used in Mediterranean, Alpine and British areas, while the Germanic *incipit* prevailed in all regions north and east of these areas. The *Speculum musicae* of Jacobus of Liège (c.1260–after 1330) is one of the few sources to include examples of both the Roman and the Germanic dialect.⁵

The Germanic *incipit* appears to be only one facet of a general tendency towards augmented intervals in northern European sources of Gregorian chant.⁶ There are several sub-types within the basic Germanic *tonus peregrinus* formula. The most common form has *c* in the first *incipit* and *a* in the second (see Example 2.3).⁷ It is possible that the *b*, *mediatio* in the first semi-verse represents a remnant of the Roman *incipit*, in which case the Germanic intonation would logically be a developed form of the Roman, rather than representing a separate tradition. Another Germanic dialect has the same *incipit* for both semi-verses (Example 2.4). This, incidentally, later became the normative formula for the Magnificat in Lutheran liturgy. The fact that it results in two falling fourths in the *terminatio* figure made it the perfect vehicle for motivic development, as we shall see later. Along with these two variants, there are also versions without a second semi-verse *incipit* (Example 2.5).⁸

⁵ There are in addition occasional deviances even from these three main forms, as in MS lat. 780, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (F-Pc), with a *flexa* on *g*.

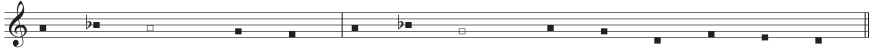
⁶ To cite just one example in the close proximity of psalmody, Carl-Heinz Illing has discussed a similar treatment of psalm-tone I (*Zur Technik der Magnificat-Komposition*, pp. 1–31). Peter Wagner cites, as an example of Germanic chant dialect, the canticle-tones as given in MS Mü 14745, where several such augmentations are present (*Einführung in die gregorianischen Melodien*, vol. 3 [Leipzig, 1921], pp. 102–103).

⁷ Georg Rhau, *Enchiridion utriusque musicae practicae* [1538] (Kassel, 1951), fol. F viii v. Also *Introductorium musicae* ([c.1500], ed. H. Riemann, *Monatshefte für Musikgeschichte*, 29 [1897]: 149–164); Henricus Glareanus (*Dodekachordon* [1547] [New York, 1967], p. 42) give such variants.

⁸ *Tractatus de musica plana et mensurabili* [fifteenth century], in E. de Coussemaker (ed.), *Scriptorum de musica medii aevi (nova series)*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1867; repr. Milan, 1931), pp. 416–475, at p. 458. Johannes Spangenberg (*Quaestiones musicae in usum scholae*

that the true process was the reverse: the notion that the *tonus peregrinus* was merely a *differentia* of another psalm-tone may well have led the author of the *Commemoratio brevis* to alter the psalm-tone for the sake of conformity with the regular system.

Example 2.6 The *tonus peregrinus* in Roman chant dialect



Example 2.7 The *tonus peregrinus* in Roman chant dialect



Example 2.8 The *tonus peregrinus* in Roman chant dialect



Deviations in the *incipit* figures are occasionally found. The most common is not really a separate variant of the first semi-verse, but, rather, an inflected restatement of the first *incipit*, dividing the *tonus peregrinus* into three rather than two sections (Example 2.9).

Example 2.9 Variant of the first semi-verse of the *tonus peregrinus*



Hieronymus of Moravia gives this variant for the fifteenth verse of Psalm 113, which indeed has a tripartite organization: *Manus habent et non palpabunt, pedes habent et non ambulabunt, non clamabunt in gutture suo*: ‘They have hands but cannot grasp, they have feet but cannot walk, they cannot cry from their throats.’¹²

The fact that the theorist gives this verse with a tripartite *tonus peregrinus* pattern in addition to a common Roman variant for the first verse of the psalm, suggests an established practice of dividing the first *tenor* into two sections by means of a *flexa*. The consequences of this practice in polyphonic composition will be discussed later.

¹² Hieronymus of Moravia, *Tractatus de musica* and *Discantus positio vulgaris* [c.1275], in E. de Coussemaker (ed.), *Scriptorum de musica mediae aevi (nova series)*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1864; repr. Milan, 1931), pp. 1–97, at p. 83.

Variants without the normal *mediatio* figure are also encountered, as can be seen in Example 2.11.¹³ Versions with neither *incipit* nor *flexa* are predominant in Iberian sources. Diego del Puerto's *Portus musice*, Juan Bermudo's *El libro llamado declaración de instrumentos musicales*, the *Intonarum Toletanum* and the *Breve instruc[c]ión de canto llano*, all present variants with a plain three-note opening semi-verse (Example 2.13).¹⁴ Later Spanish sources, such as the *Escuela musica según la práctica moderna* (1724) of Pablo Nassarre (c.1655–c.1730) and the *Arte de canto-llano* (1778) of Ignacio Ramoneda (c.1730–1781), continue to uphold this practice. As we shall see in a later chapter, this variant was also employed in the polyphony of this particular region of Europe. This form will be referred to as 'the Iberian variant'.

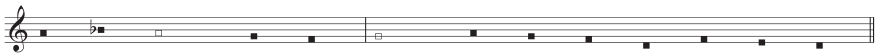
Example 2.10 Deviant second semi-verse of the *tonus peregrinus*



Example 2.11 *Tonus peregrinus* variant with deviant *mediatio* figure



Example 2.12 *Tonus peregrinus* variant with *f* in *terminatio* figure



Example 2.13 The *tonus peregrinus* in Iberian chant dialect



The second *incipit* is on rare occasions given as in Example 2.10. The *d* replacing the normal *flexa*-like *incipit* represents the most far-reaching deviation from the more usual *tonus peregrinus* variants. One must assume that this version relates to the closing of the psalm-tone in the same way as the version in Example 2.4 related to its opening and the *d* can be traced structurally to the *terminatio* figure, since the wealth of *flexa* variants found in the regular psalm-tones often relates to features of their basic shape. This particular *incipit* variant is very rarely found in polyphonic settings. Nicolaus Capuanus (fl. c.1415) gives another version of the

¹³ *Tractatus de musica plana*, pp. 433–483.

¹⁴ Diego del Puerto, *Portus musice* (Salamanca, 1504); *Intonarum Toletanum* (Alcalá de Henares, 1515); Juan Bermudo, *El libro llamado declaración de instrumentos musicales* (Ossuna, 1555); Luy de Villafranca, *Breve instruc[c]ión de canto llano* (Seville, 1565).

second *incipit*, where the second *tenor* is arrived at via an *f-g-a* figure.¹⁵ Similarly, this may relate structurally to pitches already in the psalm-tone (the *mediatio*), but the consequence of this *incipit* is rather different from that of Ladislaus of Zalka (fl. late fifteenth century), since it produces a conjunct transition from the first *incipit* to the second *tenor*.

One alternative second semi-verse, particularly common in the Sarum use in the British Isles, includes an *f* in the *terminatio* formula (Example 2.12).¹⁶ This note weakens the contour of the psalm-tone, which elsewhere derives much of its linear character from the falling fourth in the second semi-verse. The *terminatio* in the *Commemoratio brevis* (Example 2.8) introduces one further alternative: the *e* in the figure not only alters the shape of the *tonus peregrinus* drastically but also gives the second semi-verse a configuration that is untypical of Western psalmody. It must have been difficult for untrained singers to fit the final syllables of the psalm verses to this very long *terminatio*.

We have now covered the *tonus peregrinus* variants that are most frequently encountered in liturgical and theoretical texts, as well as in the early polyphonic repertory. It becomes clear from these examples that most major variations in *tonus peregrinus* readings occur in the first semi-verse. As regards the various *differentiae*, these are not nearly as far-reaching as those normally employed for psalm-tones I–VIII. This fact possibly indicates that the uniformity of the antiphons connected regularly with the *tonus peregrinus* made *differentiae* superfluous. Indeed the term *differentia* is misleading in the study of the different *tonus peregrinus* endings, since these rarely depart from the normal *terminatio d-f-e-d* in their structure, and do not serve the same kind of function as the *differentiae* of the other psalm-tones. This was certainly due to the fact that the psalm-tone was used with a typologically very limited repertory of antiphons.

Other recitation formulas with more than one reciting note

The *tonus peregrinus* was not the only recitation formula to comprise multiple recitation pitches, even if it was the most common and widespread deviation from the normality of single-pitch recitation in the daily liturgy of hours. Deviations are otherwise most often found in responsorial psalmody, where the main body of singers respond to the verses chanted by one singer, or with texts other than psalms

¹⁵ Nicolaus Capuanus, *Compendium musicale* [c.1415], in A. de la Fage (ed.), *Essais de diphthéographie musicale* (Paris, 1864), pp. 308–338, at p. 331.

¹⁶ *Antiphonale Sarisburiense* (London, 1901–24; repr. Farnborough, 1966), pp. 110, 276, 308, 323, 543, 648; *Libellus Tonarium* [c.1075], Universitätsbibliothek, Leipzig (D-LEu), MS 1492, fol. 93 r; Johannes of Tewkesbury, *Quatuor principalia musicae* [c.1350], in E. de Coussemaker (ed.), *Scriptorum de musica medii aevi (nova series)*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1876; repr. Milan, 1931), pp. 200–298, at p. 245; Nicolaus Wollick, *Enchiridion musices, liber tertius* (Paris, 1512), fol. F viii v.

and canticles. In our attempt to explain why these other recitation formulas were not, like the *tonus peregrinus*, used in the antiphonal singing of psalms, we have to fall back on hypotheses, the most obvious perhaps being that contrast between the two pitches may have been undesirable when expressing the *parallelismus membrorum* (the compound structure of text and complementary addition or, less commonly, thesis and antithesis) of psalms and other bipartite forms: the balance of the two similar semi-verses, acting as mutual paraphrases, was disturbed by the change of recitation pitch. In early music theory deviant psalm-tones are often discussed as a group, and two Frankish writers addressed a problem that may relate to an unsuitability for antiphonal singing – one stated that *non finiuntur ita ut inchoant*: ‘they do not finish as they began’ the other that *quia per omnia ab orbita in sui canore versiculi segregatur, huiusce toni, secernendam putavi a cæteris diffinitionibus*: ‘as this psalm-tone is separated by a semi-verse from the common run of all singing [psalms] it was excluded from the others.’¹⁷ This hypothesis relies indirectly on the early indications that the *tonus peregrinus* earned its place in psalmody mainly on account of pre-existent problematical antiphons, something that is discussed further in Chapter 7. A complementary hypothesis is that the reason why multiple recitation pitches occur mostly in responsorial psalmody is not primarily homiletic but concerned with traditional musical practice. A contrast between ‘call’ and ‘response’ may have been widely cultivated in early Western Christendom and then have survived as a relic in responsorial psalmody.¹⁸

One psalmodic formula with two recitation pitches that is most probably distinct from the *nothae*, or deviant formulas relating to the eight regular psalm-tones, is the melody for Psalm 113 (*In exitu Israel*) in the Sarum use. As will be discussed below, this psalm was particularly associated with the *tonus peregrinus* – therefore, we need to refer also to an alternative *In exitu Israel* formula, not only on account of the liturgical context, but also because it may possibly tell us something about the *tonus peregrinus* itself. Similarly to the *tonus peregrinus* variants in Examples 2.8 and 2.9, this formula appears tripartite at first sight.¹⁹ The sequence, however, is reversed, the second recitation being higher than the first. The third phrase is the *Alleluia*, bearing witness to the special function that this melody had on Easter Day and the following week. It functions here in place of an antiphon, and the fact that it is appended after each single verse suggests an archaism: possibly a connection with an older responsorial psalmody (although each verse was treated antiphonally just like a psalm-tone).²⁰ When the Sarum

¹⁷ *Alia musica*, p. 149; Aurelianus of Réôme, *Musica disciplina* [c.850], in M. Gerbert (ed.), *Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica sacra potissimum*, vol. 1 (St Blasien, 1784; repr. Hildesheim, 1963), pp. 28–63, at p. 51. The metaphor *ab orbita* is logical in the light of the word *versus* (*vertere*: ‘to turn’).

¹⁸ This is suggested by Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive originum libri* [seventh century], ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae Latinae* 82 (Paris, 1850), coll. 73–728, VI: 9.

¹⁹ See Example 3.7.

²⁰ See e.g. British Library (GB-Lbl), Harley MS 2945.

use *Directorium sacerdotum* (1487) and *Processionale* (1502) were printed, the custom of repeating the antiphon after each verse of the psalm had passed out of general practice for several hundred years at least.²¹ This melody appears not only in English sources but also in ones originating from Western France. Guy Oury has suggested that this melody, and the entire psalmody based upon it, originated in France and then spread to the British Isles via Normandy.²²

We have seen several melodic patterns with multiple recitation degrees used in psalmody. Within the context of the Mass, there are in addition several other melodic patterns with multiple recitation degrees which unlike the *tonus peregrinus* and the invitatory psalm-tones were used for texts other than psalms and canticles. The best-known of these is perhaps one of the common tones for the *Prefatio* (the first part of the Eucharistic prayers, which immediately precedes the *Sanctus*).²³ It is important to note that the nature and function of a recitation formula like this is quite different from the *tonus peregrinus* and the invitatory chants, since the changes in recitation degree are here intended to express punctuation in the reading of the text. Thus, these chants and the *tonus peregrinus* have little in common as regards musical development or liturgical practice and are mentioned here only in order to illustrate that the *tonus peregrinus* was musically untypical in the liturgy of the Western Church. Falconer has raised the possibility that since the *tonus peregrinus* often was classified as a *differentia* of one of the eight psalm-tones, other *differentiae* of these psalm-tones might in the same way have originally belonged to irregular psalm-tones, since they resemble cadential patterns of the Mozarabic and Ambrosian rites.²⁴ Ruth Steiner has drawn attention to similarly deviant psalm-tones, some of which are irregular (notably the psalm-tone she calls ‘Tone S’) in a manner recalling the *tonus peregrinus*, and Atkinson has catalogued four psalm-tones for the *parapteres* that he believes have origins similar to those of psalm-tones I–VIII. These, however, remained strictly invitatory tones and do not often appear even as such after 1200.

²¹ *Directorium sacerdotum*, ed. Clement Maydeston (London, 1487); *Processionale ad usum Sarum* [1502] (Clifden, 1980).

²² Erbacher relates that Jean Lebeuf (1687–1760) believed it to be a remnant of the Gallican rite (*Tonus peregrinus*, vol. 1, pp. 77–78); see also Guy Oury, ‘Psalmum dicere cum Alleluia’, *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 79 (1965): 97–108, at pp. 103–104; Michiel Huglo (with Jane Bellingham and Marcel Zijlstra), ‘Gallican Chant’, in S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (eds), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn, vol. 9 (London, 2001), pp. 458–472, at p. 467.

²³ This melody is quoted as example 12 in John Boe, ‘Präfatation’, in L. Finscher (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd edn, section, VI (Kassel and Basel, 1997), coll. 1761–1776.

²⁴ Keith Falconer, ‘The Modes Before the Modes: Antiphon and Differentia in Western Chant’, in P. Jefferey (ed.), *The Study of Medieval Chant: Paths and Bridges, East and West: In Honour of Kenneth Levy* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 131–145, at p. 142. It is clear that this line of reasoning continues the tradition of the postulated common source (‘Q’) hypothesis.

The liturgical context of the *tonus peregrinus*

The names, descriptions and liturgical functions of the *tonus peregrinus* prior to the rise of Western polyphony have been covered elsewhere as has the historiography of its origins (a matter in which there has been a great deal of disagreement among nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars).²⁵ Suffice it to say here, that the origins of the term *tonus peregrinus* remain unclear, with suggestions that it relates to the musical properties of the psalm-tone (a ‘wandering’ or ‘migrant’ character), to its connection with the text of Psalm 113, to its use in processions in a special Easter Vespers liturgy or to any number of other explanations. Before discussing polyphonic settings of the *tonus peregrinus* and its role in Western music theory, a short description of its liturgical functions will be useful.

By far the most common application of the *tonus peregrinus*, which has been mentioned several times already, is its use for Psalm 113. This is not only the most common, but seemingly also the most ancient of its functions. The psalm in question is proper to Vespers on Sunday and it is in this context much of the music described in the present book will have been performed. It was connected almost exclusively with antiphons of one single melodic family, by far the most common being *Nos qui vivimus*, with text derived from verses of Psalm 113.

The second most frequent use of the psalm-tone, for the German Magnificat (*Meine Seele erhebt den Herren*), is peculiar to the Lutheran liturgical tradition. This holds true also of the application of the *tonus peregrinus* as a congregational response to the Benediction, with verses from Psalm 67 (*Gott sei uns gnädig*). As well as these three liturgical functions, we will come across a number of less common uses as we go on to discuss the polyphonic works based on the *tonus peregrinus*.²⁶

²⁵ Avigdor Herzog and André Hajdu, ‘À la recherche du tonus peregrinus dans la tradition musicale juive’, *Yuval*, 1 (1968): 194–203; Jean Claire: ‘The Tonus Peregrinus: A Question Well Put?’, *Orbis Musicae*, 7 (1980): 3–14. See Lundberg, ‘Tonus Peregrinus’, chapters 2–7 for further discussion as well as a full bibliography.

²⁶ Others, such as the use of the *tonus peregrinus* for the Benedicite at Lauds, will not be discussed at all, since no polyphonic settings with this specific function has survived (the use of the *tonus peregrinus* with the vernacular Benedicite in sixteenth-century England is covered in Chapter 10); see also Ruth Steiner, ‘The Cantic of the Three Children as a Chant in the Roman Mass’, *Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft*, ns 2 (1982): 81–90; Ruth Steiner, ‘Antiphons for the Benedicite at Lauds’, *Journal of the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society*, 7 (1984): 1–17.

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Chapter 3

Singled Out as a Model: The *Tonus Peregrinus* in Polyphony before 1500

At the dawn of the history of polyphony the *tonus peregrinus* already possessed an individual identity, both – through connections with certain texts – as a bearer of theological implications and as a distinct melodic formula with a specific liturgical function. Since the liturgical practice of the psalm-tone was taken for granted, the erudite discussion of its origins and its problematic aspects, as recounted here, most likely did not attract the interest and attention of the daily officiant or chorister.¹ One may safely assume that the perfect knowledge of all psalms, canticles and hymns, set forth as an unconditional prerequisite for ecclesiastical ordination by the eighth council of Toledo in 653, pertained not only to Scripture but also to the practical applications of the same.² The slow but significant rise of polyphonic music coincided with the crystallization of a special musical significance for the *tonus peregrinus* – one that is suggested not so much by the prose of theoretical treatises as by the simple fact that this tone was commonly taken as a practical example through which to describe theoretical topics that applied to polyphony in general.

The interpolation of an *Alleluia* into Psalms 112–118 was observed not only in Easter Week services but sometimes also in the normal Vespers in which these psalms had their allotted place. Many mediaeval Vulgate manuscripts make this normative by inscribing *A E V I A* ('*all-el-u-i-a*') at the end of every psalm in this group. If the psalms were framed by *Alleluia* sections, the function of the psalmodic antiphons must have taken second place – something that set the *tonus peregrinus* apart from psalm-tones I–VIII, which functioned with a variety of antiphon types. Thus the underlying reasons for the special treatment of the *tonus peregrinus* may have been at once technical and liturgical.

¹ Lundberg, 'Tonus Peregrinus', pp. 36–51, 87–99.

² See Karl Joseph von Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte nach den Quellen*, vol. 3 (Freiburg, 1858), p. 99. There existed variants of these requirements for ordination: in the thirteenth century, vicars choral in Salisbury had to serve a probationary year, by the end of which memorization of the Psalter and antiphonale were expected. The Lincoln statutes of 1236 stipulate that the antiphonale and hymnal should be memorized in a first year of probation, whereas the Psalter should be known by heart at the end of the second year of service (Frank L. Harrison, *Music in Medieval Britain* [London, 1958], pp. 5–6).