

# REPERCUSSION (REARTICULATION)

## ACCORDING TO THE SOLESMES METHOD

THE introduction to the *Liber Usualis*, the “Rules for Interpretation,” contains an admission that the Solesmes method practice of tying repeated notes together and fusing them into a single sound of double or triple length is a departure from the historic manner of singing:

Formerly each of these two or three notes was characterised by a slight stress or impulse of the voice; in practice, we advise the joining of the notes in one sound. These double or triple notes, especially when repeated, may be sung with a slight crescendo or decrescendo according to their position in the word of the text or in the melodic line. A gentle and delicate repercussion (i.e. a fresh layer of sound) is needed at the beginning of each distropha or tristropha, as well as on the first note of any group which begins on the same degree as the strophicus. (xxiiij; *Liber Brevior*, xxj)

In order to understand the above, it is necessary to know what the *distropha*, *tristropha*, and *strophicus* are. *Strophicus* is a generic name for a group of repeated notes. The *distropha* and *tristropha* are types of *strophicus*, and each of the individual notes is called a *stropha* or *apostropha*. Repeated notes besides the *strophicus* include the *bivirga*, *pressus*, *oriscus in apposition*, and other compound or apposed neumes. Unfortunately, some of these are indistinguishable from each other in the notation of the Vatican edition. The unison *tristropha*, i.e. three notes at the same pitch, always has the form **■ ■ ■**—three *puncta*. **According to the Solesmes method, unless three repeated notes have the form of a true *tristropha*, three *puncta* **■ ■ ■**, there is always a repercussion on one of the repeated notes.** As a rule, the repercussion comes on an ictic note, i.e. the beginning of a group of two or three notes, but there are also non-ictic repercussions as well as ictic notes that are not repercussed. The offertory for Sexagesima Sunday furnishes us with an excellent case study for repeated notes and repercussions. It is reproduced here from the *Graduale Triplex*.

OF. IV  
RBCKS

Ps. 16, 5, 6, 7

L 33  
E 86

P

Er-fice \* gres- sus me- os in se-mi- tis  
tu- is, ut non mo- ve- an- tur vesti- gi- a  
me- a: in- cli- nā au- rem tu- am, et exāudi-  
verba me- a: mi- ri- fi- ca mi- se- ri- cordi- as tu-  
as, qui salvos fa- cis spe- rāntes in te, Dómi- ne.

Perfect Thou my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps be not moved; incline Thine ear, and hearken unto my words: show forth Thy wonderful mercies, Thou who savest them that trust in Thee, O Lord.

- 1 strophicus (two distrophae)+clivis
- 2 torculus strophicus (torculus resupinus in MSS)
- 3 tristropha (pes strophicus in L)
- 4 unison tristropha - **ictic non-repercussion** - no repercussion on ictic note at end of neume
- 5 tristropha (pes strophicus in L)
- 6 virga (uncinus in L)+trigon
- 7 torculus strophicus (torculus resupinus in L)
- 8 pressus of assimilation (torculus+clivis) - here the Vatican edition is in error; there are only four notes, not five, in the MSS
- 9 diminutive liquescent tristropha
- 10 distropha+clivis
- 11 torculus strophicus (porrectus/torculus resupinus in MSS) - here the Vatican edition disregards the expressive neumatic break
- 12 trigon
- 13 distropha+pes quassus (tristropha+virga in L)
- 14 distropha+double clivis with pressus (oriscus clivis in L, pressus minor in SG) - **non-ictic repercussion** on third note
- 15 torculus strophicus (torculus resupinus in L)