

Interestingly, these internal repeats are a relatively late musical development. There is a small corpus of old alleluias dating back to the Carolingian period, whose musical style tends to be rather restrained and does not include the obvious repetitions of Example 1.14. But in the course of the ninth century, and indeed in subsequent centuries as well, many more were composed, often new melodies for old texts, and these later compositions very often display internal repeats.

The hymns of the Office hours

The texts of all the examples in this section so far have been prose, very often psalmic, nearly all biblical. One category of chant, however, has a verse text in strophes. This is the hymn, sung at the various hours of the Divine Office, at least outside Rome, which did not welcome poetic texts in the liturgy. Three melodies are given in Example 1.15, all transcribed from the Worcester manuscript. In each case only the first strophe of text is given.

Christe, qui lux es et dies is a very old text, mentioned in the monastic rule of Caesarius of Arles in the sixth century. Like very many hymn texts, it has four-line strophes in iambic metre, adopted for hymns at an even earlier date by St Ambrose of Milan (c.340–397). In the Rule of St Benedict (c.530) hymns are referred to as ‘ambrosiani’. Whether the melody is as old as this cannot be proved. Certainly it sounds very simple, syllabic, within a range of only four notes, the last line repeating the first. It was sung at Compline, when no very special music was required.

A solis ortus cardine has a text by Sedulius, who lived in Italy in the first half of the fifth century. It is actually the start of a long poem recounting the life of Christ from his birth to his ascension into heaven, in which each strophe begins with a new letter of the alphabet, first strophe ‘A’, second strophe ‘B’, and so on (hence the term ‘abecedarian’ hymn). Sedulius did not write the hymn for liturgical use, but parts of it were excerpted for the Office. (Another part, beginning *Hostis Herodes impie*, was used at Epiphany.) This widely known melody ranges far more freely than the previous one. Like so many E-mode melodies it emphasizes the chain of notes *D–F–a–c*, touching on *d* as well, to which the final *E* (first and last lines) sounds like a foil. The hymn was sung at Lauds, appropriately for the text.

Sanctorum meritis is a Frankish text, sometimes attributed to Hrabanus Maurus (Abbot of Fulda, Archbishop of Mainz, c.780–856) but probably not by him. The classical metre here is more complicated, three asclepiads, each with twelve syllables, then a glyconic verse with only eight. One might hear the words in groups of three syllables, accented on the first, with a break in the pattern for the last line. In classical

Christe, qui lux es et di-es, noctis te-nebras de-te-gis,
 lu-ci-fer, lucem pre-ferens, lumen be-a-tum pre-dicans.

A so-lis or-tus car-di-ne ad-us-que ter-re li-mi-tem
 Christum ca-na-mus prin-ci-pem, natum Ma-ri-a vir-gi-ne.

Sanctorum me-ri-tis in-cli-ta gau-di-a
 pangamus, so-ci-i, ge-sta-que for-ti-a.
 Nam glis-cit a-ni-mus prome-re can-ti-bus
 vi-ctorum ge-nus op-timum.

Ex. 1.15 Hymns *Christe, qui lux es*, *A solis ortus cardine* and **Sanctorum meritis**

Christe, qui lux es et dies

Christ, who art the light and day,
 you drive away the shadows of night,
 bringer of light, bearing it before you,
 proclaiming the blessed light.

A solis ortus cardine

From the pole where the sun rises
 to the bounds of the earth,
 let us sing of Christ the Prince,
 born of the Virgin Mary. (Sedulius)

metre, however, reckoning in long and short syllables, the last line is just a shorter form of the first three.

—	—		—	˘	˘	—	—	˘	˘	—		˘	—
San-	cto-		rum	me-	ri-	tis	in-	cli-	ta	gau-		di-	a
—	—		—	˘	˘	—						˘	—
vi-	cto-		rum	ge-	nus	op-						ti-	mum

If the hymn were sung with notes of equal length, neither the accentual nor the classical metre would be apparent. The melody is not known except from the Worcester manuscript, and may well have been composed there. The clarity of the form, A–A–B–C, is matched by the clearly defined tonal range of each phrase. The first line uses the upper and lower segments, respectively, of the D-authentic scale, that is, *d–a*, *a–D*). The third line uses the lower and upper segments, respectively, of the F-plagal scale, that is, *C–F*, *F–c*.

The hymns of St Ambrose (at least four known hymns are usually agreed to be authentic) were intended for singing by the faithful laity, and something of this character survives in many of the thousands of hymns (and hundreds of melodies) in medieval chant books. However, they were the only such chants in the early medieval Latin liturgy.

Chants for the Ordinary of Mass (*Ordinarium missae*): Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei

The place during Mass where these chants were sung can be seen in Table 1.1 above. They are linked by the fact that their texts remained the same from one Mass to another, but they have no common history and are musically heterogeneous. For all of them many different melodies were composed in the Middle Ages. Over fifty Gloria melodies are known from medieval manuscripts, and well over 200 melodies each for Kyrie, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. The Credo was sung to one principal melody during the Middle Ages, occasionally to others, but from the fifteenth century onward many more were composed. The musical history of the chants for the Ordinary of Mass therefore extends well into the late Middle Ages, not least because they were

Ex. 1.15 (*cont.*)

Sanctorum meritis

For the merits of the saints let us make a joyful noise audible to all,
O brethren, and comport ourselves with spirit,
for the heart swells with the desire to show forth in song
the best sort of victor.