

Spondaic Syllabic Cadences
 from *Le nombre musicale grégorien*, vol. 2
 by Dom André Mocquereau
 Translated by Charles Weaver

449—Before going into the detailed study of incisives, I must settle a general question that frequently presents itself: that of spondaic or paroxytonic cadences. Should we lengthen and double the accented note in these types of cadences or not?


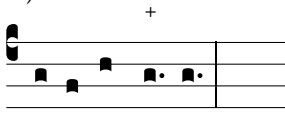
<p>a.)</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">cæ-li et terræ,</p>	or	<p>b.)</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">cæ-li et terræ,</p>
---	----	--

Figure 172

The solution to this question is very important, because the rhythm of the whole member depends on it, if it is syllabic. Now, a very thorough study of melody and of the manuscripts leads me to adopt the following rules.

450—Among the indications which determine the interpretation of these cadences, the most influential is undoubtedly the melodic form to which it is adapted. It is on the variety of these forms that we establish our teaching.

We can distinguish three main types, which I will describe in the following three sections:

- (1) Spondaic cadences at the unison
- (2) Descending spondaic cadences
- (3) Ascending spondaic cadences.

Type 1: Spondaic Cadences at the Unison

These are arranged into two subtypes.

451—Subtype 1: descending melodic progression, which is to say that the melody arrives at the last two unison notes by a descending progression.



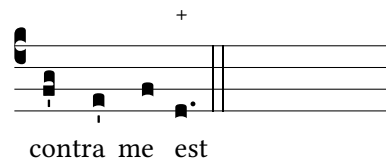
Figure 173

It suffices, for classifying cadences of this subtype, that the one note just before the accented syllable is higher, as in example b (note 3). The doubling of the note on the accented syllable is always obligatory at the ends of phrases, in cadences of this type; it is less so at the ends of members.

452—I have been led to this conclusion by the following consideration, based on a very great number of facts: these cadences are, generally, only redundant musical forms of simple cadences, whose last note always requires a final ictus of repose and, consequently, a notable lengthening.

Simple cadence:

Ant. Qui non colligit.

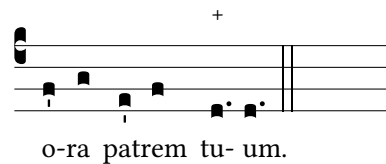


Spondaic or redundant cadences:

Ant. Cum facis.



Ant. Tu autem.



Ant. Prophetæ.

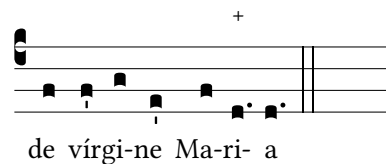


Figure 174


The addition of the final note does not modify in any way, I think, the disposition

of the simple cadence. It merely gives it a nobler character by its development; the close is longer and fuller. We strengthen this result by doubling the note on the accented syllable.

453—The same facts of redundancy are encountered in the more elaborate chants, with the difference that the final note of the simple cadence is developed in the redundant cadence by a melisma of varying lengths.


Simple cadences:

Intr. Venite adoremus.



De- us no- ster

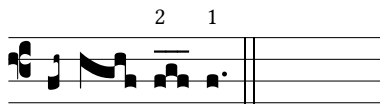
Intr. Veni.



Et o-sténde no- bis

Redundant cadences:

Intr. T.P.



Alle- lú- ia

Intr. Dominus fortitudo.



sa- lu-tá- ri- um

Figure 175

It is precisely this note of the accented syllable, developed here, which I propose to double in the syllabic cadences. It seems to me that nothing could be more logical.

454—I have said above that the doubling, obligatory at the ends of the phrase, is not always done on the members of the phrase. Such apparent contradictions are frequent in art, and above all in melodic art. Thus, in the following examples:



Figure 176

It is quite difficult to double the note of the accented syllable; the lightness, the delicacy of this little incise hardly permits it. It is not any more a true cadence, but a simple intonation that demands an immediate continuation.

One finds in the antiphonary, at certain members of the phrase, the note of the accent not doubled, in order to lighten the chant. But one can very well double it, if one wishes.

455—Subtype 2. Ascending melodic progression, one or more low notes preceding the last two notes at the unison:



Figure 177

It is difficult to give a rule that applies in every case:

- (a) In general, the doubling on the accented syllable is not useful.
- (b) Ordinarily it is prohibited.
- (c) Sometimes it is allowed.
- (d) In other cases, more rarely, it is necessary.

It is the musical context and taste which decide whether to use or reject the doubling; the study of each case in particular is absolutely required. In practice, one can always stick with the indications of the rhythmic editions.

Type 2: Descending Spondaic Cadences

Three subtypes to distinguish.

456—Subtype 1. The note on the accented syllable (2) is higher than the last note (1), and at the unison with the preceding note (3). The accent *may* be doubled:

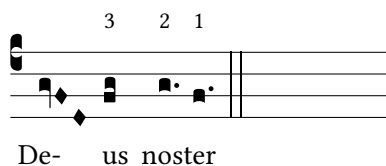


Figure 178

457—Subtype 2. The note of the accented syllable (2) is higher than the two notes around it (3 and 1):



Figure 179

In this case, the note on the accented syllable should not be doubled, either at the cadences of members or at the cadences of phrases.

458—Subtype 3. The note of the accented syllable (2) is higher than the last note (1), but lower than the preceding note (3).

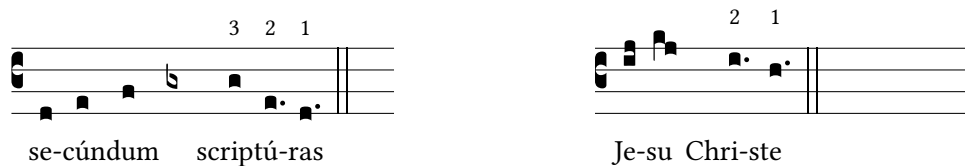


Figure 180

For cadences at the phrase level, one may double; at the member level, there is more liberty. One should always have recourse to the musical context in order to decide.

Type 3: Ascending Spondaic Cadences

459—These are very rare in the true Gregorian chant. It is useless to enter into details. Here are a few:



The figure displays three musical staves, each representing a different ascending spondaic cadence. Each staff begins with a C-clef on the first line. The notes are represented by square black symbols. Above each staff, a plus sign (+) indicates the end of the phrase. The lyrics are written below the staves: 'Grá-ti- as á-gimus ti-bi', 'in unum De- um', and 'E u o u a e'. The first staff shows a sequence of notes that rises to a final note on the second line. The second staff shows a similar pattern, rising to a final note on the second line. The third staff shows a sequence of notes that rises to a final note on the second line.

Figure 181

It is necessary to study each case in particular.

460—The codification of these rules cannot, moreover, be too broad. I should also say that the performance of musical pieces can modify, in practice, one or another of these rules. But in a general way, they will help to illuminate the rhythmic decisions taken in the following study.