

LAMENTATIONS FROM THE LOW COUNTRIES

LAMENTATIONS

from the Low Countries

A performance edition of Lamentation tones as notated
in five chant manuscripts from the Low Countries

Edited by Rens Tienstra



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I. Introduction

At various times and places, elaborate musical formulas ('tones') have been used for sung lessons on solemn liturgical occasions. The best-known are the tones used for the lessons of the first nocturn of the Night Office during the *Triduum Sacrum*. The first three lessons of each Night Office were taken from the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Some elaborate examples of Lamentation tones are known from Spanish sources, such as those from Silos, Toledo and León.

The current edition offers Lamentations as notated in five sources from the Low Countries. At present these are the only manuscripts from the region known to contain fully notated Lamentations. Although their number is small, each can be considered illustrative of a particular liturgical practice in the region.

The aim of this edition is to make the notations available to and performable by a wider audience. An edition is required for the following reasons: not all sources are digitally available, some sources have been badly damaged, modern-day singers are not accustomed or able to read the handwriting, abbreviations and musical notation of bygone ages, and *all* sources contain textual and musical errors (some only obvious on close examination). Combining these notations in one publication also provides an opportunity for comparison of Lamentation tones, allowing insight in this particular aspect of the cantor's practice. In total, the edition comprises 197 chants: 157 settings of verses, 37 settings of the recurrent 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem...' and 3 settings of titles ('Incipit Lamentatio...'), covering the entire text of the Book of Lamentations.

The oldest manuscript included is from the chapter church of St. Mary's in Utrecht, one the region's most influential churches. Next, a cantor's book known as the 'Oegstgeest Chantbook' offers an example from parish church use, with a manuscript produced at a nearby *Devotio Moderna* community. A manuscript from the Knights Hospitaller of Haarlem gives an example of an imported tradition: a prestigious knightly order with political and liturgical origins outside the Utrecht diocese. To these are added two sources from unknown locations within the region, each featuring extensive collections of Lamentation tones.

Surprisingly, only two tones are found in two manuscripts (one of which is the common mode-VI tone), which suggests that the composition of Lamentation tones was a 'local' phenomenon. The selection and grouping of verses also differ in each manuscript, pointing to different liturgical practices.

It is hoped that this edition will contribute to a deeper understanding and wider performance of the rich musical heritage of the Low Countries.

Rens Tienstra

II. Sources

Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht Hs. 419 (Hs 5 B 9)

Containing the offices for *Dedicatio Ecclesiae* and the *Triduum Sacrum*. The University Library's website dates the manuscript between 1400-1500; chant scholar Ike de Loos (website *Chant behind the Dikes*) dates it to 'late 13th century or ca 1300'. The manuscript belonged to the Mariakerk, Utrecht, and uses hufnagel notation on staves in black/brown ink. Its melodic variation ('East-Frankish chant dialect') is similar to other surviving sources from the same church.

The Lamentations in the manuscript's main text are provided with some staffless neumes above the Hebrew letters and the first and final syllables of each verse (see image); these are the inflections of the 'simple' mode-VI tone which is found in manuscripts throughout Europe, and of which NL-Uc BMH 25 contains an example. At an unknown date, different and more melismatic Lamentation tones have been added in the upper and lower margins of the manuscript, including some verses not included in the main text. Later the entire manuscript was recut, damaging the outer parts of the additions. The current publication offers a critical performance edition of the added Lamentations, including 'restitutions' of the damaged parts based on the tones' melodic models.

The manuscript is currently kept in Utrecht University Library; it has been digitised and can be freely downloaded from the University Library's online repository.

GB-Ob MS. Lat. liturg. d. 1

A Venitare (or Invitatoriale) and Kyriale from the late 14th century, of the Utrecht use (based on the litany in the Easter Vigil). A troped *Benedicamus* addressed to St. Lawrence on f. 84 suggests a church dedicated to that saint; the book is suggested to have belonged to St. Lawrence's in Rotterdam, but it could just as likely have belonged to another St. Lawrence's in the region, such as Alkmaar and Heemskerk. The book contains the tones of the *Venite*, Lamentations, two-part Credo, Sanctus and Agnus (two of each), and chants for the blessing of the font on Holy Saturday. It uses hufnagel notation; in the polyphonic chants this notation is intermingled with mensural elements. Its 'East-Frankish chant dialect' and notation style place its use within the northern Low Countries. The scribe's use of virga and punctum appears somewhat careless, varying between lines. Towards the end of the Lamentations, some apparent errors occur regarding the formulas used.

The manuscript is currently kept at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, England. It has been digitised and may be viewed on request.

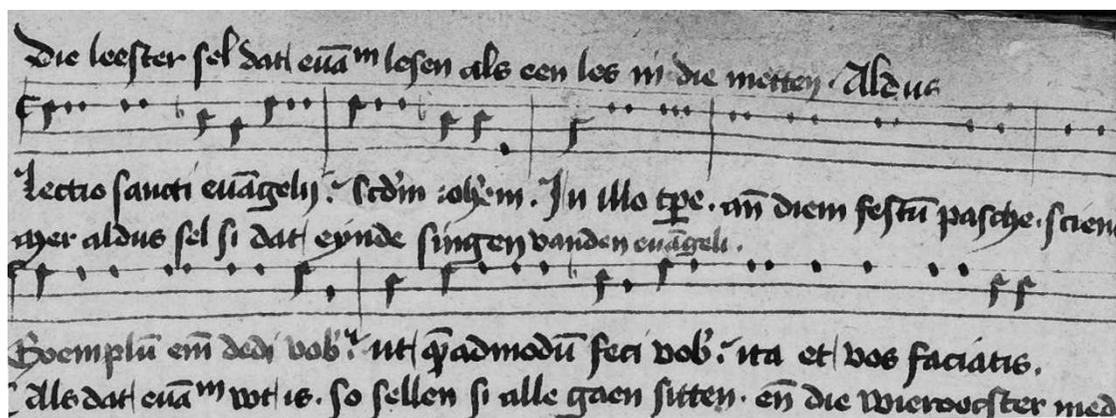
L-Lu BPL 2777

Cantoreale, 1562, ordered by the church masters of Oegstgeest parish church and written by 'frater Adrianus', chaplain of Marienpoel near Leiden; other chant manuscripts in his hand are also known. The book features an 'East-Frankish chant dialect' in hufnagel notation, which is intermingled with mensural elements in the polyphonic Christmas songs. It was meant for use

by a soloist, since it contains mainly soloist parts of the chants. It also includes the Guidonian Hand, an extensive tonarium and some rubrics on performance practice with children, suggesting a didactic function.

The manuscript is currently kept in Leiden University Library; it has not been digitised. The book is the subject of the publication *Het oudste boek van Oegstgeest - Een laatmiddeleeuws gregoriaans zangboek* (2017) by Freek Lugt and Rens Tienstra, published by Vereniging Oud Oegstgeest, Oegstgeest.

Uniquely, the common tone for lessons during the Night Office is known from another manuscript from Marienpoel, kept in the Leiden city archive as 'ELO toegang 0503 inv.nr. 882' (other reference: 'NL-L Kloosterarchieven 882'). The manuscript contains liturgical prescriptions on where and how to stand, to bow, to kneel, how to perform processions, etc. On the last page, it reads: *De leester sel dat evangelium lesen als een les in die metten. Aldus;* that is, 'The reader will read the Gospel as a lesson in Matins, like this:'.



NL-Hs 184 C 4

Antiphonarium (the flyleaf says 'Chorale sive antiphonarium'), 16th century, secular cursus. Most probably used by the Commanderij Jan Baptist of the Knights Hospitaller in Haarlem, based on the liturgical ordering and the chants' melodic variation. It uses hufnagel notation on ink staves. Its noteworthy 'West-Frankish chant dialect' – in a region where 'East-Frankish' inflections were common – can be found in nearly all sources of this community. The Lamentations include some erroneous Hebrew letters, for which no explanation could be found.

The manuscript is currently kept in the Noord-Hollands Archief, Haarlem. It has been digitised and may be viewed on request.

NL-Uc BMH 25

Antiphonarium, secular cursus, late 16th century; hufnagel notation on ink staves; 'West-Frankish chant dialect', suggesting an origin in the Southern Low Countries; note the spelling in comparison to the other sources. Though containing chants for the entire liturgical year, *Benedicamus* tropes, prosulae, fully notated hymns and the most extensive collection of

Lamentations, it provides no hints of its origins or use besides suffrages for Mary, SS. Peter & Paul and St. Bavo. No specific 'local' saints are included in addition to the full set of Roman saints and feasts, and no patrons are mentioned. The mention of Bavo and two rubrics in Dutch (f. 127v) place the manuscript within Low Countries use.

It is the only source including punctuation in the main text. Moreover, its precise alternation of *virga* and *punctum* suggests a rhythmic performance style.

Interestingly, the final melisma of each concluding verse 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem...' is marked 'pneuma', a word associated with the didactic model antiphons used to learn the clichés of each mode, and rare (if not unique) in manuscripts from the region. The manuscript provides no further hints regarding this marking, but since it is placed under the smallest of melismata – a mere *climacus* followed by a *torculus* – it suggests the performance of a larger melisma at that point, known to or improvised by the cantor. (The small formula is somewhat similar to the ending known from the model antiphon *Sexta hora sedet super puteum* known from other manuscripts.) Note the slight change in the notes of the 'pneuma' towards the end of the collection.

The manuscript is currently kept at Museum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht; the manuscript or the current author's photographs may be viewed on request.

^{Ps. 124}
 uic pronūciato
 mirabilia tua. ^{r usqz}
 infenectam ^r senium: dē
 ne delinquas me. **D**onec
 annūciem brachiū tuū:
 generationi omni que uē
 tura est. **P**otentiam tuā
^r iusticiam tuā deus usqz
 in altissima que fecisti
 magnalia: deus qd simi
 lis tibi. **Q**uātas osten
 disti mi tribulationes ml
 tas ^r malas ^r conuissus in
 iustificasti me: ^r de abyssis
 tie iterum reduxisti me.
Multiplicasti magnificen
 tiam tuam: ^r conuissus cō
 solatus es me. **N**am et
 ego cōfitebor tibi in uas
 psalmi ueritatem tuam
 deus: psallam tibi in cy
 thara sanctus isrl. **S**cul
 tabunt labia mea dū
 cantauero tibi: ^r animā
 meam quā uideristi: ^r
^r lingua mea tota die me

dubitatur iusticiam tuā:
 cū iusti reuerenti fuerint
 qui quevunt mala michi.
Deus meus eripit me de ma
 nu peccatoris. **H**omo pius
 in quo speram. **A**mpl. ad me. **S**up.
Quōmodo fecerit lo. **A**le
 la ciuitas plera pld:
 facta est quasi uidua to
 mina gentium: princeps
 pugnar facta est subar
 bito. **B**eth. **P**lorans plora
 uit in nocte: ^r lacrimae eius
 in maxillis eius: n̄ est qui
 consoletur eam ex omnib.
 caris eius: om̄nes amicae
 spreuerunt eam. ^r facti s̄
 ei inimici. **S**
 e inores populi cōsolūm
 fecerunt ut ihesum dolo te
 nerent ^r oeci de uent cū gla

^{Ps. 124}
 et nō r̄ qui cōsoler̄ ea ex oibz caris eius
 n̄ est qui cōsoler̄ ea ex oibz caris eius
 n̄ est qui cōsoler̄ ea ex oibz caris eius

et semper et in secula seculi
lorum Amen. In cena dñi. ^{ca} 1. p.
Aleph. non enim Quomo
do sedet sola ciuitas plena popu
lo facta est quasi vidua do
mina gentium principes prouinci
arum facta est sub tributo.
Beth. plorans