

# Conflicting Assignments of Office Antiphons between Modes 3 and 8

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**Abstract:** The conflicting assignments between modes 3 and 8 are found not only among sources, but also within a single source through erasures and revisions in different hands. Here the modal assignments of office antiphons are examined through a comparison of the sources of the monasteries in the region of Lake Constance. They are from the monasteries of Einsiedeln, St. Gallen, Rheinau, Weingarten, and Zwiefalten. For a singer, the most important matter in singing antiphons was not to end the melody on a specific note, but to select a suitable reciting tone. At a time in which musicians classified antiphons into several “differentia” groups, what characterizes each differentia group is surely the melodic incipit and the psalm tone. But over the course of time, medieval musicians became to consider the concept of mode, that is, the classification by the final note and range, and at that time the ending of the antiphon gained in importance. This change of thinking gave rise to the modal conflicting assignments.

**Keywords:** office antiphons, psalm tones, modes 3 and 8

It is well known that Western chant modal assignments are not necessarily consistent among medieval sources, and that there are several patterns in these conflicting modal assignments. For example, in the case of office antiphons, there are conflicts between authentic mode and plagal mode, conflicts between modes 5 and 7, modes 6 and 8, modes 1 and 7, and modal conflicts of the antiphons of theme 29 in the categorization of Gevaert. In this paper the subject is conflicting assignments between modes 3 and 8. This type of conflict is found not only among sources, but also within a single source through erasures and revisions in different hands.

Here the modal assignments of office antiphons are examined through a comparison of the sources of the monasteries in the region of Lake Constance. They are from the monasteries of Einsiedeln, St. Gallen, Rheinau, Weingarten, and Zwiefalten.

*List of the sources*

1. Einsiedeln Stiftsbibliothek Codex 83  
A breviary with chironomic neumes of St. Gallen type compiled at Einsiedeln around 1100.
2. Einsiedeln Stiftsbibliothek Codex 611  
An antiphoner in square notation on a black four-line staff, compiled at Einsiedeln before 1314.
3. Einsiedeln Stiftsbibliothek Codices 610/612  
An antiphoner of two volumes, compiled at Einsiedeln before 1314.
4. Karlsruhe Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. Perg. LX  
An antiphoner originally written at Zwiefalten in the twelfth century with German neumes on a four-line staff; after erasures of almost all parts, it was rewritten with a German-Lotharingian chant notation on four black lines.
5. St. Gallen Stiftsbibliothek Codex 388  
An antiphoner with St. Gallen neumes, compiled at St. Gallen, dated as the twelfth century in the guidance of this library.
6. St. Gallen Stiftsbibliothek Codices 390/391 (The Hartker antiphoner)  
The Hartker antiphoner in two volumes with St. Gallen neumes by Hartker (d. 1011) and the Hartker tonary.
7. St. Gallen Stiftsbibliothek Codex 541  
The Sicher antiphoner in German Gothic notation in diamond shape on a four-line staff written by Fridolin Sicher in 1544.
8. Stuttgart Württembergische Landesbibliothek HB I 55  
A breviary and tonary of twelfth century with German neumes from the Weingarten monastery.
9. Stuttgart Württembergische Landesbibliothek HB XVII 13  
An antiphoner of 1400 from the Zwiefalten monastery written with the German Gothic notes in diamond shape on a five-line staff.
10. Stuttgart Württembergische Landesbibliothek HB XVII 14  
An antiphoner of the fourteenth century from the monastery of Zwiefalten written in square notation on a four-line staff.
11. Zürich Zentralbibliothek Rh 28  
A breviary of Rheinau from the thirteenth century with German chironomic neumes.

The repertoire of the comparison is limited to the liturgical season of Lent and Eastertide, therefore, from Ash Wednesday to Pentecost.

What should be noted here is that the point of departure of this study is medieval practice. Many theorists of the Middle Ages argue modal problems, taking antiphons as examples. However, a central concern of this study lies in the meaning and importance of modal theory in practice; thus the departure of this study is circumstances that can be observed in liturgical books for practical use.

In the sources from Rheinau, Weingarten, and Zwiefalten, the antiphons involved in this type of conflict are all assigned to the eighth mode. These are rather recent sources, none earlier than the twelfth century, and they come

from monasteries that had been affected by the Hirsau reform, which was an expression of the Cluniac monastic movement in the Germanic area. In the earlier sources, from the monasteries of Einsiedeln and St. Gallen: – specifically Einsiedeln 83, the Hartker antiphoner and St. Gallen 388 – the antiphons in question are assigned to the third mode. Neither monastery was affected by the Hirsau reform. In later sources from these monasteries, however, most of these antiphons are in mode 8.

In a comparison of Einsiedeln 83 and Einsiedeln 611, for examples, five antiphons are found with conflicting assignments of the third mode in the older source and eighth mode in the newer source. These can be seen in the *Example 1*: the first five antiphons.

In addition to these antiphons, in Einsiedeln 611, there are two antiphons that show revisions that have changed modal assignments between modes 3 and 8. “Et respicientes viderunt” of Easter Sunday has its final on G and has a saeculorum amen formula of the eighth mode. In the manuscript itself, we can see the evidence of an erasure in both the ending of this antiphon and the saeculorum amen formula. These revisions are written in a hand is called here as that is clearly different from the main one. The work of the main hand is called here as that of the first scribe, and that of the one who rewrote as the second scribe. The erased melody written by the first scribe appears to have been in the third mode; therefore, the second scribe was not content with the third-mode singing of this antiphon and changed it to the eighth mode. In the manuscript the revision can be seen in the closing melody: from <E FGa FG G> to <E FGa aGG>, and in the saeculorum amen formula: from <c c ca a b a> to <c cb c a G>. In the case of “Si diligitis me” of Pentecost, it is the second scribe who wrote the eight last notes of the antiphon and the saeculorum amen formula, which are in the third mode. Although the erased melody is not clear for this antiphon, we can see evidence that an eighth-mode melody was erased in the saeculorum amen formula. In the case of “Si diligitis me” the second scribe made a change opposite to the one he made for “Et respicientes.”

It appears that the first scribe and the second scribe of Einsiedeln 611 are contemporary. This manuscript is said to have been compiled under the direction of Abbot Johannes I of Schwanden, most probably before 1314, together with two other antiphoners: Codices 610/612 (610/612 consist of one antiphoner), and Codex 613, as well as a processional, Codex 631,<sup>1</sup> presumably by the same scribe. Throughout Codex 611, the second scribe made many revisions. And the melodies and modes in Codices 610/612 are actually the same as those revised in the hand of the second scribe of Codex 611. Therefore, it is

<sup>1</sup> Odo Lang, *Mittelalterliche Handschriften der Beitrag des 14. Jahrhunderts*. Einsiedeln, 1992, 34–38.

CAO	Text Incipit	Liturgical Occasion	Eins. 83	Eins. 61	HartkerA	HartkerT	S.G. 388	Sicher	Weing.	Rheinau	Karls.	Zwief. 13	Zwief. 14
2588	Ego sum alpha et omega primus	Dom. Resurrectionis	i	8G1	yb	yb	yb	8	ω	?	7	8	8
3686	Malos male perdet et vineam	Fer. 6, 2 Quad.	ik	8G1	ω	ig	ig	8	ω	ω	ω	8	×
3873	Nemo te condemnavit mulier	Dom. 4 Quad.	i	8G1	?	i	i	8	ω	ω	8	8	8
4223	Pastor bonus animam suam	Dom. 2 Pascha	i	8G1	i	i	i	8	H	ie?	8	8	8
5227	Tuam crucem adoramus domine	Inventio S. Crucis	i	8G1	ω	i	i	8	ω	ω	8	8	8
2596	Ego sum pastor bonus alleluia	Dom. 2 Pascha	ig	6TF1	ω	ig	ib	8	H	ωd	8	8	8
2718	Ei respicientes viderunt	Dom. Resurrectionis	ω	8G1 (3)	ω	i	i	8	ω	ω	8	8	8
4886	Si diligitis me mandata mea	Fer. 5 Pent.	?	3A1(8?)	ω	i	i	8	ω	ω	ω	×	8
3435	Iste sanctus pro lege dei sui	De Sanctis, T.P.	yc	3A1	ω	×	yb	8	?	ω	8	×	8
3828	Multa quidem et alia signa	Octava paschae	i	6F1	i	i	i	6T	H	ω	8	8	6
3874	Nemo tollit a me animam meam	Fer. 3 Maj.	i	3A1	i	i	i	8	ω	ω	ω	×	8

? differentia or closing melody is not (clearly) legible or not written    × the antiphon is not included    ( ) differentia or closing melody that is erased  
T transposition    bold revision

Example 1: Antiphons involved in the conflicting assignments of modes 3 and 8 (and also 6)

most likely that after the first scribe completed writing Codex 611, the second scribe, seemingly a director of a scriptorium, or armarius/cantor, corrected it. And then the first scribe made a fair copy of it as Codices 610/612. So, in this case, the corrections were done within a short time.

At first glance, Hartker seems to favor eighth-mode assignments for these antiphons. In a study of the manuscript of Hartker's antiphoner, one notices erasure spots where letters have been scraped away with a shaving knife in the margin of the pages for the antiphons in question. The tonary letters indicating the eighth mode, omega, which we can see today, are written in darker ink either over or next to the erasures. The handwriting of these letters seems to be different from that of Hartker. We know the mode to which Hartker himself assigned these antiphons, from the tonary attached to this antiphoner, which is written in the same hand as that of the main part of the antiphoner, therefore, by Hartker. The antiphons showing this kind of revision are in the Example 1. Besides the five antiphons discussed earlier from Einsiedeln, here we also find "Ego sum pastor bonus alleluia" of the second Sunday of Easter as another example of the conflicting assignment of modes 3 and 8. In the case of "Iste sanctus pro lege dei sui", there is clear evidence of erasure and rewriting of omega, but this antiphon is not included in the Hartker tonary and is assigned to the seventh mode in another antiphoner of St. Gallen, Codex 388, which is said to be a copy of the Hartker antiphoner.<sup>2</sup> This antiphon is also in mode 7 in Einsiedeln 83. The tonary letter for "Nemo te condemnavit" is not known because of the loss of parchment from the antiphoner, even though this antiphon is classified to the third mode in the Hartker tonary.

These antiphons, except for "Iste sanctus" are in mode 3 in St. Gallen, but are in mode 8 in another antiphoner of St. Gallen compiled by Fridolin Sicher in 1544, Codex 541. Hence it seems appropriate to infer that the corrections in the Hartker antiphoner were made before 1544. Comparing these three antiphoners from the St. Gallen monastery locates another case of antiphon with this type of modal conflict, that is "Nemo tollet a me animam meam" of Tuesday of Major week.

With this observation, it is possible to say in general that the scribes of the older sources of these two monasteries, Einsiedeln and St. Gallen, assigned these antiphons to the third mode, and those of newer sources assigned them to the eighth mode. In the sources of the Hirsau monasteries: Rheinau, Weingarten, and Zwiefalten, these antiphons are in mode 8. Since these sources from the Hirsau group are all later than the twelfth century, the eighth mode assign-

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Steiner, "Hartker's Antiphoner and the Oral Tradition of Chant at St. Gall", in *Sangallensia in Washington: The Art and Letters in Medieval and Baroque St. Gall Viewed from the Late Twenties Century*, ed. James C. King. New York: Peter Lang, 1993, 206–208.

ments in these sources confirm the generalization. In addition, when searching CANTUS database too concerning some of these antiphons in question, it can be said in general that these antiphons are in mode 3 in older and especially Western sources, and in mode 8 in newer and Eastern sources.

Now it is appropriate to consider the reasons underlying the classification of these antiphons in different modes: 3 and 8. Here we also have to pay attention to the fact, as is observed in the Example 1, that some antiphons are assigned to the sixth mode in some sources. Therefore these antiphons are involved in the conflicting assignment of three modes.

The theoretical principle of early medieval antiphonal singing, – that the crucial criterion in the selection of the psalm tone is the characteristic shape of the melodic incipit of the antiphon. For example, Aurelian of Réôme and Regino of Prüm considered these antiphons to be in the third mode although both of musicians admit that these antiphons end in the eighth or the sixth mode.<sup>3</sup> They seem to have admitted the so-called polymodality of antiphons in their incipits and endings. However the opinions of medieval musicians on the modal decision seem to have been changed over the course of time, and they came to judge mode by final note. Some musicians as Berno do not admit the inconsistency of the mode of opening and that of ending of an antiphon any more.<sup>4</sup>

In the musical *Examples* 2–3, there are parallel transcriptions of “Nemo tollet a me”, and “Si diligitis me” in some of the sources.

The melodic contour of both incipits is composed of the tetrachord from <G> to <c>, including some variants from source to source though. Not only the similarity of the incipit of these two antiphons, but also the resemblance in the melodic incipits of all antiphons in question here is noteworthy. According to Eins. 611, “Nemo tollet a me” with <G ac c>, and “Si diligitis me” with <G G ac>. These melodic incipits are actually found in both modes 3 and 8, that is, theme 36 of the third mode and theme 17 of the eighth mode in Gevaert’s taxonomy,<sup>5</sup> III-c or III-d and VIII-e or VIII-f of Walter Frere’s categorization,<sup>6</sup> group 2, 3, 4, 6 of mode 3 and group 1 of mode 8 in Paul Merkley,<sup>7</sup> and mode 3-A and

<sup>3</sup> Aurelianus Reomensis, “Musica disciplina” in *Aureliani Reomensis Musica disciplina*, ed. Lawrence Gushee (Corpus scriptorum de musica, 21), 95; Regino Prumiensis “De harmonica institutione” in Edna Marie Le Roux, RSM, “The De harmonica and Tonarius of Regino of Pruem” (Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1965), 22–84.

<sup>4</sup> Bern Augiensis “Prologus in tonarium” in: Alexander Rausch, *Die Musiktraktate des Abtes Bern von Reichenau: Edition und Interpretation*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1999, 51–54.

<sup>5</sup> François Auguste Gevaert, *La mélodie antique dans le chant de l’Église latine*. Gand: Librairie Générale de Ad. Hoste, reprint, Osnabrück: Otto Zeller, 1967, 353–359, 282–289.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Howard Frere, ed., *Antiphonale Sarisburiense*. London: Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society, 1901–24, reprint Farnborough, Hants.: Gregg Press, 1966, vol. 1, 69, 70, 73, 74.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Merkley, *Modal Assignment in Northern Tonaries*. Ottawa: The Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1992, 255–264, 324–336.

**Einsiedeln 83**  
46r i  
Nemo tollet a me animam meam sed ego pono eam et iterum sumo eam

**Hartker**  
177 i  
Hartker Tonary  
SG 388

**Weingarten**  
72v ω  
// . // .

**Rheinau**  
516 ω  
// // //

**Einsiedeln 611**  
79v 3A1  
SG 541  
126r 8  
Nemo tollet a me animam meam sed ego pono eam et ite-rum su-mo e-am e v o v a e

**Karlsruhe**  
86v ω

**Zwiefalten 14**  
128r 8

**Psalmody**  
mode 3  
mode 8  
Antiphon

Example 2: CAO 3874 Nemo tollet a me animam meam (Fer. 3, Maj.)







mode 8-C6 in László Dobszay's edition of antiphons in the series *Monumenta Monodica*.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the melodic incipits of the antiphons in question here seem to be related somewhat to both modes. Taking the resemblance of these incipits into account, we can easily imagine medieval musicians confusing or changing the assignments of these antiphons between modes 3 and 8, especially because each antiphon was performed only once a year.

In addition to the similarity of the melodic incipits, it is important to note that the reciting tone of third-mode psalmody and that of the eighth mode are the same. Indeed, the reciting tone of the third mode is said to have been <b-natural> before the early twelfth century, and the possibility of <b-natural> for the eighth mode also cannot be denied, even though the evidence of <b-natural> for the latter mode is oblique. In any case, however, over the course of time, the reciting tones of both modes became the same, <c>.

When comparing the third-mode singing of "Nemo tollet a me" and the eighth-mode singing of the same antiphon, one can see where the differences between these two versions lie. First of all, from a comparison of the non-heighted neumatic sources, we cannot see any difference between modes 3 and 8. A comparison of Eins. 611 and Sicher/Karlsruhe indicates the difference that affects this conflicting assignment between modes 3 and 8: it is the only last several notes. In addition, the reciting tone is the same, <c>, as was mentioned before. Therefore, including the psalmody, the only differences between the two ways of singing this antiphon, either in the third mode or in the eighth mode, lie in the five last notes of the antiphon and the saeculorum amen formula of its psalmody.

One wonders if a singer regarded this difference as crucial in practice. For a singer, the most important matter in singing antiphons was not to end the melody on a specific note, but to select a suitable reciting tone. At a time in which musicians classified antiphons into several "differentia" groups, what characterizes each differentia group is surely the melodic incipit and the psalm tone. Regino classified most of the antiphons in question in a single differentia, because the incipits and therefore, the psalm tones are the same. Although this musician was aware of the eighth-mode ending of some of these antiphons, the difference of closing does not seem to have affected in his classification. But over the course of time, medieval musicians became to consider the concept of mode, that is, the classification by the final note and range, and at that time the ending of the antiphon gained in importance, as Berno explains. And then this change of thinking gave rise to the modal conflicting assignments.

<sup>8</sup> *Monumenta monodica medii aevii, Band V: Antiphonen*, edited by László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1999, vol. 2, 341–464, vol. 3, 1113–1122.