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VALAAM AND THE SINGING TRADITION OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH IN PARIS¹

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INTRODUCTION

The topic of the formation and transmission of traditions is one of the most interesting and, at the same time, one of the least studied topics of musicology. The aim of this article is to make a small contribution to this vast topic by clarifying the ways in which the singing tradition of the renowned spiritual centre of the Russian Orthodox “Abroad”, the parish of St Sergius in Paris, was formed.² It will in particular seek to attend to the gap between the musical manuals commonly used in the diaspora during the twentieth century and the discrete traditions these manuals relate to, thus shedding new light on which specific elements of the great Russian Orthodox musical tradition were safeguarded and spread to Paris and elsewhere following the Revolution of 1917. To achieve this goal, the article will start by looking into the genesis of the parish’s musical tradition at the hands of Vladyka Benjamin (Fedchenkov) and M. M. Osorgin. It will then consider from where this musical tradition takes its roots, and through which musical books it arrived in Paris. Trying to understand the tradition of the Valaam Obikhod, the article will review the history of music at Valaam through a comparison of primary sources and historically contemporary analyses.

1 The authors thank The Finzi Trust for its grant which allowed us to consult the Alfred Swan Archives at the University of Virginia Library.

2 More information about this can be found in the following book: *Свято-Сергиевские подворье в Париже. К 75-летию со дня основания* (Санкт-Петербург: Алтейя, 1999).

It will then look into the key figures of A. Swan and M. M. Osorgin and their role in the study and preservation of ancient Russian practices in the diaspora. The article concludes by reviewing the contemporary practices of the Parisian church.

The authors make use of a mixture of primary and secondary materials, including published contemporary reports from the early nineteenth to the mid twentieth centuries, never-before published extracts from the archives of Alfred Swan, other archival materials such as periodicals and sheet music but also doctoral theses, academic publications, and conference papers. Materials from recent interviews conducted by the authors are also included in the article.

THE GENESIS OF THE MUSICAL TRADITION OF THE PARISH OF ST SERGIUS IN PARIS

The Parisian church, which at its foundation was conceived as a spiritual embassy (metochion - подворье) of the Holy Trinity St Sergius Lavra near Moscow, was founded in 1924 by refugees from Russia. The origins of the church lie with the well-known Russian bishop Eulogius (Georgiyevsky) (1868-1946). It is necessary to underline immediately that the opinion of the spiritual leadership, be it the local bishop or abbot, in relation to church singing has been since the early days of the Church, if not decisive, then very weighty. Therefore, in this paper we will have to mention more than once the names of famous spiritual leaders who, in one way or another, influenced the church singing tradition. Vladyka Eulogius's personal views on church singing have not come down to us today. It is, however, beyond doubt that he was acutely aware of the main issues it encountered at the time, as he headed the Department on Divine Services and Preaching at the 1917–18 Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. The duties of his department included the preparation of decrees on church singing and church art. However, in founding the parish in Paris and organizing the activities of the Theological Institute of the same name, Vladyka Eulogius preferred to entrust church singing to specialists. One of the recipients of the archbishop's trust was Bishop Benjamin (Fedchenkov) (1880-1961), who arrived in Paris in the summer of 1925 from the Yugoslav Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes at the invitation of Eulogius.

Vladyka Benjamin had extensive teaching experience in theological educational institutions, including the St Petersburg Theological Academy. He was entrusted with the duties of inspector and teacher at the newly established Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris, which was set up at St Sergius. As A. K. Svetozarsky writes, "he was entrusted with the so-called 'practical' disciplines, namely liturgics, pastoral practice, i.e., canon law and moral theology. He also became the head of church singing together with M. M. Osorgin"³. In 1926, Vladyka Benjamin left Paris, returning

³ Алексей Константинович Светозарский, "Митрополит Вениамин (Федченков) (1880–1961)," in *Преподобный Сергей в Париже. История парижского Свято-Сергиевского православного богословского института* (СПб.: Росток, 2010), 204.

only for a short time in 1930 to teach at St Sergius Theological Institute. It would be accurate to say his work there was short-lived, but very fruitful, as it helped to establish a tradition in the church of St Sergius which lives on to this day, including a specific tradition of church singing.

The care for church singing entrusted to Benjamin was no accident: having a musical gift, the future bishop, while still a student in Kirsanov, in the Tambov province, sang in the church choir of the Assumption Cathedral. Later when studying at the Tambov Theological Seminary, he directed its choir not without pride, recalling later that as a choir director he was in good standing with the ruling bishop.⁴ As for the ideals of church singing which Vladyka Benjamin and Mikhail Mikhailovich Osorgin (1887–1950) tried to implement in St Sergius in the 1920s, those might have been shaped by the singing traditions of the Holy Trinity St Sergius Lavra and of the Valaam Monastery. Indeed, it is known that the services at St Sergius were in a characteristically monastic style, which attracted many believers to the services of the Parisian parish.⁵

Vladyka Benjamin visited Valaam on pilgrimage in 1905 and left us vivid memories of his journey to Karelia. In one entry, having joined the monastery's kliros for an all-night vigil, he wrote,

I was immediately fascinated by the singing of the choir – no, “fascinated” is not strong enough a word – I was in a kind of intensely reverent exaltation from it. In essence, Valaam melodies are Great Znamenny chant with a Northern Russian touch. But since it has been sung here for centuries, the monks have adopted it as their own, and the old monks love “their” singing to the point of jealousy. Sometimes, it so happens that on the right or left kliros, the choir sings something in a secular, “worldly way,” – which is what ‘Valaamians’ call the different Bakhmetevs, Lvovs, Arkhangel'skys, etc. The elders immediately revolt with an audible displeased murmur, and whatever was being sung is immediately removed from the repertoire. The current abbot, as I heard, banished all polyphonic original compositions, and ordered the choir to sing only in the Valaam style... Sometimes, the left and right choirs, about fifty people, converge in the middle of the church – all powerful voices, especially the basses – and they raise to the sky the animated, namely living, “solidified”, sound of simple, strict, and powerful chants! They do not observe any piano or forte here, but freely and boldly praise God. To this, one must add also the canonarch: he will first say the beginning of the verse, barely understandable, and then suddenly a mighty choir will pick up where he left, and the idea of the text is drawn as a picture before your eyes.⁶

4 <https://iknigi.net/avtor-rostislav-prosvetov/194956-zhizneopisanie-mitropolita-veniamina-fedchenkova-rostislav-prosvetov/read/page-2.html>

5 Unpublished manuscript by A. Kartashev on the Theological Institute, part IV, section “Teaching. Characteristics of teaching individual disciplines”, 150. Taken from: Александр Семенов-Тянь-Шанский, “Михаил Михайлович Осоргин (старший),” *Преподобный Сергей в Париже. История парижского Свято-Сергиевского православного богословского института* (СПб.: Росток, 2010), 496.

6 Митрополит Вениамин (Федченков), “На северный Афон,” *Записки студента-паломника на Валаам* (Москва, 2003), 112–113. Authors’ translation.

It is therefore possible that, having been inspired by the “Athos of the North”, Vladyka Benjamin wanted to hear not worldly but monastic singing in the Parisian church as well; not musical compositions by authors of recent centuries, but prayer embodied in the concentrated and earnest singing of ancient chants. Perhaps, he dreamed that in addition to simplicity and severity, his choir’s singing in Paris would also have this “powerful peculiar beauty that captivates the soul,” and which led into religious delight all those who, in times of old, heard the singing of Valaam.

Similar views were apparently shared by the pious layman Mikhail Osorgin, who from the mid-1920s to the end of the 1940s was the psalmist (псаломщик – *psalomshchik*) at the St Sergius parish church and directed its choir, where the Institute’s students also sang, thus preparing musically the future pastors of the Orthodox Church for their ministry. At the Institute, his primary duty for almost a quarter of a century was the teaching of the *Typikon* (церковный устав – *ustav*). In the mid-1930s, through his efforts, a course for psalmists was established in Paris at the dormitory of the “Action orthodoxe” (Православное Дѣло), St Maria Skobtsova’s ‘social-missionary association’ where M. M. Osorgin also taught.⁷ A Russian aristocrat and a state councillor, Osorgin was by no means a regent by profession, in the sense of a professional precentor/choir director. Before the revolution, he had never conducted large choirs or performed in concerts, having only some limited experience managing singers in the church of the Osorgin estate in the Kaluga region. However, Mikhail Mikhailovich was a born church musician with impeccable instinct, and he studied with dedication the art of canonarchs and psalmists.⁸

WHERE THE MUSICAL TRADITION OF ST SERGIUS FINDS ITS ROOTS

The Great Prokeimenon “Let my prayer arise” is a so-called Greek chant that can be found in both the “Valaam Obikhod” of 1909 (page 126)⁹ and the “Psalmist’s Companion” of 1916 (page 330)¹⁰ in this exact arrangement. A vinyl recording of M. M. Osorgin singing this prokeimenon with the choir of St Sergius in 1948 attests to the use of this chant in Paris. On the other hand, the “O House of Ephratha” sung by Osorgin and his choir on the same vinyl is found only in the Valaam Obikhod (p. 33). We can also deduce that M. M. Osorgin sang the “O House of Ephratha” for the recording from the Valaam Obikhod and not from any other manual

7 Antoine Nivière, “Осоргины,” *Православная энциклопедия*, Т. 53 (Москва: Церковно-научный центр Православная энциклопедия, 2019), 437.

8 He mastered the art of church reading in the traditional Russian style – a recording can be found here of Ezekiel’s Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones: <https://youtu.be/Bo7k7JV5MYo>. He was also known to copy canonarchs in the traditional monastic style, as can be heard here in a recording from the chant “O House of Ephratha”: <https://youtu.be/YBOOraTbLvo>. There are only two recordings of Osorgin’s voice and the choir of the Theological Institute, which were made in 1948 by “Anthologie Sonore” and to which both of the above belong. In 1956 they were reissued on a single LP.

9 *Обиходъ одногласный церковно-богослужебнаго пѣнія по нѣтъву Валаамскаго монастыря* (Издание Валаамской обители, 1909), 126.

10 *Спутникъ псаломщика. Пѣснопѣнія годичнаго круга съ требоисправленіями*, издание 3-е (Санктъ-Петербургъ: Синодальная Типографія, 1916), 330.

for several reasons. We know for certain Osorgin had both abovementioned anthologies in his possession, yet the Companion offers no version of this particular hymn. The only other 'book of common chant' (i.e., *obikhod*) known to us that offers a set-up for this hymn based on a similar root chant is the *Obikhod* of the Solovetsky Monastery, but the differences are too stark for this version to have been used by Osorgin.¹¹ The audio recording of "O House of Ephratha" differs from the written music of the Valaam *Obikhod* only in one key way: Osorgin proclaims the verses before the choir sings them, in the style of canonarchs (канонарх), which is proper in a monastic setting, but a highly unusual phenomenon in a standard parochial environment.¹² This clearly sets St Sergius in Paris apart, showing its desire to cultivate a unique monastic style.

**ПОДОБЕНЪ: „ДОМЪ ЕВФРАТОВЪ.“
ИМѢЕТЪ ПЯТЬ КОЛѢНЪ.**

ДО-МЕ ЕВ-ФРА-ТОВЪ, ГРА - ДЕ СВА-ТЫИ
ПРО-РО-КОВЪ СЛА - ВА, ОУ - КРА - СИ ДОМЪ,
ВЪНЕМЪ ЖЕ БО - ЖЕ - СТВЕН - НЫИ РО - ЖДА - ЕТ - СЯ.

Illustration 1. "O House of Ephratha" – Podoben in five verses. Valaam *Obikhod* p. 33. 1909.

The Valaam *Obikhod* is a standard book of music, collated under the personal supervision of Hegumen Gabriel (1848-1910), head of the Valaam Monastery between 1891 and 1903.¹³ Its *raison d'être*, as written by the monks themselves in the book's foreword, is the preservation of the monastery's ancient singing tradition "which unwittingly leads one to prayer and moves one's heart"¹⁴. The reasons for the monks' remarkable efforts to safeguard

11 *Обиходъ нотнаго пѣнія по древнему растрѣву, употребляемому въ первоклассномъ ставропигіальномъ Соловецкомъ монастырѣ. Въ трехъ частяхъ* (Издание Соловецкаго монастыря, 1912), 64. We have exhaustively checked the "Synodal *Obikhod*" and several other widespread *obikhods* and have found no other mention of the hymn except in the Solovetsky *Obikhod*. Their version of the chant, ostensibly based on the same original chant, differs significantly from what Osorgin sang in 1948.

12 Indeed, it was common for monasteries to have a canonarch, whose responsibility it was to ensure that the correct verses were sung by the kliros, at a time when electric light did not exist and service books were hard to find. In today's practice, it is usually considered the canonarch no longer serves a practical purpose.

13 Наталья Юрьевна Плотникова, "Певческие традиции Валаамскаго монастыря," in *Валаамскій монастырь: духовные традиции, история, культура* (Санкт-Петербург: Сатисъ, Держава, 2004), 320.

14 *Обиходъ одноголосный Валаамскаго монастыря*, vii. The authors' translation.

their tradition appear to be essentially two in number. There was a widespread tendency for monasteries and communities to record their local singing traditions in an obikhod. More importantly for Valaam, their efforts to record their tradition seem to have been motivated by the fear of losing it, as well as an awareness that it was waning. Indeed, in this very foreword, the monks emphatically express this fear that their ancient traditions might get lost or be altered by the new generation – a fear that sadly proved to be well-founded. To sing all the necessary services by memory required many years of training and dedication; if the new generation lacked the former by definition, they might also have lacked motivation for the latter – although we cannot say for certain, the reason for the disappearance of the oral tradition in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century requires further research. The oft-quoted Dmitriy Solovyov, in his 1889 book, provides evidence of this withering of the tradition through his account of Fr Joel's confession to him.¹⁵ This is further supported by the evidence that certain "podoben" chants recorded in a manuscript from 1821 had fallen out of use by the time the Obikhod was gathered in the 1890s.¹⁶ The foreword further notes that the music was written down "directly from the voice" of the older monks.¹⁷

The main object of this article is not the analysis of singing tradition at Valaam. It is nonetheless essential that we clarify certain points and raise a few essential key questions before we can move on. Indeed, discussing the passing on of a tradition from Valaam to Paris and the US would be moot if we did not know what that tradition consisted of in the first place.

THE MUSICAL TRADITION OF THE VALAAM MONASTERY

First, we must discuss whether the melodies recorded in the Obikhod should be called "Valaam chant" or something else. The monks themselves, in the previously mentioned manuscript of 1821 would appear to have notated some of their own chants under the label "Book of common stolpovoy chants" (Обиход столпового пения), which would reflect a certain self-awareness of the fact that their chants were a local rendition of "Stolpovoy".¹⁸ In the foreword of the Obikhod, the monks write that their tradition is born of the "union of the Great and Small 'Znamenny' chants, and of others also".¹⁹ And Bishop Benjamin (Fedchenkov), quoted earlier, described the style as "'Great Znamenny' chant with a Northern Russian touch". There

15 Дмитрий Соловьевъ, *Церковное пѣніе въ Валаамской обители* (Санкт-Петербургъ: Изданіе Санкт-Петербургскаго Епархіальнаго Братства во имя Пресвятыя Богородицы, 1889), 26.

16 Jori Harri, "How were stikhera sung at Valaam?", *Journal of the International Society for Orthodox Church Music* 3 (2018): 154.

17 Плотникова, "Певческие традиции Валаамского монастыря," 319. Johann von Gardner also writes on the topic of monastic singing that it was an oral tradition, usually unrecorded, passed down from one generation of monks to the next. Иванъ Алексеевичъ Гарднеръ, *Богослужбное пѣніе Русской Православной Церкви*. Исторія (Jordanville, NY: Тѣпографіа преп. Іѡва Почаевскаго, 1982).

18 Hierodeacon Roman, "Архив библиотеки и собрание рукописей Валаамского монастыря как источники изучения валаамского богослужбного пения," in *Валаамский монастырь: духовные традиции, история, культура* (Saint-Petersburg: Сатисъ, Держава, 2004), 314. Authors' translation.

19 *Обиходъ одногласный Валаамскаго монастыря*, vii. Authors' translation.

is little doubt therefore that the tradition is essentially “Znamenny”, in the many forms that the Znamenny tradition might have. The chants contained in the Obikhod are, however, more than simply “Znamenny”. Natalya Plotnikova, analysing the traditions of the Obikhod, notes Valaam also borrows from “Greek, Kievan, Bulgarian and Put”²⁰ (путевой) chants, making the Obikhod fit into the *pan-Russian tradition* that combines many of these common chants.

Yet, we cannot escape the uniqueness of “Valaam chant”. In his “Description of the Valaam Monastery and the turmoil in it” (Описание Валаамскаго монастыря и смуть, бывшихъ въ немъ), St Ignatius (Bryachaninov) (1807-1867), writing in 1838, qualified the singing in the following way:

Their own singing, Valaam chant, is something of their own making, a distortion of Znamenny singing: it is heard in the southern communities of Russia under the name of “samodelshchina”²¹. Whoever should wish to hear this “samodelshchina” can do so in the sketes: there, the zealous upholders of the Valaam Rule [устав—in the sense of monastic rule] preserve this sacred creation in all its inviolability; they give a disgustingly high importance to it without any respect for set practices and rites.²²

The saint’s sarcasm and obvious dislike for Valaam chant aside, we note that whatever the monks sung on Valaam must indeed have been quite different from the general Russian tradition to warrant such strong feelings. It was clear that despite an adherence to wider practices, the style developed at Valaam was peculiar to them, and not only because of the way in which it was executed. Indeed, in this same report, St Ignatius also notes the great clash of two musical traditions in the monastery: on the one hand, the oral tradition sung by the ‘monks in the sketes’ which was a unique Znamenny-derived tradition proper to the monastery, and on the other the practice of singing mainstream “Znamenny printed church books”²³, which was being promoted by the hegumen at that time, Fr Benjamin. The tradition that made it into the Obikhod nearly a century later is, in all likelihood, that oral tradition of which St Ignatius wrote.

This then raises the question of where this tradition stems from, something St Ignatius can help us with again. In his “Archaeological description of antiquities found in 1853 in the monasteries of the St Petersburg diocese”, he tells us the monastery, despite having been founded over half a millennium ago, was only re-established in the early eighteenth century after a century of Swedish occupation. After being re-established, it burned down in 1754, and was finally rebuilt in stone at the end of that

20 Плотникова, “Певческие традиции Валаамскаго монастыря,” 320.

21 The word “самодельщина” is difficult to translate but can be interpreted in this context as meaning *amateurish* or *crude DIY music*.

22 Святитель Игнатий (Брянчанинов), “Описание Валаамскаго монастыря и смут, бывшихъ в немъ,” in *Полное собрание творений и писем: в 8 томах*, Том 3 (Москва: Паломник, 2014), Статья 4, 487.

23 *Ibid.*, 487. The printed books of Znamenny referred to by St Ignatius are in all likelihood the books of the Synodal Obikhod in nota quadrata, which after much advertisement and efforts by the Holy Synod, were gaining traction.

same century.²⁴ At that same time, in 1781, Metropolitan Gabriel of Novgorod sent Fr Nazarius (Kondratiev) to Valaam to renew the monastic life there.²⁵ Fr Nazarius was a *starets* from the Sarov Pustyn' monastery. It is thus only from the time of Hegumen Nazarius that we can consider the modern monastery of Valaam to be properly established, permanently inhabited, and thriving. It is a known fact that Fr Nazarius brought with him the Sarov Rule, known for its attachment to mediaeval tradition, austere singing of Znamenny chants during all offices, and strict following of the typikon. This will be discussed in more detail below. Whether he also brought with him the music from Sarov is a different question altogether. On the one hand, there is a perfectly reasonable argument saying he did. As A. V. Zagrebin contends, the complete destruction of the mediaeval wooden monastery by the Swedes in the seventeenth century and the fire of 1754 both make it highly implausible that Valaam had any proper tradition worth mentioning in the later eighteenth century. He therefore assumes that the tradition of Valaam must also have come from Sarov.²⁶

Yet, the Sarov thesis is not entirely satisfactory. Most of the chants from the Sarov manuscript did not actually make it into the Obikhod a century later, meaning that they might have been briefly introduced in the monastery, but that they did not get assimilated. This would therefore hint at the fact that there was already an extant musical tradition prior to Fr Nazarius's arrival, and that this tradition would have survived despite the dire conditions of the monastery in the eighteenth century.²⁷ If there was indeed an earlier, more ancient tradition that survived the attempts of the likes of Hegumen Benjamin in the 1830 to make it more regular – in the sense of conforming to the wider practices of the Russian Orthodox Church at that time – that would make the musical tradition of Valaam all the more noteworthy. Where then does this tradition come from, if not from Sarov, an otherwise natural candidate? Indeed, even if the Valaam tradition is not imported from Sarov, some elements of the Sarov practice made it into Valaam chant. It would therefore not be too far a stretch to consider some elements of Synodal practice popular in the early nineteenth century survived into Valaam chant, and that elements from the traditions of many other monasteries and centres of Russian Orthodox singing must have found a way into Valaam chant also, providing thus an explanation for the formation of the Valaam tradition: the progressive layering and assimilation of many Russian styles into the practice of Valaam, producing a unique local blend, the result of which is the tradition of the Obikhod.

24 Святитель Игнатий (Брянчанинов), "Археологическое описание древностей, найденных в 1853 году в монастырях Санкт-Петербургской епархии," in *Полное собрание творений и писем: в 8 томах*, Том 3 (Москва: Паломник, 2014), 391.

25 Игорь Григорьевич Родченко, "Культура Валаамского монастыря в середине XIX века." (PhD diss., Saint-Petersburg State University of Culture and Arts, 2003), 12.

26 А. В. Загребин, "Валаам: Островок русского церковного пения," Ежегодная богословская конференция Православного Свято-Тихоновского Богословского Института 2000 года (Москва: ПСТБИ, 2000).

27 Плотникова, "Певческие традиции Валаамского монастыря," 323.

The progressive layering and formation of a local tradition, albeit with a strong 'Sarov' colour, seems more plausible than the wholesale importation of a musical tradition from somewhere else, as the 'Sarov thesis' would have it.

Lastly, there remains the thorny question of the practice of singing at Valaam, and the question of whether the monks sang polyphonically or monophonically. Although we do not claim to have the answer, it is important that we carefully consider all the evidence available to us.

The primary sources on the question are very scarce, but not non-existent, and tend to support the monophonic side of the debate. One such important primary source is the Rule of the monastery, which Fr Nazarius brought with him from Sarov, and which was established as the sole Rule in perpetuity for the monastery with the blessing of Metropolitan Gabriel in 1784. The Rule, known for its proximity to mediaeval Russian tradition, as well as to the practices of the Transvolga Old Believers, stipulates that:

Article 2: General monastic rules must be observed both during common religious services and during private religious services (келейное правило) performed in church; moreover it is stipulated a) that all singing must be "Stolpovoy"; b) that there must be no diaphonic (в два голоса) reading or singing; c) that during the canons of the Mother of God and of the Saints during the Liturgy and Molebens, and during private prayer (келейное правило), the responses in the canons of the akathist must be sung and not read...²⁸

Article 2.b. is of particular interest to us, as the Rule explicitly forbids polyphony or harmony, depending on the interpretation. The extent to which this rule was applied will be discussed below. However, we can say with undeniable certainty that, at a time when Bortnyansky and his confrères' music *a l'italienne* was all the rage, no more than 100 miles from St Petersburg, the Metropolitan of that very city was giving his blessing to a small coenobitic community to live according to a unique monastic Rule, closer in its spirit to the mediaeval Russia of Ivan the Terrible than to the modernity of Catherine the Great. Despite the apparent inflexibility of the Rule, Solovyov – another essential primary source – contends that the reality was quite different and depended specifically on how strongly the hegumen of the time was inclined to enforce monophony, or in fact the Rule more generally. The choir at the time of Solovyov's visit consisted of "basses, tenors, and altos", a construction which he calls "monastic". He reminds his reader that it was previously widespread across monasteries in Russia.²⁹ Some authors, citing this same passage, conclude that if Valaam was so similar to other monasteries, its performance of liturgical music must have been just as mainstream also, i.e., polyphonic in several parts.³⁰

28 Родченко, "Культура Валаамского монастыря в середине XIX века," 12.

29 Соловьевъ, *Церковное пѣніе въ Валаамской обители*, 19.

30 Jori Harri, "On the Polyphonic Chant of Valaam Monastery," in Ivan Moody and Maria Takala Roszczenko, editors, *Church, State and Nation in Orthodox Church Music. Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Orthodox Church Music* (Joensuu: The International Society for Orthodox Church Music, 2010), 205.

On that very same page, Solovyov, however, also writes that

The choir of Valaam did not always use to have this construction. There were some hegumens who, for various reasons, would not permit the presence of altos in the choir, and some even found the division into tenors and basses impermissible; in their opinion, such singing was already too sweet-voiced for a monastic choir.³¹

St Ignatius's account from half a century earlier tells us how a hegumen was removed for his attempt to tweak the Rule and 'synodalize' the singing, precisely because the monks held it in such high esteem. It would then also follow that they must, in all likelihood, have held their monophony in equally high esteem. Yet, to say that the musical tradition of the monks of Valaam was monophonic does not necessarily mean they sang exclusively in unison, or indeed that they never occasionally sang polyphonically. On this topic, the famous musicologist Johann von Gardner writes that from the 1820s onwards, monks in many places began to develop a 'monastic' style of polyphonic arrangements of their traditional chants. The authors of such monastic arrangements include Archimandrite Theophan and Hieromonk Victor.³² It is therefore possible that some form of typically monastic polyphony – a style which has nothing in common with the 'Italian secular church style' – also made its appearance on Valaam in the course of the nineteenth century, despite Valaam's particular attachment to monophony.³³

There are additionally some important practical considerations that often escape the attention of most works on the topic. Valaam had (and still has) many sketes, each having potentially up to two kliroi. What is certain is that, given the strong emphasis of the Rule on singing even in private prayer, there must have been a great many number of singers in the monastery in addition to those in the main two choirs of the Transfiguration church. In such conditions, having polyphony, especially of the Western kind, is hard to imagine. These monastics would spend many hours a day in prayer and having to learn several parts would have been very impractical. In all likelihood, due to the smaller number of singers, the sketes sang monodic melodies in unison, in the psalmist style, or alternatively, if the skill and number of monastics permitted, sang in what Gardner called 'monastic polyphony'. Such polyphony is also monodic, with one or two other voices following the melodic line at a third and adding a bass. That way, the monks would not have had to learn any other melodies than that of the chant. To this, one must add the factor of the personal preference of the monks in the different sketes, but also of the clergy, which might have strongly influenced the style of singing in different periods, and in different parts of the monastery.

31 Соловьевъ, *Церковное пѣніе въ Валаамской обители*, 19. The authors' translation.

32 Гарднеръ, *Богослужбное пѣніе Русской Православной Церкви. Исторія*, 299.

33 *Ibid.*, 118.



Illustration 2. The skete of St Abraham of Rostov, Valaam Monastery. Suspected author: the monastery's own photography studio. 1900.

It is however very likely that the situation in the main church was different. Solovyov notes that as many as fifty singers would come together for services there³⁴, a statistic that is confirmed by Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenkov) a decade and a half later. The composition of the choir into several voices/parts would have allowed monophony at the octave, in two or three octaves depending on the range of the singers, and also certain types of polyphony: both harmonized in the *Western* style, but also of a different nature. Here again we must turn to Solovyov who writes:

34 Плотникова, "Певческие традиции Валаамского монастыря," 324.

There is here [at Valaam] a different kind of polyphony, not as much in the sense of their application of the rules of harmony, as in the sense of the contrapuntal character of their diaphony, triphony and other harmonic and melodic movements.³⁵

To sum up, the tradition which is contained within the Obikhod and which, despite two world wars, a revolution and the forced exile of many thousands of people from their motherland, and which is perpetuated through it in centres of Russian spiritual culture such as St Sergius in Paris, is essentially three things. First, it is Znamenny, albeit incorporating other Russian chants; the whole rendered with a unique local flavour, and with ornaments and editions of their own making. Second, it is in part from Sarov, but mostly from all over Russia. Valaam is not a place that has produced its own original melodies, but rather it is the product of many traditions meeting at different times. And last, it was in its essence monodic, with a very strong original attachment to mediaeval Russian monastic practices. As the whole of Russian sacred music was assuredly walking towards its current form, the coenobitic community of Valaam conscientiously and deliberately made the choice of a more ascetic style of church singing, centred on traditional chants resulting from their oral tradition. The monks performed these either in unison or accompanied by other voices.

THE MUSICAL TRADITION OF THE PSALMIST'S COMPANION

In contrast to the Valaam Obikhod, the "Psalmist's Companion", which was also used extensively at St Sergius in Paris, is composed of chants from famous publications such as the Synodal Obikhod written in square notation or the "Annual cycle of 'common chant' chants of the Moscow diocese" (Кругъ церковныхъ пѣснопѣній обычнаго напѣва Московской епархіи³⁶). Aside from Muscovite chants, the editors of the *Sputnik* also included in it various regional styles, but with a marked preference for "Great Znamenny" chant. The aim of Archbishop Arseniy (Stadnitsky) of Novgorod (1862-1936), who headed the compilation of the Companion, was to breathe new life into the institution of psalmists. Part of this process is also visible in his organizing pilot psalmist schools first in the Pskov and then in the Novgorod dioceses. Between 1913 and 1916, not only was the *Sputnik* published thrice; it even earned the praise of the Sovereign Emperor.³⁷

The Valaam Obikhod and the Psalmist's Companion are very different in nature, despite both capturing aspects of Russia's sacred

35 Соловьевъ, *Церковное пѣніе въ Валаамской обители*, 20. The authors' translation.

36 *The Synodal Obikhod in nota quadrata* was published in 1772 in four books: Obikhod, Irmologion, Octoechos and Dodekaorton.

37 The history of the "Psalmist's Companion" as well as measures to streamline church singing at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, are discussed in great detail in the new book: *Хоровые съезды, общества, курсы. Русская духовная музыка в документах и материалах*, Том VIII. Книга. 2. Научный редактор С. Г. Зверева, подготовка. текстов, вступительные статьи и комментарии С. Г. Зверевой, А. В. Лебедевой-Емелиной. Москва: Издательский Дом "ЯСК", 2021.

musical tradition. The compilers of the Companion aimed to safeguard the oldest chants available – Great Znamenny, Small Znamenny, Kievan, Greek, Abridged Greek, Bulgarian – through a rigorous process of tracing back the old Russian tradition to its oldest still decipherable roots, mainly through the Synodal Obikhod. It is therefore a reflection of a written tradition. The oral traditions which existed everywhere in Russia, Valaam being one such example, were considered by some to be corruptions of the original mediaeval traditions, and thus less worthy. It is therefore interesting to note that after the Revolution, the tradition of Valaam recorded in its Obikhod was received on terms equal to that of the Synodal Obikhod. The spiritual authority of the monastics from Valaam, who dispersed to different countries after the Revolution, also played no small part in the recognition of the melodic heritage of Valaam.

KEY FIGURES AND THEIR ROLE IN THE PRESERVATION OF ANCIENT PRACTICES IN THE DIASPORA

Some information about singing on Valaam and the significance of this centre of church singing for the Russian emigration between the wars can be found in the correspondence of Mikhail Osorgin with Alfred Swan (1890–1970), a Russian-born English American. (The reader will be able to find a few individual letters from this epistolary exchange appended at the end of the article.) After graduating from Oxford and from the Petrograd Conservatoire, Swan moved to the United States where he immersed himself deeply in the study of Russian music.

The correspondence between Swan and Osorgin started after the former wrote to the latter asking him for a copy of the pre-revolutionary “Psalmist’s Companion”; he most probably knew that ancient church chants were sung at St Sergius, using this book. From this same correspondence, we learn that Osorgin had a deep appreciation for the singing tradition of Valaam.

Osorgin also invited his addressee to dive deeper into sacred music and pointed to the Valaam Monastery as a place where the Russian church singing tradition was preserved and where one could learn to perform liturgical singing in the ancient style. The very first time they met, in Paris, in 1933, Osorgin gave Swan a copy of the monodic Valaam Obikhod, and warned him that many chants sung even to that day in the monastery remained unpublished and were still only performed by the monks from memory. However, as he writes, the monastery’s singing tradition was slowly dying and was on the verge of complete disappearance “if the monastery were to close, which is the aim of the Finnish government’s policy”³⁸.

Indeed, this primordial Russian monastery ended up on the territory of Finland after the revolution in Russia. Falling historically under the Grand Duchy of Finland, in the Russian Empire, the island of Valaam was naturally integrated into the newly independent Finland in 1917. Several

38 М. М. Осоргин, Письмо к А.А. Свану, 6 (23) сентября 1933 года. Cf. The appendix.

things are known about Valaam in the years immediately following the revolution. It became a refuge for many emigrants fleeing the Bolsheviks and the Civil war and was widely known as such in the Russian diaspora. It also fell under the jurisdiction of the Finnish Orthodox Church, which gained autocephaly between 1921 and 1923. This latter point was especially contentious, as the Finnish Church decided on a number of reforms such as the change of calendar from Julian to Gregorian, and the use of Finnish as the liturgical language. A number of monks, as well as the leadership of the monastery were very unhappy with these changes, leading to over a decade of fighting. The monastery was eventually evacuated in 1940.

What is also noteworthy is the mediatic void surrounding Valaam in the post-revolution years. Whereas in the early twentieth century, Valaam was a bustling centre of missionary activity, pilgrimages, and the headquarters of two Orthodox Brotherhoods³⁹, in both the secular and the religious periodicals of the Russian community in Finland in the 1920s, the monastery appears to be dead in comparison.⁴⁰ That said, we know that visitors were a common sight on the island at least still until the later 1930s, as some of the letters in our possession that had been sent to Swan testify.

In August 1934, Alfred Swan and his wife, the author Ekaterina Rezvaya, left for Valaam. Both the monastery itself and the surrounding Russian life left a deep and indelible impression on Swan:

This is an entire enchanted world filled with grace. An untouched fragment of old Russia", Swan wrote to Osorgin on 17 August 1934, from Valaam. "Everything is here, as in the old days. I study the details of their church service on the spot, I sit in the library ... I found an Octoechos, a Triodion, an Obikhod (the Irmologion I already received from you), I read melodies, I sing along with them, I find charming transitions in their music.⁴¹

However, the singing of the monks was no longer what it was before the Revolution. As Swan writes in that same letter, the singers had completely switched over to four-part polyphony, which they found easier to perform than the unison they practiced in the old days. While already disappointed, Swan's impressions of the singing on Valaam darkened even more two weeks later.

With the exception of the wonderful ringing of bells, there is no music on Valaam now. In the absence of Russian singers, everything is creaking at the seams. The choir director waved his hands but could not do anything. True, he could have made the few singers he had sing more enjoyably by not combining a major with a minor, as they alas often do. And there are no ancient chants to speak of, apart from the occasional hint of something good here and there, but for the most part it is an unimaginable mess.⁴²

A recording of the singing of the monks of the Valaam monastery made in the 1930s has survived to our time, allowing us to get at least a distant idea

39 *Православный сборник*, 1910, №2, 34; *Православный сборник*, 1910, №3, 33–35.

40 *Листок Русской Колонии*, 1927, апрель 24–№ 12.

41 А. А. Сван, *Письмо к М. М. Осоргину*, 17 августа 1934. Written by Swan in Valaam.

42 А. А. Сван, *Письмо к М. М. Осоргину*, 2 сентября 1934. Written by Swan in Valaam.

of how the Valaam monks sang when the death knell of the Monastery's musical tradition rang.⁴³

The study of the manuscripts of the Valaam Monastery, and the ensuing long correspondence with the monastery's librarian, Hierodeacon Jovian (Иувиан) (Krasnoperov) (1880–1957), largely determined the path of Swan not only as a researcher of Russian mediaeval music and as a composer of sacred music, but also as a Christian, who converted to Orthodoxy in the late 1930s. The letters of the humble Fr Jovian, who spent fifty-eight years of his life on Valaam, contain almost no information about singing in the monastery. But the Father Librarian did supply Swan with sheet music of Valaam chants.⁴⁴ In an effort to support Swan's scientific endeavours, we learn from their correspondence that he also sent him a number of other publications.⁴⁵ Fr Jovian also helped M.M. Osorgin to acquire some of the books he needed for his teaching at St Sergius Institute, and, in addition to this, gave recommendations to Swan about which places in the Russian diaspora he should visit in order to become even more familiar with Orthodox church singing:

Since your work, dear Alfred Alfredovich, on Orthodox church singing is very valuable and important, for the good of this business it is very necessary that you visit the Orthodox monasteries of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and even Poland, where one of the lavras of the former Russian Empire is located, namely Pochaevskaya. A visit to these monasteries will familiarise you with Orthodox church singing. I do not have accurate information about the monasteries in Novi Sad and Skopje, but if you are in Belgrade, you can get comprehensive information about all the monasteries in Serbia there, which in one sense or another are remarkable in terms of church singing. When visiting Czechoslovakia, be sure to visit the Orthodox Mission in the Carpathians, which is near Vladimirov – this is the brainchild of Archbishop Vitaly, who is famous in America, and works a great deal for the Church.⁴⁶

As far as we know, before the outbreak of World War II, Swan made a pilgrimage to the monastery only once more. In June 1936, he visited the Pskovo-Pechersky Dormition Monastery, located in the Pskov province, part of which, together with this monastery, ended up being in Estonia. The Pskovo-Pechersky monastery, which on the eve of the revolution was small in terms of numbers (in 1913 there were 28 monks, 25 novices and 22 workers in the monastery), finding itself on the territory of a foreign state,

43 The link to this video can be found on YouTube and similar platforms online.

44 In the music Fr Jovian gave to Swan, one can find among others the 4-part harmonized "Sbornik" of 1902 mentioned earlier in this article.

45 Here is a non-exhaustive list of books and notes Swan received from Fr Jovian: Потулов Николай Михайлович. *Сборник церковных песнопений*. Вып. 1 и 2 (Москва, 1878/82); *Ектении и некоторые краткие песнопения на Божественной Литургии* (СПб, 1900); Корсаков Дмитрий Александрович. *Из жизни русских деятелей* (Казань, 1891); Шавельский Георгий Иванович. *О Боге и Его Правде* (София, 1938); Мансветов Иван Данилович. *О постах Православной восточной Церкви* (Москва, 1886); Рязский Александр Дмитриевич. *Учебник церковного пения*. 2-е издание (Москва, 1894).

46 Монах Иувиан, *Письмо к А. А. Свану*, 14 (27) июля 1935. University of Virginia, Special Collections Division, A.J. Swan coll., № 10093. Folder: Correspondence. The monk Iuvian (from Valaam monastery).

acquired a special spiritual meaning in the eyes of Russian emigrants. The singing of the monks of the Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery was not as famous as that of their counterparts of the Valaam Monastery. Nevertheless, old manuscripts, the study of which became the purpose of Swan's trip there, were kept in the monastery's archives.



*Illustration 3. Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery.
Photo taken by Swan himself during his stay. 1936.*

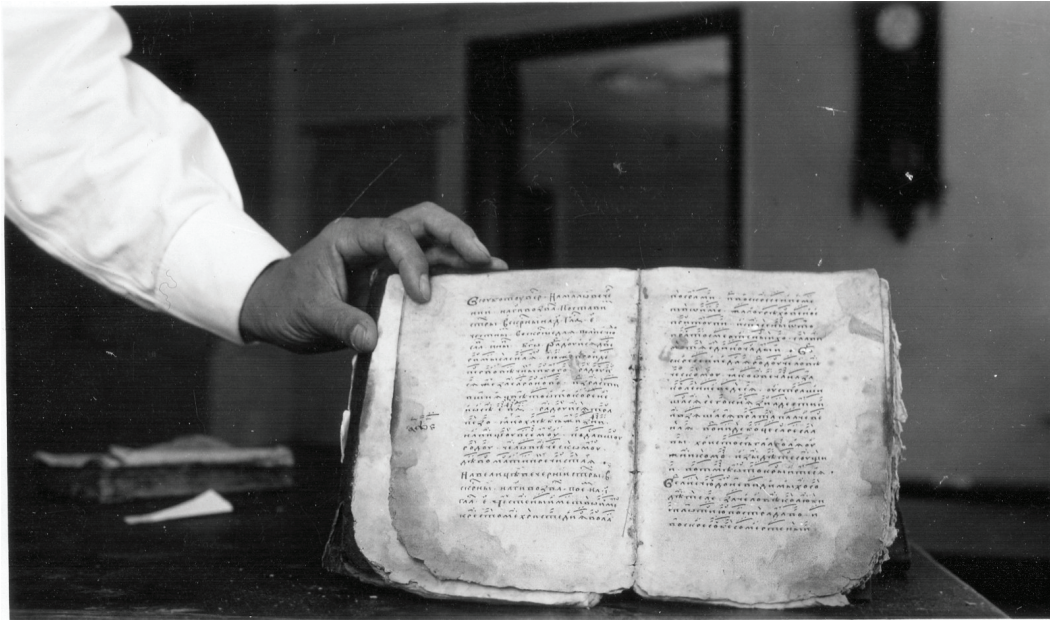


Illustration 4. Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery.
Photo taken by Swan himself during his stay. 1936.

It should be added that the monastery was a spiritual centre not only for numerous pilgrims from various émigré Russian colonies, but also for the indigenous Russian Orthodox Baltic population. Finding themselves a minority in the newly formed Baltic states, Russians were drawn to Orthodox churches, organised church and secular choirs, orchestras, educational societies, schools, and annual celebrations for the Day of Russian Culture. One such celebration took place in June 1939 at the very walls of the Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery.⁴⁷

Swan and his wife were carried away by the folkloric singing in the region. The result of their interest was Swan's recording on his phonograph of samples of a wedding ceremony in the village of Gorodishchi, the publication of a collection of songs arranged by Swan⁴⁸, and a host of musicological studies.⁴⁹ The magnificent stories of E.V. Rezvaya "Pechora Territory" and "Izborsk"⁵⁰ also contributed to the list of Russian literature dedicated to these unique Russian reserves in foreign land. In a story about the Pechory, she wrote:

Here there is still a fragment of Russia, of its great spiritual culture. Only by clinging to this spiritual culture, the main foundation of which is Orthodoxy in its high images, can we be saved.⁵¹

47 *Сборник второго всегосударственного слета русских хоров в Эстонии, 1–2 июля 1939 г. в Петсери (Печеры)*. (Тарту: Изд. ком. 2-го всегос. слета русских хоров в Эстонии, 1939).

48 А. Сван. *Сборник русских народных песен*. [Десять русских народных песен из деревни Городище Печорского уезда б. Псковской губернии. Записал в народной гармонизации (при помощи фонографа) и переложил для одного голоса с сопровождением фортепиано А. Сван летом 1936 года.] (Лейпциг: Изд. М. Беляева, 1939).

49 Including: "The Nature of the Russian Folk-Song," *Musical Quarterly*, xxix (1943): 498-516; *Russian Music and its Sources in Chant and Folk-Song* (London: J. Baker; New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1973).

50 Екатерина Владимировна Сван (Резвая), *Статьи. Рассказы. Описания* (Нью-Йорк: изд. им. А. П. Чехова, 1944).

51 Сван (Резвая), *Статьи. Рассказы. Описания*, 20.

On 17 June 1936, Swan also paid a visit to the Riga Old Believers. He was lucky to be there at a time when the Old Believers performed not only Znamenny chant, but also the rare Demesvenny chant, which struck the researcher with its unusual sounds. He records his impressions, writing that,

It was a strange chant altogether. Could it have been a Kondakarian chant of the kind that had disappeared in the fourteenth century? It was jagged, theatrical, full of chromatic and ultra-chromatic passages, and quite unlike anything else.⁵²

In conclusion, it may be added that those Russian church singers who found themselves in the Baltic States in the Novgorod and Pskov provinces continued to use the Sputnik actively and widely in their church services.

THE VALAAM OBIKHOD AND PSALMIST'S COMPANION IN PARIS AND JORDANVILLE TODAY

Fr John Drobot, the protodeacon of St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Paris, who sang at the St Sergius church in Paris from 1975 and did so for twenty years, explained the Parisian use of the "Psalmist's Companion" thus. At Vespers, they sang from it the opening psalm, the prokeimena and the "Hail Mary"; on Saturday evening All-Night Vigils, they sang dogmatics from it; at the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, they sang "Let my prayer arise" (all the rest of the chants of the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy were sung according to the Valaam Obikhod); and they sang from it also for Great Lent Saturday memorial matins. Most of the chants at St Sergius were borrowed from the Companion. Fr John however specifies that "we did not actually use it; we sang from memory".

Information about the widespread use of the "Psalmist's Companion" in parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was given to us by Archpriest Fr Andrei Papkov, the Chairman of the Church Music Committee of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. In addition to the Companion, he also tells us the Valaam Obikhod was not unknown to the choir of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville. The services were sung there following both anthologies in elementary harmony, which is commonly called "psalmist's harmony" (дьячковская гармония). From an interview with N. M. Osorgin (Osorgin's son and heir to the work of M. M. Osorgin in both the St Sergius parish church and the Theological Institute), we learn however that, sometimes, chants were also sung monophonically.⁵³ As Fr John Drobot, who sang under Osorgin's baton for a long time, tells us, "we always sang in unison the Znamenny chant Dogmatikoi for the Theotokia on Saturday vespers, all Resurrectional troparia for matins after the Greater Doxology, the stichera for the Forefeast of the Nativity, the podobien "Proceed O Angelic Powers",

52 Swan Альфред. *Пение в Гребеницкой общине в Риге*, University of Virginia, Special Collections Division, A.J.Swan coll., № 10093. Folder: A.J. Swan's notes.

53 Церковное пение зарубежья. Беседа с Николаем Осоргиным. Link: <http://internet sobor.org/index.php/stati/iz-raznykh-istochnikov/tserkovnoe-penie-zarubezhya-beseda-s-nikolaem-osorginym>

the Easter stichera, and occasionally, certain Zadostoyniki and the Greater Doxology. All these were sung using the Synodal Obikhod in nota quadrata. Stichera such as “Proceed O Angelic Power” were sung directly from the Menaion, i.e., without any music in front of us. We also sang the troparion for Mid-Pentecost from the Valaam Obikhod. If we sang in unison, it was always absolute and clean, never at the octave.”

CONCLUSION

Thus, the spread of the Russian church singing tradition in the twentieth century received a strong impetus after 1917, on account of the formation of numerous Russian Orthodox colonies and the building of many churches outside of the USSR. As for the above-mentioned “Psalmist’s Companion” and “Valaam Obikhod”, they became essential to Alfred Swan’s scholarly work in the United States, but they also formed the basis for the musical tradition of St Sergius in Paris and of the Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY. According to the clergymen we interviewed who sang in the choirs there, both these manuals, as well as the Synodal Obikhod in nota quadrata, came to be used extensively in the churches and monasteries of the Russian Church Abroad during services until the very end of the twentieth century. In this way, these models of the great Russian melodic heritage found a new life far beyond the territories in which they were originally born and developed over many centuries.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF MIKHAIL M. OSORGIN TO ALFRED A. SWAN.⁵⁴

6 (23) сентября 1933 года. Париж, Сергиевское подворье.

Дорогой Альфред Альфредович!

Получил Ваше письмо от 14/IX с большим опозданием, так как на несколько дней уезжал отдохнуть в деревню, куда оно мне было переслано, и не застав меня там вновь было переотправлено в Подворье. Несколько дней по его получении я сомневался, стоит ли отвечать на него по существу, так как довольно безнадежно на бумаге дать на все Ваши вопрошения исчерпывающие ответы, которые бы Вас удовлетворили. Одно мне стало ясным: конечно, двух разговоров наших было далеко недостаточно для того, чтобы прийти ко взаимному пониманию и соглашению. Чтобы не огорчать Вас решил все же в конце концов по пунктам ответить на Ваши вопросы; боюсь, что мне не удастся достигнуть тех или других верных результатов, которые имели бы место при непосредственном общении.

1. Относительно записи валаамских и карпаторосских роспевов Вы, конечно, не так меня поняли, но и Денисов⁵⁵ также не прав. Что кое-какие роспевы записаны — это факт, тому доказательство хотя бы тот «Валаамский обиход», который я Вам послал на память о нашей первой встрече и который, надеюсь, Вами получен. Кроме этого Обихода есть еще некоторые вещи, записанные из валаамского репертуара, есть даже кое-что переложенное на 4 голоса (очень плохо и неудачно, между прочим).

Из карпаторосских напевов, насколько мне известно, записанного и печатного материала значительно меньше. Но не в этом суть: что почти совсем

54 The letters of M. M. Osorgin to A. A. Swan published in this appendix can be found in the University of Virginia, Special Collections Division, A. J. Swan collection, № 10093. Folder: Correspondence. M. and E. Ossorguine. The complete correspondence between A. A. Swan and M. M. Osorgin as well as selected letters of monk Jovian to A. A. Swan will be published in the 1st book of the 10th volume of the series “Russian Sacred Music in Documents and Materials” (Русская духовная музыка в документах и материалах), which is currently being prepared by the authors of this article.

55 He refers to the famous Parisian singer and regent I. K. Denisov, who on the eve of the Russian revolution was a soloist at the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg. During the émigré period of his life he sang in the famous quartet of N. N. Kedrov and founded his own quartet after the latter's death in 1940. In his younger years, he was an altar boy at the Holy Trinity St Sergius Lavra and also visited other monasteries, including Valaam, where he returned to as a pilgrim even after the revolution. Osorgin and Denisov maintained a close relationship by virtue of the fact that the latter directed the student concert choir of the St Sergius Theological Institute, with which he toured in the 1930s to raise funds for the Institute.

неизвестно у карпатороссов — это их многочисленные подобны, утраченные даже старообрядцами; их следует на месте собирать и даже быть может с трудом разыскивать. Мне недавно под руку попали два таких карпаторосских гласовых подобна, изумительные по красоте и, смею Вас уверить, никому неизвестные, и таких много.

Я считаю, что собирание и исполнение таких подобнов есть одна из прямых целей пропагандирования старого пения. То же касается и Валаама: их подобны и многое другое фигурирующее в Обиходе, то есть, способ их тамошнего исполнения, не изданы. А ведь Валаамский монастырь всегда славился своим пением, и одноголосное передавание мелодии в Обиходе далеко не дает то, что самый монашеский способ исполнения, передаваемый от старых монахов молодым и скоро долженствующий совсем исчезнуть с закрытием монастыря, к чему стремится политика финляндского правительства.

2. О чем Вы хотите, чтобы я сговаривался с Кузьмичем? (Кстати, у меня с ним вполне хорошие отношения.) Прежде всего, в области старой церковной музыки я абсолютно не считаю его за авторитета и совершенного инако с ним мыслю. А затем, мне с ним, как с бывшим артистом Мариинской оперы, считающим себя компетентным, очень трудно, а потому и неприятно разговаривать о любимой мне музыке. Когда он начинает что-нибудь доказывать или утверждать, или, наконец, ссылаться на свою практику, что для меня определенно неверно и не так, я никогда не стану поддерживать с ним спор, предпочту лучше уступить и замолчать, быть может, во вред делу. Кузьмич очень милый человек, голос его хороший, но поймите, что он прежде всего артист, который с таким же азартом и охотой споет подряд какой-нибудь догматик (еще со своими вариациями) и концерт Бортнянского, а для меня это — нож в сердце. Он, кстати, у меня недавно долго сидел, я этот визит оценил, как Ваше влияние. Советовался он со мной, что включить в программу выступлений студенческого хора в Голландии. Я охотно дал ему разные советы, но опять-таки не в этом суть. (См. 3-й пункт.)

3. Как Вы хотите, чтобы студенческий наш хор спел старую музыку без соответствующего воспитания и подготовки? Исполнение этой музыки, постепенно утрачиваемой — вещь настолько трудная и специальная, что вот почему я считаю необходимым организацию небольшого ядра певчих, материально обеспеченных, с которыми следует проделать соответствующее музыкальное обучение и очень трудную работу, скорее даже весьма скучную, которая для некоторых из них в начале была бы, выражаясь Вашими словами, «пением из-под палки» ради только заработка. Только проделав с большим терпением этот скучный и трудный период, можно рассчитывать получить из этих певчих, понявших и полюбивших красоту этой музыки — фанатиков, которые являлись бы благовестителями на весь мир ее красоты и стали бы самоокупающей себя организацией, не имеющей конкуренции. [...]

4. На Ваш четвертый пункт о певчих за плату я, кажется, довольно ясно высказался в предыдущем пункте. Добавлю, что я, конечно, не делаю себе иллюзий, что найти бесплатных любителей для обучения и шлифовки по теперешним трудным материальным временам — вещь невозможная. Подумайте только о том, что профессиональные врачи, генералы, чтобы заработать себе на кусок хлеба должны с утра до вечера не по своему назначению довольствоваться какой-нибудь грязной заводской работой! В таком же положении находятся и любители церковного пения, для которых борьба за существование также остро стоит, как и для других. Потому на

длительный жертвенный порыв с их стороны было бы безумием рассчитывать. Я ведь полагаю, что для успешного результата подготовительного периода следует посвящать пению не меньше 2-х часов ежедневно, и после года, Бог даст, выйдут хорошие результаты. Для всестороннего воспитания этого ядра певчих необходимо, по-моему, организовать для них поездку на Валаам и в Карпатороссию, чтобы им и на чужой практике поучиться. Обучение этого хора должно преследовать две параллельных задачи: знаменное и киевское пение со всей их строгостью, и рядом с этим более современное и простое хорошее обиходное пение в 4-голосном исполнении. Если бы Бог привел когда создание такого хора, он должен был бы и в церкви и в концертах и на лекциях знакомить массы с обеими этими отраслями нашего русского церковного пения.[..]

В заключение выскажу одно свое соображение, которое, быть может, Вам понравится и может Вам пригодиться. Если Вы решите организовать певческое ядро в Париже, мне кажется правильнее всего было бы связаться и войти в соглашение со существующим здесь обществом «Икона». Это общество, организованное несколько лет тому назад фанатиками и любителями старой иконописи, имеет своим представителем очень милого, культурного старообрядца, небезызвестного Вл[адимира] Пав[ловича] Рябушинского. Цель этого общества — всячески поощрять лекциями, выставками, обучением и т.д. хорошую старую иконопись. Уверен, что общество «Икона» с распростертыми объятиями примет под свое покровительство этот организующийся хор, так как Рябушинский неоднократно предлагал и просил меня взять на себя инициативу открытия при их обществе филиального отделения любителей старого пения. Я всегда возражал ему, утверждая, что такое отделение без соответствующих финансов не стоит открывать, ничего не выйдет. По окончании образования хора общество «Икона» могла бы на первых порах лансировать⁵⁶ выступления хора в Париже путем устройства лекций с певческими иллюстрациями, церковных выступлений (во всех юрисдикциях) и концертов. Практически же расходование денег, которые Вы могли бы раздобыть от крупных жертвователей на период организации и обучение хора, находилось бы в распоряжении общественной солидной организации и частный характер исключался бы, что крайне важно. Вот кажется и все. На этом кончу свое длинное послание, прося передать мой сердечный привет Вашей супруге, а Вам желаю от души всяческого успеха.

Ваш М. Осоргин.

APPENDIX 2: LETTER OF ALFRED A. SWAN TO MIKHAIL M. OSORGIN⁵⁷

17 августа 1934. Валаам

Дорогой Михаил Михайлович,

Пишу Вам с Валаама. Это целый зачарованный мир, преисполненный благодати. Нетронутый осколок старой России. Все здесь, как в прежнее время. Изучаю на месте подробности церковной службы, сижу в библиотеке, но в смысле напевов и музыки вообще мне приходится туговато, тем более, что Денисовы так-таки и не приехали. Нашел Октоих, Триодь цветную и постную, Обиход нотного пения (Ирмологий вы мне прислали), читаю

⁵⁶ To start/launch (a Gallicism), from the French word 'lancer'.

⁵⁷ Copies of the two letters from A. A. Swan to M. M. Osorgin published below are provided by his son, N. M. Osorgin. They were found in the Osorgin family's home archive.

мелодии, подпеваю их, нахожу прелестные переливы. Но без Вас все же не могу справиться ни с гласовыми попевками, ни с общими различиями между знаменным и греческим роспевами.

В соборе в унисон не поют. Нет певчих, боятся трудностей, поэтому поют на 4 голоса. Иногда очень хорошо, иногда же не в моем и не в Вашем духе. В общем же живем прежней русской жизнью. Ездим по скитам, пьем чаек с монахами, едим ягоды во фруктовых садах, катаемся на лодке по чудным озерам и проливам, купаемся в безбрежном Ладожском озере.

Удалось ли Вам уехать на отдых? Уж мы в Париж в этом году не попадем, как я предчувствовал. Слушая пение здесь все более и более убеждаюсь в необходимости воскресить старые напевы и исполнить их надлежащим образом. Об «Иконе» рассказываю здесь, но музыкантов здесь мало.

Вернемся в Лондон 31 числа, наш адрес там 99 Mortlake Road, Kew Gardens, Surrey.

Шлем Вам и семье самый сердечный привет. Как здоровье Миши? Поправился ли он вполне?

Ваш А. Сван.

APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF ALFRED A. SWAN TO MIKHAIL M. OSORGIN

2 сентября 1934, Лондон

Дорогой Михаил Михайлович!

Уж очень давно сижу без известий от Вас. Мы только что вернулись с Валаама, и я очень надеялся найти по прибытии в Лондоне письмецо от Вас. Как-то Вы устроились и удалось ли семье Вашей отдохнуть у моря и в природе?

У нас лето получилось очень волнительное и закончилось все Валаамом. Впечатлений масса, но отнюдь немзыкальных. За исключением чудного колокольного звона музыки на Валаама сейчас нет. За неимением русских певчих все расплывается по швам. Регент махнул рукой и ничего сделать не может. Правда, он мог бы и что у него есть заставить петь подружнее и не сочетать мажор с минором, как это они, увы, зачастую делают. А уж о древних напевах и говорить не приходится – иногда проскальзывают здесь и там намеки на что-то хорошее, но по большей части это каша невообразимая.

Вскоре после написания Вам открытки мне удалось в библиотеке найти маленькую книжечку Рязского издания 1894 года о церковном пении⁵⁸, и вот она впервые открыла мне глаза на сущность осмогласия. Я уже начинал подозревать, что разница в гласах — это разница в узорах мелодии, и вот Рязский утвердил меня в этом. Он приводит целый ряд гласовых попевок, и вот заучив их я уже совсем иначе смотрю в Ирмологий и т.д. Скоро надеюсь добиться того, что буду распознавать гласы.

Но вот в чем Валаам сослужил мне огромную службу: я теперь уже чувствую себя почти как дома во всех родах служб, разбираюсь в тропарях, стихирах, ирмосах и т.д. Это необходимо, чтобы не сделать грубых ошибок, когда пишешь о музыке. Теперь я стою уже на довольно твердой почве, и в наших беседах с Вами мне не придется задавать элементарных вопросов. Более чем когда-либо мне сейчас нужно к Вам по чисто музыкальным делам, и я по приезде в Англию намерен сейчас же хлопотать себе отпуск на 1935/36

58 А. Д. Рязский, *Учебник церковного пения*, Москва, 1994.

год, чтобы закончить работу о церковной музыке. В Америку мы уезжает 15-го сего месяца. Буду ждать от Вас весточку тут в Лондоне по вышеуказанному адресу. О хоре продолжаю усиленно мечтать и знаю, что придет пора и этому начинанию⁵⁹. Надо лишь терпеливо ждать.

Вообще пребывание на Валааме нам кажется сном из потустороннего мира. Опять побывали в России девяностых годов, и какая это была чудесная Россия!

Шлем Вам и семье самый теплый привет и очень, очень надеемся, что летние Ваши дела сложились благополучно и что Мише и другим детям удалось поправиться и отдохнуть после зимних болезней.

Преданный Вам А. Сван.

APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF MIKHAIL M. OSORGIN TO ALFRED A. SWAN

6 сентября 1934. Париж

Дорогой Альфред Альфредович!

Своевременно получил с Валаама Вашу открытку, а сегодня получил пересланное мне в деревню, где нахожусь, Ваше письмо от 2/IX и спешу Вам ответить, чтобы сказать, что на открытке Вами был так неразборчиво написан адрес, что даже один англичанин, которому его показали, не смог его разобрать, вот почему не мог никак реагировать на открытку.

Очень за Вас порадовался и даже грешным делом позавидовал Вам после всех Ваших описаний красот Валаама и тамошнего нетронутого русского быта прежних времен. Очень меня огорчило только Ваше известие об упадке пения церковного на Валааме: мое пророчество сбывается, то есть, если в ближайшее время не удастся кому-либо зафиксировать их четырехголосное исполнение всех подобнов и разных чисто валаамских роспевов, иными словами, переделанный знаменный роспев, очень скоро это станет невозможным, так как все певчие постепенно вымрут и напевы утратятся.

Очень жалко, что мы так и не увидимся этим летом и посему хоть письменно желаем Вашей супруге и Вам счастливого пути и успехов во всех Ваших начинаниях в Америке с надеждой, что в будущем году мы увидимся. [...]

Всей семьей шлем Вашей супруге и Вам наш сердечный и горячий привет и пожелание всего самого лучшего.

Ваш М. Осоргин.

⁵⁹ Swan managed to assemble a small choir of 14 experienced and motivated singers to perform early Russian music only in 1942. By this time he had already authored a number of works on the subject. The choir rehearsed in New York, but without financial support, the undertaking did not continue.