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Theta Combinations in the Stichera of the Transfiguration

Case Study of 10th–13th Century Greek and Russian Manuscripts

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Introduction

Our idea of the 10th-13th century stichera for the Twelve Major Feasts rests upon liturgical manuscripts in which sticheraric melos was recorded with Chartres, Coislin, Middle Byzantine and early Znamenny notations.

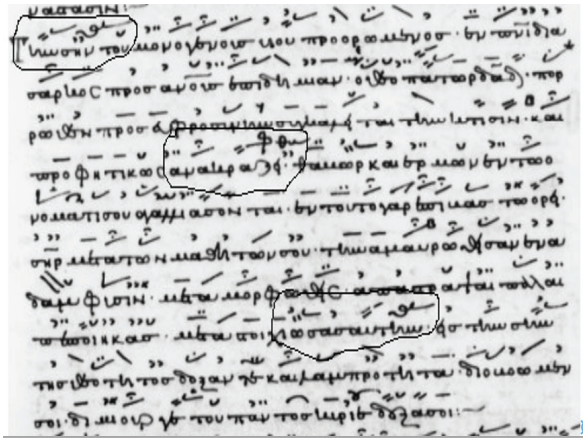
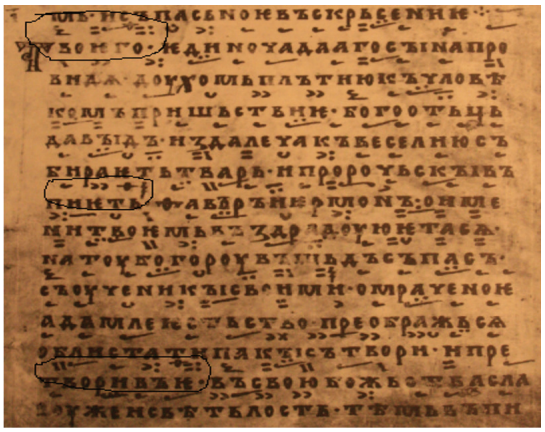
Many festive stichera, being the most solemn and joyful hymns contain complex notation fragments that indicate chanting usually called intrasyllabic or melismatic. The main criterion for the melismatics is the theta symbol. "Θῆτα", "θέμα" or "θέματα" is a neume, expressed by the letter θ found in the Greek and Church Slavonic alphabets. The earliest theoretical treatise on the Chartres notation - Mount Athos Codex Lavra Γ 67[1] and the earliest theoretical treatise on the Coislin notation "The Hagiopolites"[2] refer to this musical phenomenon as "θέμα". Russian theory of music terms it "theta" from the 15th century[3]. In modern Byzantine studies, this phenomenon is

1 LC Lavra Γ 67, 10th-11th centuries, f. 159.
2 Codex Vaticanus gr. 872 (14th century). Lorenzo Tardo, *L'antica melurgia byzantina nell'interpretazione della scuola monastica di Grottaferrata* (Grottaferrata, 1937), 170-174.
3 Максим Викторович Бражников, *Древнерусская теория музыки: По рукописным материалам XV-XVIII вв.* (Ленинград: Музыка, 1972), 29-30.

termed "theme"[4] or "thematismos"[5], derived from the Greek verb "θεματίζω" meaning "to establish the original meaning".

The melodic content of this neume in paleo-notations remains obscure. It is always surrounded by other neumes, together with which it forms a single theta complex. The location of thetas in chants is different. Normally thetas are sporadic in a hymn, they mark variably distanced fragments of the verbal text and form musical-syntactic parallels[6].

Figure 1. Sporadic appearance of thetas in hymns of the Transfiguration
Ἦχος α'. "Τὴν σὴν τοῦ μονογενοῦς γίοῦ"/ Глас а̃. "Твоего единочадааго сына"

LC Sinai 1219, fol. 140 (Chartres)	RASL Main collection 34.7.6, fol. 176v (early Znamenny)
	

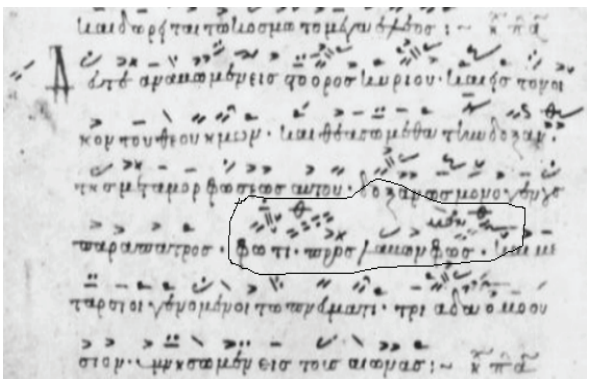
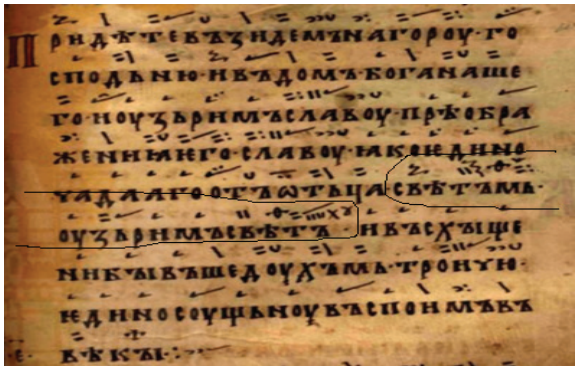
Dense occurrence, that is, an accumulation of melismata in certain fragments of a hymn, happens much more rarely. In this case, theta complexes move smoothly one into another as if joining together. We have termed this phenomenon "фитное соединение", a "theta combination" in English. The English variant of the term is a working draft. We have not found a concise English translation so far. The possible variants are: theta string, theta compound, theta chain.

4 Constantin Floros, *Einführungin die Neumenkunde* (Wilhelmshaven, 1980), 252-281; Maria Alexandru, "Studie über die 'Grossen Zeichen' der byzantinischen musikalischen Notation unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Periode vom Ende des 12. Bis Anfang 19" (PhD diss., Universität Kopenhagen, 2000), 126, 254.

5 Nicolas Schidlovsky, "Medieval Russian Neumation", *Palaeobyzantine Notations II* (Hernen, 1999), 73; Gerda Wolfram, *Codex Vindobonensis theol. gr. 136 (Sticherarium antiquum Vindobonense)*, MMB Pars Suppletoria. Vol. X (Vindobonae, 1987), 27-31.

6 Comparative study of separate thetas in Paleobyzantine, Middle Byzantine and Old Russian sources was carried out by different scientists, namely: Constantin Floros, *Universale Neumenkunde. Band 1: Entziff erung der ältesten byzantinischen Neumenschriften und der altslavischen sematischen Notation* (Bärenreiter Kassel, 1970), 252–281; Schidlovsky, "Medieval Russian Neumation", 71-79; Annette Jung, "Kolaphismos: A Long Melisma in a Syllabic Genre", *Palaeobyzantine Notations III* (Leuven-Paris-Dudley, 2004), 49-66; Ирина Владимировна Старикова, "Развитие мелизматики в византийской и древнерусской певческих традициях: опыт компаративного исследования", *Вестник ПСТГУ. Серия V: Вопросы истории и теории христианского искусства*, вып. 34 (2019): 25-36.

Figure 2. Theta combination in a hymn of the Transfiguration
Ἦχος πλ. α›. "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος Κυρίου"
/ Глас ѳ. "Придите взыдем на гору Господню"

LC Sinai 1217, fol. 157v (Coislin)	SHM Sin. 589, fol. 170 (early Znamenny)
	

There are no insertions of syllabic lines and pronounced cadences between such theta complexes. Their melodies move straightaway one into the other to bring about a special sacred sounding space inside the chant – what one can term "hierophony", which is supposed to concentrate listeners' attention on the text being chanted[7]. It is a noteworthy and important phenomenon of the intrasyllabic melos, characteristic of different old chant traditions, which deserves attention and can become the subject of special scientific interest.

Last September we reported at the Vienna *Theory and History of Monody* conference and presented the first findings as regards theta combinations in the stichera of nine Major Feasts of the Menaion from the earliest Greek and Russian manuscripts of the 10th-12th centuries with Chartres, Coislin and Early Znamenny notations. It appeared that theta combinations are found in Stichera of most Feasts – the Exaltation of the Holy Cross of Our Lord, the Nativity of Christ, the Baptism of the Lord, Candlemas, the Annunciation, the Transfiguration and the Dormition, but they have not been found in Stichera of the Nativity of the Holy Theotokos or the Entry of the Holy Theotokos into the Temple[8]. We discovered that the occurrence of theta combinations is universal, and they appear in various ancient notations. At the present stage, it appears appropriate to continue and to expand comparative study, changing its perspective and consider this phenomenon within each specific feast cycle. Therefore, in this article we will focus upon the feast of the Lord's Transfiguration.

7 Екатерина Васильевна Плетнева, "Соединения фит в знаменной монодии (на примере праздничных стихир)", *Древнерусское песнопение. Пути во времени*, Вып. 8 (Санкт-Петербург, 2020), 421-422.

8 Based on conference report the article was accepted for publication in the collection of scientific papers "Theta Combinations in the Hymns of Menaion Major Feasts: Case Study of the 10th-12th Century Greek and Early Russian Monuments".

The following tasks have been set:

1. to define the fullest possible body of Transfiguration stichera in early Greek and Russian manuscripts of the 10th-13th centuries, including the forefeast and afterfeast periods[9];
2. to find theta combinations in the Transfiguration stichera, characterize them and try to trace regularities in their occurrence;
3. to reconstruct hypothetically the meli of the theta combinations based upon 12th-13th century Middle Byzantine manuscripts that spell out the cryptic signs of the combinations with analytical notation.

The manuscript sources

The material for the study were the 10th-13th century Menaion Sticheraria with the Transfiguration hymns from the Greek and Russian traditions. In addition, we resorted to a unique 12th century Russian notated Menaion (the August volume) and Russian archaic 14th-15th century Sticheraria. We used the representative total of 26 manuscripts including: two Chartres, four Coislin, eight Middle Byzantine and twelve Znamenny copies.

Figure 3. Sources

Greek manuscripts	Early Russian manuscripts
Chartres – LC Sinai 1219 (10th -11th century) LC Lavra Γ 74 (10th -11th cent.) *Coislin* – LC Sabas 361 (11th cent.) - poor condition LC Sabas 610 (11th cent.) - poor condition LC Sinai 1217 (11th -12th cent.) ANB theol. gr. 136 (first half of the 12th ce nt.) *Middle Byzantine* – LC Sinai 1218 (1177) LC Sinai 1227 (12th cent.) LC Panagios Taphos 528 (12th-13th) LC Sinai 1231 (1236) LC Sinai 1484 (13th cent.) LC Sinai 1224 (13th cent.) LC Sinai 1220 (13th cent.) LC Sinai 1216 (13th cent.)	SHM Sin. 279 (12th cent.) SHM Sin. 572 (12th cent.) SHM Sin. 589 (12th cent.) RGADA f. 381 No.145 (12th cent.) RNL Sof. 384 (12th cent.) RNL Q. p. I. 15 (12th cent.) RASL Main collection 34.7.6 (12th cent.) *Additional sources* SHM Sin. 168 (12th cent.) Menaion (August) RSL f. 113 № 3 (14th cent.) RSL f. 304 № 439 (15th cent.) RSL f. 304 № 440 (15th cent.) RNL Pogodin 45 (1422)

In those we have identified 29 different Transfiguration stichera, including pieces for the forefeast and the afterfeast.

9 According to the Typikon of Patriarch Alexios Stoudites, the Feast of the Transfiguration includes five calendar dates-from 5 to 9 August. See Алексей Мстиславович Пентковский, *Типикон патриарха Алексия Студита в Византии и на Руси* (Москва: Издательство Московской Патриархии, 2001), 357-360.

Figure 4. The Transfiguration stichera

Ἦχος	Greek manuscripts	Глас	Early Russian manuscripts
α′	**Ὁ πάλαι τῷ Μωσεῖ συλλαλήσας**	а	**Древле съ Мосеомъ глаголавыи**
	Τὴν σὴν τοῦ μονογενοῦς γίοῦ		**Твоего единочадааго сына**
	Τὸ ἄσχετον τῆς σῆς φωτοχυσίας		**Безмерьное твое светопролития**
β′	**Ὁ φωτί σου ἅπασαν τὴν οἰκουμένην**	в	**Светомъ твоимъ всю вселенную***
	Ὁ ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ Θαβώρ		**Иже на горе Фаворстей**
	Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός		**(Иже) Преже сълнеца светъ Христосъ***
	Σήμερον ἐν τῷ ὄρει Θαβώρ		
δ′	**Πρὸ τοῦ σοῦ σταυροῦ κύριε ὄρος**	д	**Преже распятия твоего господи гора**
	Πρὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ σου κύριε παραλαβὼν		**Преже распятия твоего господи поятъ**
	Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν		**На горе высоце преображся**
	Ὄρος τὸ ποτὲ ζοφῶδες		**Гора иногда мрачна**
		д Подоб. "Хотехъ слезами"	Явилъ еси господи
			Потощимъся верьнии оумъмъ *
			О трьблажении оученици *
		д Подоб. "Даст знамение"	Дьньсь показалъ еси *
			Дьньсь въсиялъ еси господи *
			Дьньсь радоуються небесьнии ангели *
πλ. α′	**Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν**	е	**Придите възыдемъ**
	Νόμου καὶ προφητῶν		**Закону и пророкомъ**
	Τῆς θεότητός σου		**Божества твоего ***
πλ. β′	**Προτυπῶν τὴν ἀνάστασιν**	ѕ	**Прообразуя въскресение**
	Πέτρῳ, καὶ Ἰωάννῃ καί Ἰακώβῳ		**Петру, Иоанну и Иакову**
			Преобразися Иисоусе на горе
πλ. δ′	**Παρέλαβεν ὁ Χριστός**	и	**Поятъ Христосъ**
		и	Гора фаворьская освятися спасе *
	Τὸν γνόφον τὸν νομικόν	и	**Мрака законенааго**
			Светьмь божьствьныимь
			Вьрста пророку
		?	Божьственаго зрака твоего *

Let us specify the differences between the Greek and Russian manuscript sources. They include different numbers of stichera: 18 stichera have been found in the Greek manuscripts and 28 in the Russian. As the result of the comparative sources study, 17 chants appear to be common to both Greek and Russian traditions. These common texts in the table are marked in italics.

The Greek corpus contains one non-canonical sticheron, mode 2 "Σήμερον ἐν τῷ ὄρει Θαβώρ"/"Днесь на горе Фавор", which is a prosomoion to the Nativity sticheron "Σήμερον ὁ Χριστός ἐν Βηθλεὲμ"/"Днесь Христос в Вифлееме". This sticheron is very rare and was not specially intended for the Transfiguration service. It is a paraphrase of the hymn for the Nativity of Christ.

Early Russian manuscripts contain many more stichera because they record notated stichera prosomoia: two cycles of mode4 and cycle of mode 8, performed according to the first sticheron model, "Мрака законенааго"[10]. They also contain a number of stichera ideomela : "Тора фаворьская освятися спасе", "Божьственаго зрака твоего" and "Преобразися Иисоусе на горе», which cannot be found in the Greek sources. The first two stichera are not known in the early Russian manuscripts but were discovered in the 15th century Russian Menaion Sticherarion (RNL Pogodin 45); apparently, they were not found in the Greek monuments for this reason. All the Early Russian manuscripts consistently contain the sticheron "Преобразися Иисоусе на горе". Its usage is upheld by Alexis the Studite's Typicon[11]. The question is: why is this sticheron absent in the Greek monuments while being so traditional in Russian ones? We have not so far arrived at an answer.

We admit that the number and the repertoire of the Transfiguration stichera in the Russian manuscript collection exceed the data of Christina Dyablova concerning the chant content of this service based on the material of two Menaion Sticheraria of the 12th and the 15th centuries[12]. In the table given above the texts, which are not marked by the author, are denoted by the sign*.

The Theta combinations

The study of all Transfiguration stichera brought the following findings: theta complexes occur in about half of the hymns, to be exact, in fourteen. Theta combinations were found only in five of the stichera. Thus, we can regard this phenomenon as a very rare one.

10 The stichera "Мрака законенааго", "Светьмь божьствьныимь" and "Вьрста пророку" were marked in manuscript SHM Sin. 168 as stichera-idiomela. However, according to Alexis the Studite's Typikon the first sticheron is the model one for two others. See Пентковский, *Типикон*, 359. The data of the Typikon are confirmed by the notation in SHM Sin.168 and in RNL Sof. 384, which shows the orientation to one musical sample.

11 According to the Typikon, the sticheron is performed on the afterfeast Vespers on 9 August. Пентковский, *Типикон*, 360.

12 Кристина Дяблова, "Пути формирования певческого репертуара праздника Преображения в восточнохристианской традиции", Калофонія: Науковий збірн*ик з історії церковної монодії та гимнографії*, Ч. 8 (2016): 120-121.

Figure 5. The 5 stichera with theta combinations

№	Ἦχος / Глас	Greek manuscripts	Early Russian manuscripts
1	β′ / ѳ	Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός	Иже прежде солнца свет Христос
2	β′/ ѳ	Σήμερον ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ Θαβώρ	
3	δ′/ д	Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν	На горе высоце
4	πλ. α′/ ҁ	Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν	Приидите взыдем
5	ѕ		Преобразися Иисусе на горе

Let us have a closer look at the five stichera with theta combinations. Only three stichera are common to both the Greek and Russian corpora, namely: "Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός"/ "Иже прежде солнца свет Христос", "Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν μεταμορφωθεὶς ὁ σωτήρ"/"На горе высоце преображся Спас" and "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος κυρίου"/"Приидите взыдем на гору Господню". They can be considered in parallel. One Greek manuscript contains the sticheron prosomoion "Днесь на горе Фавор"/"Σημερον εν τω ορει Θαβωρ", and all the early Russian manuscripts consistently contain the sticheron "Преобразися Иисусе на горе".

Here are the features characteristic for the theta combinations.

1. Each of the stichera contains only one theta combination consisting of two theta complexes.
2. The combinations occur only in the stichera that contain other solitary theta complexes.
3. Theta combinations occur independently of the stichera functions in the service: they appear in ordinary stichera forming micro-cycles and in doxastika, they occur in idiomela but can be found also in prosomoia.
4. The theta combinations are stable – they are consistent in Greek and Russian sources.

This pattern is generally similar to the theta combinations found in other twelve Major Feasts. However, the recording of theta combinations in the Transfiguration stichera has a number of peculiarities, namely:

1. The theta combinations appear only in the second parts of the hymns: one of the stichera, "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν"/"Придите взыдем", has its theta combination in its centre (Figure 2).
2. The theta combinations always form a single semantic syntagma, associated with two contextual spheres.

Figure 6. Two contextual spheres

Sticheron and semantic syntagma	Translation
Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν / На горе высоце “ᾧ . καὶ φωνὴ τοῦ ρατρός”/“емоуже. и гласъ отечь”	to Him . and the voice of the Father”
Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός / Иже прежде солнца свет Христос “καὶ φωνὴ . ἄνωθεν”/“и гласъ свыше”	the voice . from above
Σήμερον ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ Θαβώρ “ἡμεῖς δὲ . ἀκαταπαύστως βοῶμεν”	and we . continuously exclaim
Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν / Приидите взыдем “φωτὶ . προσλάβωμεν φῶς”/“светъмь . оузримъ светъ”	let us receive light . from His Light
Преобразися Иисоусе на горе “с ними же . и мы” (света светом принимающе Христу поем)	We. join them (and receiving light from Light sing to Christ)

One is the sphere of a Sound or a Voice. This can be the divine voice of God the Father witnessing the divinity of Christ and addressing the spectators of the Transfiguration miracle (such are the fragments “to Him and the voice of the Father”, and “the voice from above”). Or this can be a human voice of a solemn collective song glorifying the Saviour (such as “and we continuously exclaim”). The other contextual sphere is associated with the Divine Light at Mount Tabor (such as “let us receive light from His Light”). In a sticheron its theta combination covers the two spheres: (for example, as in the fragment reading: “we join them (and receiving light from Light sing to Christ)”). Possibly, such accenting with theta combinations is no coincidence and reveals the super-topoi of the Transfiguration service[13].

Next comes the issue of the melos of theta combinations. Judging from the graphics of the four notations, there are ten different theta complexes that participate in the combinations, therefore two different theta complexes meet in each hymn. Unfortunately, neither Chartres, nor Coislin, nor Early Znamenny manuscripts give an opportunity for any reconstruction of melodies for theta complexes: they give no analytical records (Russian manuscripts even all the way down the 16th century), which is why we can discuss the melodic content of the neumes only in the context of the specifics of the component neumes of a theta complex.

There were three stages in our work with the musical materials. First, we deciphered theta combinations in the stichera recorded with Middle Byzantine notation, using the transcription methods of H.J.W. Tillyard[14], J. v.

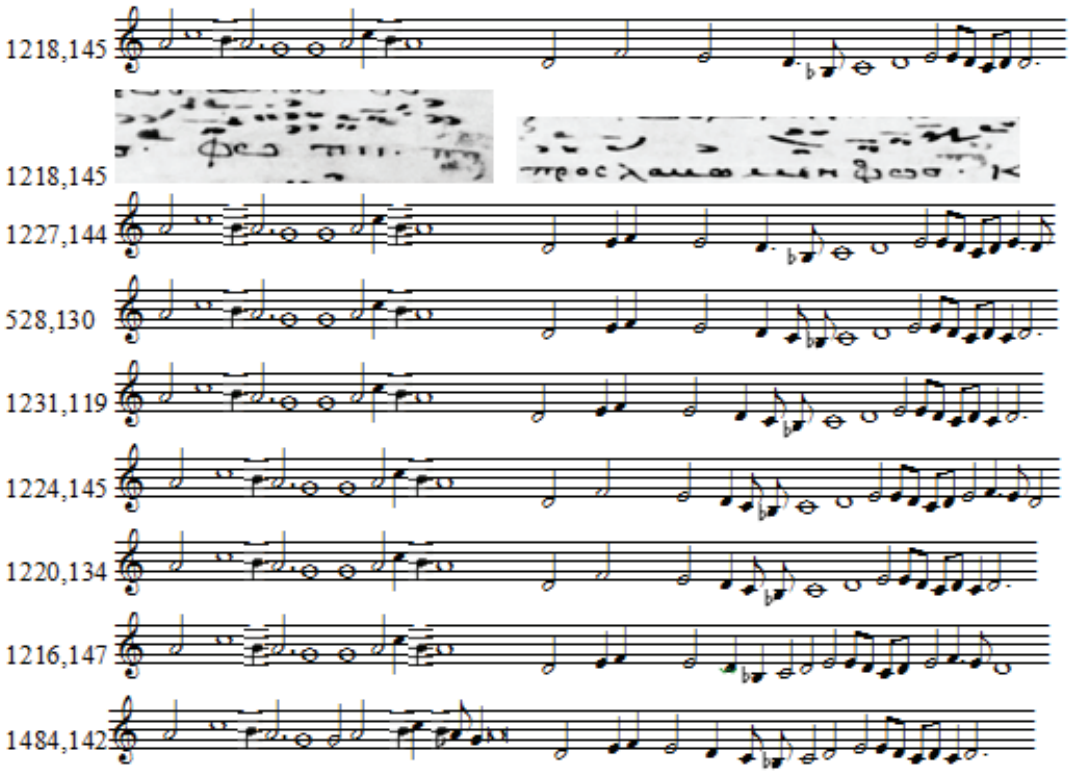
13 The given results develop the subject of poetic chant study of the Transfiguration, reflected in the following research: Ольга Владимировна Шангина, “Евангельское чтение и славник Преображению Господню”, *Древнерусское песнопение. Пути во времени*. Вып. 5 (Санкт-Петербург, 2011), 77–93; Кристина Дяблова, ”Герменевтические аспекты исследования древнерусского церковного пения (на примере песнопений двунадесятого праздника Преображения Господня)”. *Δόξα / Докса*, Вип. 2 (28) (2017), 174-191; Марина Егорова, ”Иеротопические исследования в музыкальной медиевистике: от интонации к сакральному пространству (о проблемах метода)”, *Древнерусское песнопение. Пути во времени*. Вып. 9 (Санкт-Петербург, 2021), 355-371

14 Henry Julius Wetenhall Tillyard, *Handbook of the Middle Byzantine Notation*, MMB Subsidia. Vol. 1 (Copenhagen, 1935).

Biezen[15] and Ch. Troelsgård[16] and our own transcription approach, in which one half-beat was chosen as the chronos protos for this purpose[17]. Then, using the method of retrospective transcription we tried to read the Greek paleonotated copies. Only after that, we brought in the Russian sources and searched for approaches to their comparative study. We find the retrospective transcription method very valuable for lack of other information and documents, capable of clarifying the melodic content of paleonotated sources.

Let us consider the melos of theta combinations in the three stichera common for the Greek and Russian sources.

Figure 8. Ἦχος πλ. α΄ "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος Κυρίου"/ Глас ϵ̃. "Придите взыдем на гору Господню" Sources of Middle-Byzantine notation



The sticheron "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν" is a multi-echos sticheron and in addition to mode plagal 1 it contains several medial martyrias belonging to mode 1 and mode 3. The theta combination falls on the words "φωτὶ. προσλάβωμεν φῶς"/"светом. узрим свет", which is a paraphrase of verse 9 from psalm 36 "in thy light shall we see light". According to the Middle Byzantine records it has a tetrachord "metabola"[18] or a skip into a higher tetraphony regarded as a sharp deviation into the modality of the related mode 1.

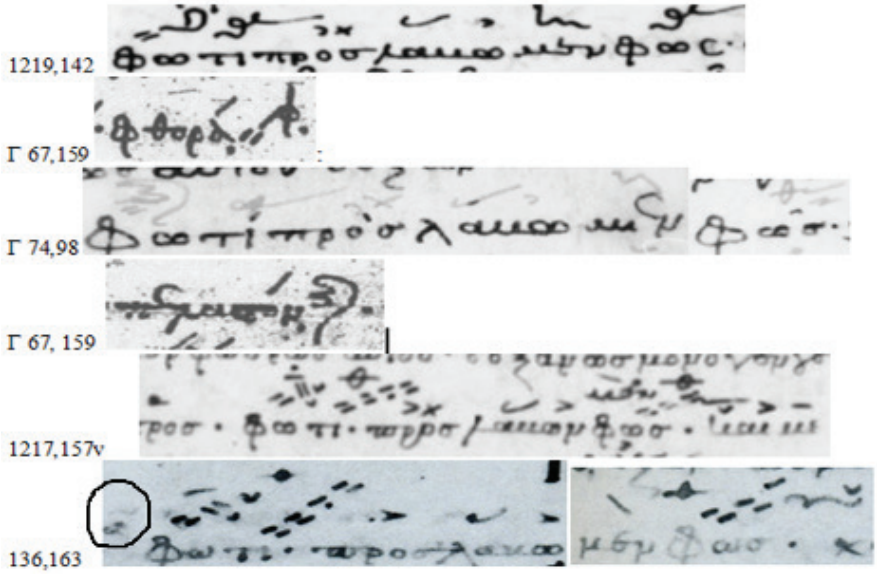
15 Jan van Biezen, "Die Hypothese eines Mensuralisten?", *Die Musikforschung* 35. Heft 2 (1982): 148-154.

16 Christian *Troelsgård*, Byzan*tine Neumes. A new introduction to the middle byzantine notation*, MMB Subsidia. Vol. 9 (Copenhagen, 2011).

17 Надежда Александровна Щепкина, "Служба Введения во храм Пресвятой Богородицы по греческим певческим рукописям X – начала XIX веков" (PhD diss., Санкт-Петербургский Институт истории искусств, 2017), 26-47.

18 Евгений Владимирович Герцман, *Энциклопедия древнеэллинской и византийской музыки* (Санкт-Петербург: Квадривиум, 2019), Т. 2, 431.

Figure 9. Ἦχος πλ. α΄ "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος Κυρίου"/ Глас ѳ. "Приидите взыдем на гору Господню" Sources of Chartres and Coislin notations



The same meaning is imported by the medial martyria of mode 1  in the Vienna Coislin Code 136. Thus, the first theta complex at the word "φωτὶ"/"светом" is a skip with respect to the previous and following musical narration and it sounds contrastingly high.

The same fragment in Chartres manuscript Sinai 1219 has a sign resembling 'phthora' from the Chartres abecedary Lavra Γ 67: 'phthora' (destruction or break up) is known to designate a metabola. The graphic image of this 'phthora' in another Chartres record Lavra Γ 74 resembles the ancient 'pelaston' from the same Lavra Γ 67 abecedary. These graphic parallels suggest that the ancient 'pelaston' and 'phthora' had somewhat close functions[19].

Figure 10. Ἦχος πλ. α΄ "Δεῦτε ἀναβῶμεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος Κυρίου"/ Глас ѳ. "Приидите взыдем на гору Господню" Sources of early Znamenny notation

19 Герцман, *Энциклопедия*, Т. 2, 887.

Russian records consistently display the 'enarxis' sign in the beginning of the first theta complex. Russian theory uses the term 'paraklit' for such 'enarxis'[20]. It is significant to note the unknown sign of 'kentema' before the paraklit (line 1,4,5 in figure 10). The entire theta complex sounds high, which is proved by the 'ypsilon' sign ('the magpie's foot') in Russian sources.

The second theta complex of this theta combination returns the melos to the low region. This is shown with the 'apostrophe' and 'khamili', backed up with a medial martyria echos plagal 1. The Russian manuscripts do not contain a special sign to mark the sharp downward movement; however, the 'ison' sign (or the 'stopitsa') can be interpreted as the return to the initial pitch level or to tmode plagal 1. At the same time the "xy" syllable, which in the late Russian manuscripts is transformed into the 'khabuva' theta complex, meaning that the scale shifts downwards.

Therefore, theta complexes in this combination correlate based on contrasting pitch. It should be also noted that these contrasting theta complexes reside on the cognate words "φωτὶ" (the symbol of the light of Tabor) and "φῶς" (the symbol of Christ), each being emphasized with its special colouring.

In the 2nd mode sticheron "Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός" its melos moves upwards into the high pitch zone with a skip of a fourth also at the beginning of the theta combination. The first theta complex of the Chartres copy also has the 'ypsilon' sign ('magpie's foot') to show its high musical culminating point. The second theta complex in this combination retains the same pitch level. The contrast between the theta complexes in this combination is achieved on account of their different sizes: the second complex is longer than the first and is densely filled with fine melismata. The second theta complex has a glimpse of metabola in one of the Middle Byzantine copies, the Panagios Taphos 528, where several sounds are marked with 'phthora'. Here we bring to the reader's attention two variants of transcription for this fragment.

20 Russian theoretical manuals, *Azbuki*, as starting from the 15th century, discuss only the paraklit sign, and do not know the enarxis sign. Christian *Troelsgård* gives general information about the functioning of parakletike, enarxis and rheuma in notations, but the issue of their differentiation has not been finally settled. See Troelsgård, Christian, "The rôle of Paraklitike in Palaeobyzantine Notations", *Palaeobyzantine Notations I* (A.A. Bredius Foundation, 1995): 81-99. As regards the meaning of enarxis in 13th-14th century Byzantine notations, the following can be said. Codex Barberinus gr. 300 (the above-quoted Tardo, 153 edition) places enarxis among the phthorai. According to the treatise by Gabriel Hieromonachos, the appearance of enarxis marks the beginning of a new melos in a new mode, "as if we begin afresh." *Abhandlung über den Kirchengesang*, hrsg. Ch. Hannik and G. Wolfram. Corpus scriptorium de re musica I. (Wien, 1985), 36-102. The meaning of the enarxis sign can be found on p. 40 in this publication. It is most likely enarxis that appears in the theta combinations of the Russian manuscripts under discussion. But this is a debatable issue. The two neumes, namely parakletike and enarxis, although featuring similar graphics, could have different functional meanings, which needs further research.

Figure 11. Ἦχος β΄ "Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός"/ Глас в҃. "Иже прежде солнца свет Христос" Sources of Middle-Byzantine notation

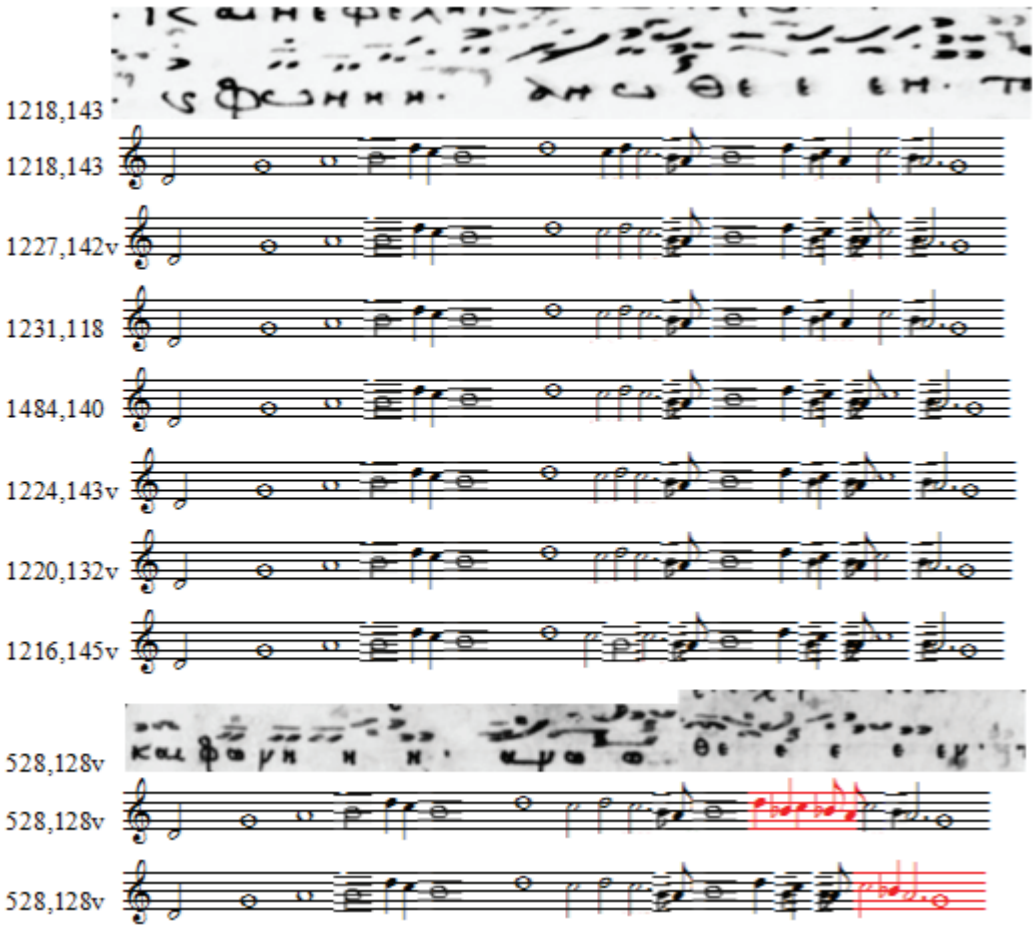
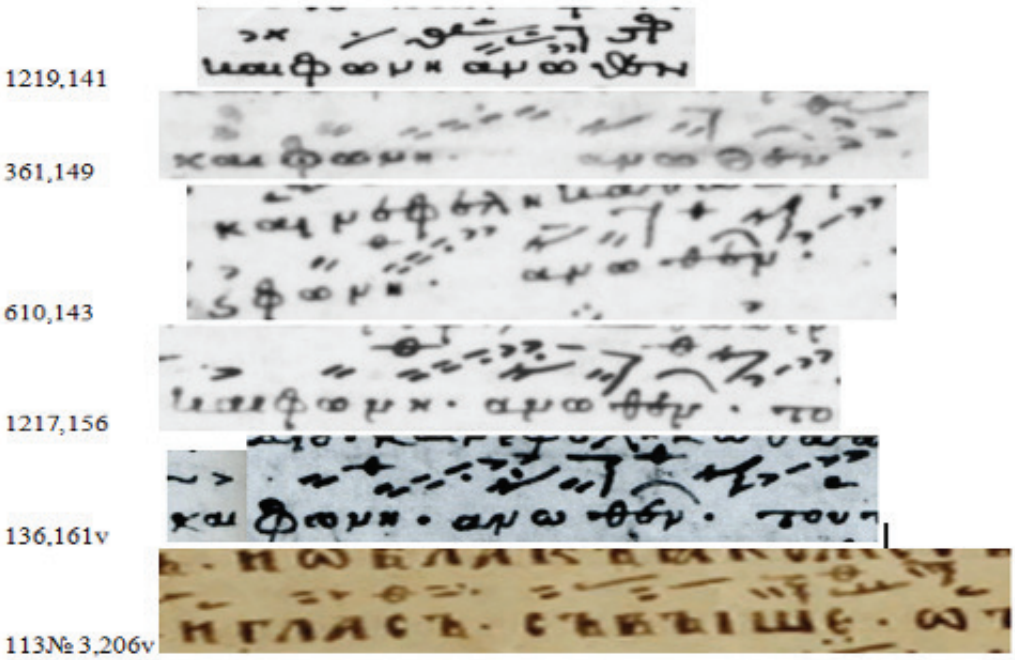


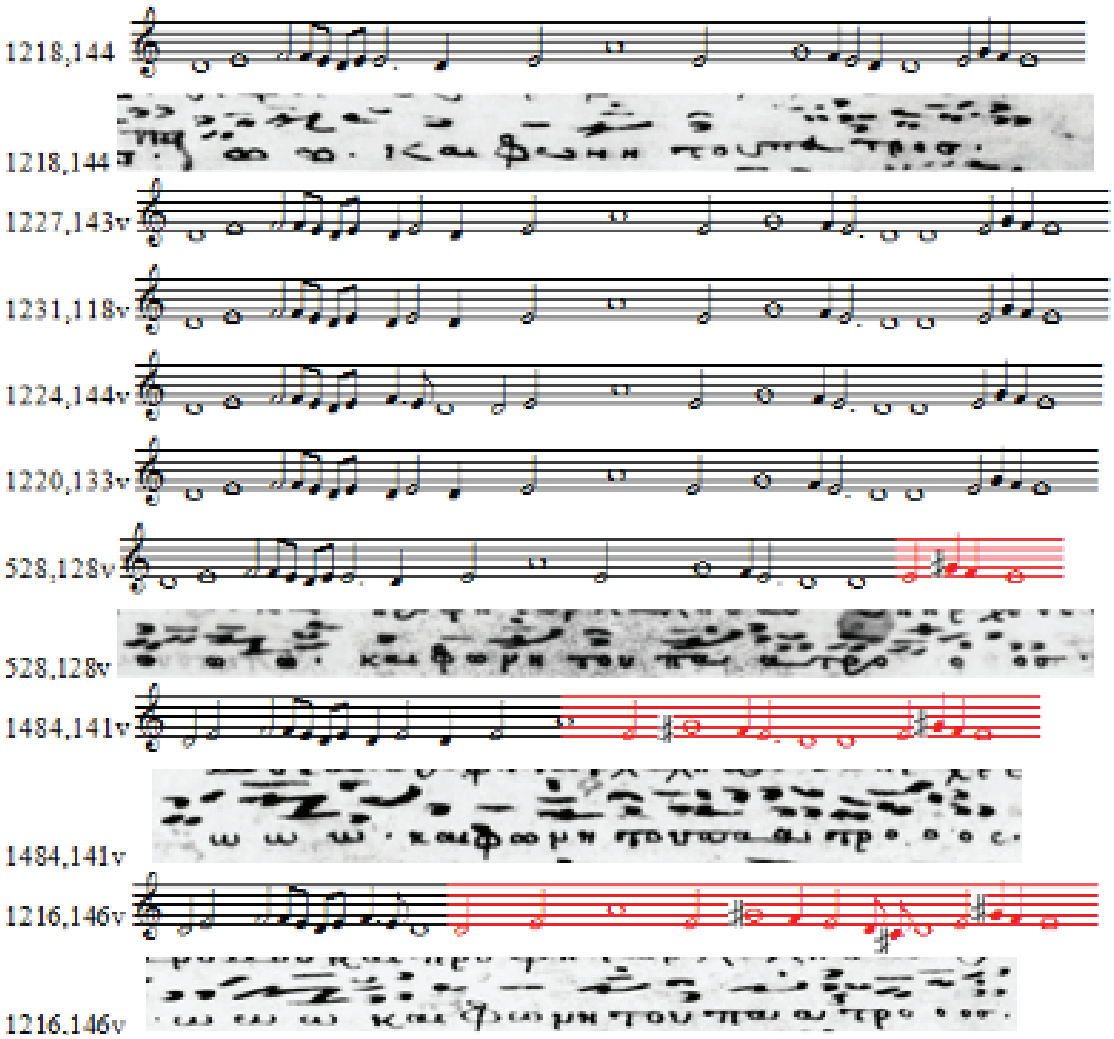
Figure 12. Ἦχος β΄ "Τὸ προήλιον σέλας Χριστός"/ Глас в҃. "Иже прежде солнца свет Христос" Sources of Chartres, Coislin and early Znamenny notations



The graphics of the Chartres copy also testify in favour of a metabola in the melos of this fragment, since the second theta complex in the theta combination contains the 'phthora' sign. However, the Coislin and the only early Russian 14th-century manuscripts do not have graphical prerequisites for a modal change in the said theta combination. Thus, the question of the obligatory character of the metabola remains undecided. It should be noted that the poetic text is in a special relation with the musical text. The theta complexes reside on two non-cognate, but phonetically similar rhyming words. This creates the effect of musical imagery: (καὶ φωνὴ . ἄνωθεν). Thus, it is as though the musical contrast of the two theta complexes contradicts the identity of the two lexemes with which the complexes reside. This situation is similar to what we saw in the previous sticheron.

Let us move on to the last of the three stichera.

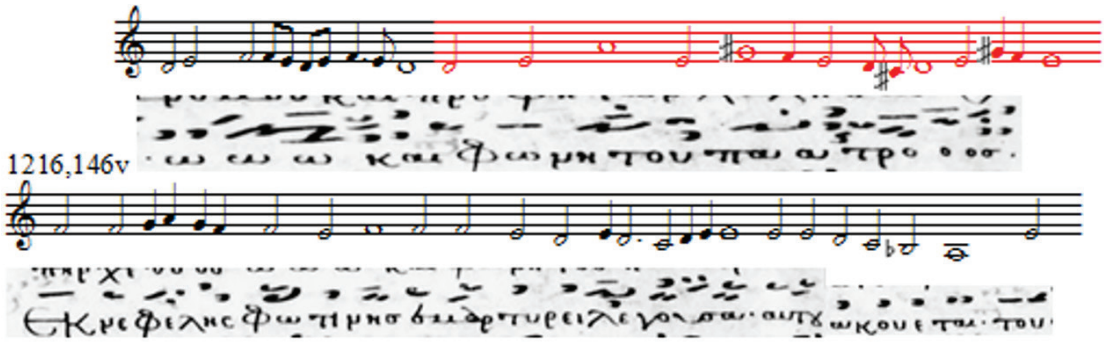
Figure 13. Ἦχος δ' "Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν"/ Глас д "На горе высоце"
Sources of Middle-Byzantine notation



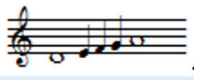
The combination of thetas in the mode 4 stichera "Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν μεταμορφωθεὶς ὁ σωτήρ"/"На горе высоце преобразися спас" falls on the syntagma "ᾧ . καὶ φωνὴ τοῦ πατρός" / "ему же . и глас отець". Three Middle

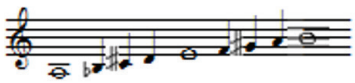
Byzantine manuscripts contain noteworthy designations – two 'phthoras' in the second theta complex and a middle martyria between the theta complexes. In the Panagios Taphos 528, 'phthora' indicates the change of mode at the very end of the fragment, at the word "πατρός"/"отечь". In the Sinai 1484, there is a 'phthora' appearing earlier, at the word "φωνὴ"/"глас". The 14th century Protheory (according to the copy from the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences Gr. 494[21]) terms this type 'phthora nenano'.

Figure 14. Phthora nenano



The modal texture marked with these 'phthoras' would be fairly difficult to read, if it were not for the two medial martyrias of mode plagal 1  and mode 2  framing the second theta complex in the theta combination from Sinai 1216. The transcription of this fragment that includes also two syllabic colons after the melismatic combination (before the next medial martiria) evidently implies a metabola and its further cancellation.

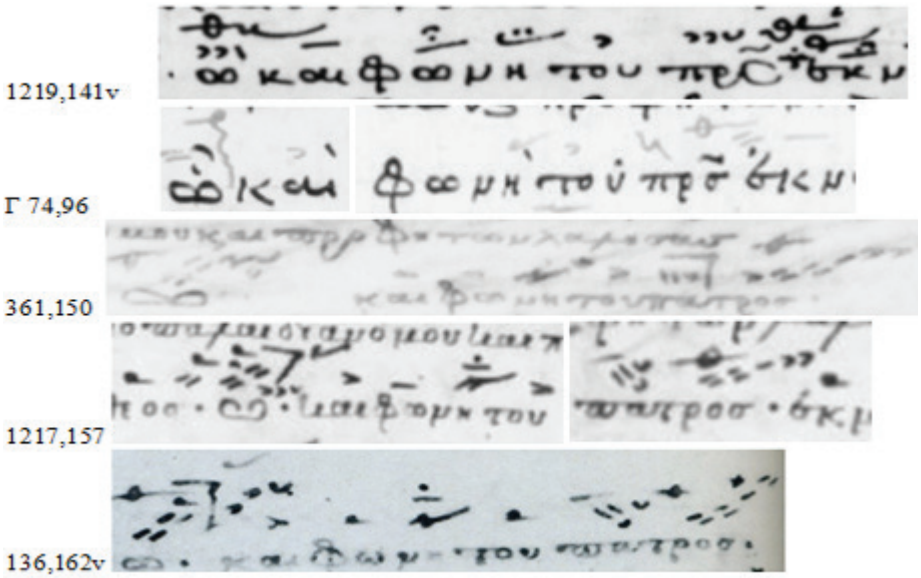
The "ему же/ᾧ" theta, similar to the preceding syllabic lines, is in the mode pl. I scale: 

The melismatic combination ends with a "connective" and a transition to the chromatic mode II: 

The following syllabic lines are already in the diatonic mode II and end in its lower tetraphony, mode pl. II. Such detailed indications of the middle martyria made it possible to decipher the 'nenano phthora'.

21 Евгений Владимирович Герцман, *Петербургский Теоретикон* (Одесса: Вариант, 1994), 54-55.

Figure 15. Ἦχος δ' "Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν"/ Глас д. "На горе высоце"
Sources of Chartres and Coislin notations



The Greek paleonotated copies, judging from their graphics, give almost no information about the presence or absence of a metabola, in the same manner as they are silent about the 'nenano phthora'. Only in some degree can we interpret as a phthora the sign at the word "εκ" at the exit from the fragment of combined thetas in the Chartres copy Sinai 1219.

Figure 16. Ἦχος δ' "Εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν"/ Глас д. "На горе высоце"
Sources of early Znamenny notation

At the same time, the early Russian copies are, so to say, screaming for the metabola. The 'enarxis' sign with an upper 'kentema' between the theta complexes in the theta combination, and, further on, the 'enarxis' sign with the upper point after the theta complexes in the theta combination. So many enarxes in a row are rare and are very indicative of the metabola presence.

Conclusion

Let us move on to the conclusions based on the material of theta combinations of the stichera of the Transfiguration.

The beginning of a theta combination is an event in monody and can often be emphasized by a transition to another mode or a register contrast.

1. In each theta combination, it is always the second theta complex that is either musically brighter, or more prolonged or contains a metabola. This ensures the energy of movement and the dynamics so that the hymn acquires a vector of development.
2. One of the theta complexes in a theta combination necessarily contains a metabola, confirmed by at least several manuscript sources.

Study of theta combinations will continue with further inquiry into the stichera of the remaining twelve Major Feasts.

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