



FROM THE CRETAN CHANTING TRADITION OF THE 16TH–17TH CENTURIES: A RADICAL AND ORIGINAL MUSICAL SETTING OF THE GREAT DOXOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

The Great Doxology is the most developed form of doxological hymn as part of the daily liturgical cycle of the Orthodox Church (*nychthemeron*). It is amongst the oldest sacred hymns, chanted since ancient times down to the present day.¹ The circumstances of the transmission of this text are known to those who have studied it and can be easily summarized as follows: the first verse of the Doxology, the well-known “*Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία*”,² is the hymn that was heard when Christ was born in Bethlehem, chanted by a choir of angels. The hymn was completed later by “*an unknown yet remarkable author of the early Church*” (“*ὑπὸ ἀγνώστου μὲν πλὴν ἀξιολόγου συγγραφέως τῆς πρώτης ἐκκλησίας*”);³ Symeon of Thessalonica, one of the first scholars to have studied and commented on the hymn, in his treatise *Περὶ τῆς θείας προσευχῆς* (*On Divine Prayer*), identifies in detail the interpolated parts thereof:

‘*Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἡσαΐου καὶ τοῦ Προδρόμου λαβοῦσα, διὰ τὸ πάθος καὶ τὴν σφαγὴν, Ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Πατρὸς, ἀπὸ τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου πλουτοῦσα, Ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. Ὁ αἴρων τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ κόσμου, πρόσδεξαι τὴν δέησιν ἡμῶν, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἡσαΐου ἔχουσα. Ὁ καθήμενος ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Πατρὸς, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, ἀπὸ τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου. τὸ δέ, Πρόσδεξαι, καὶ τό, Ἐλέησον, ἀπὸ τοῦ Δαβίδ. Ὅτι σὺ εἶ μόνος ἅγιος, σὺ εἶ μόνος Κύριος, Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, εἰς δόξαν Θεοῦ Πατρὸς. Ἀμήν. ἀπὸ τοῦ Παύλου. Καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν εὐλογῆσω σε, καὶ αἰνέσω τὸ ὄνομά σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος ἀπὸ τοῦ θείου Δαβίδ. τὰ λοιπὰ δὲ εὐχῆς καὶ δεήσεως, καὶ προφητικά.*’⁴

Therefore, the hymn of the Great Doxology, as used in divine worship, consists almost entirely of short expressions or verses from the Bible.

THE MUSICAL HISTORY OF THE HYMN

The Great Doxology, from the time its first appearance in the musical sources up to the present day, has undergone a long evolutionary process corresponding to the broader evolution of sacred music during the Byzantine and post-Byzantine era. Its musical setting is first recorded

1 J. Mearns, *The Canticles of the Christian Church Eastern and Western in Early and Medieval Times*, Cambridge 1914, 15.

2 Luke 2, 14.

3 Alex. S. Korakidis, *Αρχαῖοι ὕμνοι. 2. Ὁ ἀγγελικὸς ὕμνος (Gloria) “Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη...”*, Athens 1984, 45.

4 P. G. 155, 572D-573A.

in the manuscript sources of the second half of the 14th century. This is not a particularly creative period as far as Doxology settings are concerned. This is an anonymous setting of the hymn's initial hemistich and of its conclusion which includes the Trisagion Hymn in second chromatic mode.⁵ From the 15th century we have two settings of the hymn, by Manuel Gazis and John Plousiadenos respectively, both of them great melodists. The first setting in the form that was to be followed by all later compositions (melodically sophisticated and stressing all the verses) was composed in 1620 by Melchisedec of Rhaedestos. The melodic form of Melchisedec was adopted by all illustrious composers of the 17th century, who created some incomparable musical monuments in all the modes. The tendency of the 18th century towards shorter chants is also obvious in the settings of the Doxologies, resulting in shorter compositions. Later musical masters tried to create a mixed kind of Doxology chant, the slow-short melody. During the same period there were important changes in both the style and the technique of the setting, shifting towards a freer treatment of rhythm and melody.

ORIGINAL CRETAN COMPOSITIONS OF THE 17TH CENTURY

In the manuscript musical books of Cretan origin, written between the late 16th and the first half of the 17th century, there are some original settings of the hymn, using remarkable techniques of musical elaboration, but also with obvious additions of different texts referring to the angels at the end of the hymn. These are compositions by famous Cretan melodists such as Benediktos Episkopopoulos, Dimitrios Tamias and, to a lesser extent, Kosmas Varanis. The most complete version of the settings by these composers, together with the added poetical texts, is preserved in the Athenian codex NLG 963, ff. 149a-153a and 335a-339b:

- 149α Ἡ μεγάλη δοξολογία ψαλλομένη ἐν ταῖς ἀγρυπνεῖαις τῶν τε δεσποτικῶν καὶ θεομητορικῶν ἑορτῶν καὶ ἀγίων ἑορταζομένων· καὶ αὕτη καθὼς παρὰ κύρ Βενεδίκτου Ἐπισκοποπούλου· [ἦχος] πλ. β' Δόξα-δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῶ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώ-ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία Ὑμνοῦ- (φ. 149β) ὑμνοῦμέν σε, εὐλογοῦ-εὐλογοῦμέν σε, προσκυνοῦμε-προσκυνοῦμέν σε, εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι, διὰ τὴν μεγάλην σου δόξα -νε- δόξαν
- 150α Εἶτα ἄρχεται πάλιν ὁ πρῶτος χορὸς τό, Κύριε Βασιλεῦ, ἐπουράνιε καὶ καθ' ἑξῆς ἕως τό, Παράτεινον· εἶτα πάλιν ἄρχεται ὁ πρῶτος χορὸς τῶν ἀσμάτων [ἦχος πλ. β'] νεανῶ Νεανὲ ἄισατε, ψάλατε, δοξολογήσα-δοξολογήσατε καὶ ὑμνήσατε-ὑμνήσατε τὸν ὕμνον-τὸν ὕμνον τὸν ἄγγε- (φ. 150β) τὸν ἀγγελικόν-ἀγγελικόν· ἅγιος
- 150β Ἄγγελοι ἀνύμουν τὸ Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις ἡμεῖς δὲ σοὶ βοῶμεν· δόξα σοι, Χριστέ, ἡ σωτηρία πάν (φ. 151α) των, δόξα σοὶ ἅγιος ὁ Θεός
- 151α Αἶνεσιν προσάγει ἡ φύσις τῶν ἀγγέλων, Χριστέ Σωτήρ, βοῶσα· δόξα σοι, Χριστέ, ἡ σωτηρία πάντων, δό (φ. 151β) ξα σοὶ ἅγιοις]
- 151β Δόξα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῶ καὶ ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι· Σοὶ τῇ τριφύτῳ Τριάδι, πρέπει τρισάγιος ὕμνος· ἅ (φ. 152α) γιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης ὁ οἶκος τῆς δόξης σου, Κύριε
- 152α Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶ (φ. 152β) νων ἀμήν· Δεῦτε τῇ Πανάγνῳ βοήσωμεν συμφώνως, φωνήν τὴν τοῦ ἀγγέλου· χαῖ -νε- χαῖρε εὐλογημένη καὶ μόνη, χαῖρε χαρᾶς ἡ πρόξενο (φ. 153α) ος ἅγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς
- 153α Σύνθεσις κύρ Δημητρίου Νταμία καὶ πρωτοψάλτου Κρήτης· [ἦχος] πλ. α' Παράτεινον τὸ ἑλεός σου τοῖς γινώσκουσί σε ἅγιος ὁ Θεός
- 335α Δοξολογία μεγάλη καὶ ἀσματικόν, ποίημα κύρ Δημητρίου τοῦ Νταμία καὶ πρωτοψάλτου· [ἦχος] α' Δόξα-δόξα-δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῶ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία Αἰνοῦμέν σε, εὐλογοῦμέν σε, προσκυνοῦμέν σε, δοξολογοῦμέν σε, εὐχαριστοῦμέν σε, διὰ τὴν μεγάλην σου δόξαν Κύριε Βασιλεῦ, ἐπουράνι (φ. 335β) ε Θεέ, Πάτερ παντοκράτορ. Κύριε Υἱὲ μονογενές, Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα
- 335β Κύρ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Πλουσιαδηνοῦ, ὠραῖον πάνν· [ἦχος] α' Κύριε-Κύριε ὁ Θεός, ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Πατρός, ὁ αἰ (φ. 336α) ρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου· ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, ὁ αἴρων

5 For a more detailed account of the tradition of the first musical settings of the Great Doxology and the conclusions arrived at, see my article: "Ἡ πρωτοφανέρωση τοῦ μέλους τῆς Μεγάλης Δοξολογίας στὶς χειρόγραφες πηγές τοῦ ἰδ' αἰ.", in Συμβολὴ στὴ Μνήμη Γεωργίου Στ. Αμαργιανάκη (1936-2003), Athens 2013, 110-128.

- τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ κόσμου
- 336α Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Ἰωάννου Πλουσιαδηνοῦ] [ἤχος] α' Πρόσδεξαι τὴν δέησιν ἡμῶν πρόσδεξαι
(φ. 336β) ὁ καθήμενος ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς
- 336β [ἤχος] α' Ὅτι σὺ εἶ μόνος ἅγιος, σὺ εἶ μόνος Κύριος, σὺ εἶ μόνος ὑψιστος, Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ σὺν τῷ
ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι, εἰς δόξαν Θεοῦ Πατρὸς (φ. 337α) ἀμήν
- 337α Κύρ Δημητρίου [Ταμία] [ἤχος] α' Νε Αἰσατε, ψάλατε, δοξολογήσατε-δοξολογήσατε καὶ
ὑμνήσατε-ὑμνήσατε τὸν ὕμνον-τὸν ὕμνον τὸν ἀγγε-τὸν ἀγγελικόν- (φ. 337β) ἀγγελικόν
- 337β Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Δημητρίου Ταμία] [ἤχος] α' Ἄγγελοι ἀνύμνου τὸ Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις ἡμεῖς δὲ σοὶ
βοῶμεν· δόξα σοι, Χριστέ, ἡ σωτηρία πάντων, δόξα σοι
- Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Δημητρίου Ταμία] [ἤχος] α' Αἶνεσιν προσάγει ἡ φύσις τῶν ἀγγέλων, (φ. 338α)
Χριστέ Σωτήρ, βοῶσα· δόξα σοι, ἡ σωτηρία πάντων, δόξα σοι
- 338α Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Δημητρίου Ταμία] [ἤχος α'] Σοὶ τῇ τριφώτῳ Τριάδι, πρέπει τρισάγιος ὕμνος-
τρिसάγιος ὕμνος-τρिसάγιος ὕμνος· ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅ (φ. 338β) γιος Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης ὁ
οἶκος τῆς δόξης σου, Κύριε
- 338β Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Δημητρίου Ταμία] [ἤχος] α' Δεῦτε τῇ Πανάγνω βοήσωμεν- βοήσωμεν-βοήσωμεν
συμφώνως, φωνῆν τὴν τοῦ ἀγγέλου· χαῖρε-χαῖρε εὐλογημένη καὶ μόνη, χαῖρε (φ. 339α) χαρᾶς
πρόξενος
- 339α Τοῦ αὐτοῦ [Δημητρίου Ταμία] [ἤχος] πλ. α' Ἄγιος ὁ Θεός
Τὸ αὐτὸ ψάλλεται ἐκ τρίτου· εἶτα τό, Δόξα [ἤχος] πλ. α' Δόξα Πατρί
- 339β Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ· Νε ἅγιος ἀθάνατος
[ἤχος] πλ. δ' Αβουα-ἅγιος ὁ Θεός

MORPHOLOGICAL AND COMPOSITIONAL REMARKS

In what follows I shall comment on the fundamental morphological traits of the poems relative to the hymn under study, set by Benediktos Episkopopoulos and Dimitrios Tamias.

First I shall discuss the composition of Benediktos. This famous *protopapas* (first priest) from Rethymnon set the Doxology chanted “ἐν ταῖς ἀγρυπνίαις τῶν τε δεσποτικῶν καὶ θεομητορικῶν ἑορτῶν καὶ ἀγίων ἑορταζομένων” in chromatic second plagal mode. There is an obvious compositional sophistication in some words of the first two verses which are enlarged by elongation of their syllables. The melos of the verses is imposed by means of the musical position of the Paracletic. The synonyms that form the second verse, with their overlapping meanings, are partially repeated, thus creating more extended musical periods. The rich semantic field of the word “δόξαν” forces Benediktos to repeat the phrase “μεγάλην σου δόξαν”, with a different musical setting at that, as well as with a progressive melodic climax.

The composer omits the setting of the remaining verses, as his main concern is to notate the music of the extra-psalmic verses interpolated by him after “Παράτεινον τὸ ἔλεός σου...”; these are clearly referred to as canticles (“ἄσματα”) in the manuscript’s inscription. Furthermore, the morphological and melodic structure of these verses shows a partially kalophonic expression, since the term “ἄσμα” has here connotations of melisma and sophistication. This elaborated musical technique applied to the interpolated verses, especially in a traditional hymn unaltered throughout the centuries both textually and melodically, is justified by the use of Benediktos’s composition, intended to be chanted “ἐν ταῖς ἀγρυπνίαις τῶν τε δεσποτικῶν καὶ θεομητορικῶν ἑορτῶν καὶ ἀγίων ἑορταζομένων”. At the very beginning, the composer places a brief introductory melodic period in order to achieve familiarity with the mode; this period essentially marks the position of the second plagal mode. Subsequently, in an endeavour to fill liturgical time and emphasize the messages he intends to convey to believers, he resorts to the repetition of some words, especially in the first verse, thus developing more extended musical periods, whereas in a few cases (namely on the words “ψάλατε”, “χαῖρε”, “ἅγιος”) he interpolates the consonant *v* between vowels for euphonic reasons.

The second composition, written by Dimitrios Tamias, first chanter (*protopsaltis*) of Chandax, follows the same method as Benediktos. As a disciple of Benediktos, Dimitrios continued the chanting tradition of his master, thus confirming the observations of Manuel Chrysafis

concerning the imitation of older melodists by younger ones who follow their trail.⁶ In his own composition, Dimitrios uses the first diatonic mode. His intention is to create a sophisticated melody and in order to achieve this goal he follows, as a general rule, his master's technique. To be more precise, he doubles words through repetition, using different melismatic forms to avoid monotony, resorts to transient sound alternations to achieve melodic variety and sets the phrase "τρισάγιος ὕμνος" three times in order to glorify all three persons of the Holy Trinity.

TEXTUAL ADDITIONS

The technique of melodic sophistication and melismatic elaboration is sustained by extending the text through the addition to, or interpolation in, a pre-existing psalm of another text, either borrowed from a different hymn or created *ad hoc* by the composer. According to musicological research, this phenomenon is encountered in the setting of the so-called great Anoixantaria, the Polyeleoi, the Megalynaria and some Encomia Theotokia⁷ and is one of the fundamental characteristics of kalophonia, developed in the late 13th century by the eminent composers of the time. The extra-psalmonic text refers to a specific religious feast that the composers wish to emphasize. What is frequently observed is a formal "legalization" of the whole composition through its inclusion in the order of the feast for which it has been composed, and its acceptance as an indissociable part of the service for that feast. There are even a few cases⁸ in which this added part is incorporated into the Typika and transmitted together with formal instructions for the celebration of a specific service. A very interesting and telling example is provided by the configuration that will be discussed below: it is recorded in a Typikon of Simonos Petras Monastery (1566) and regulates the celebration of the service of Matins of the Feast of the Archangels:

...Εἶτα ὁ πολυέλεος, μετὰ δὲ τὸν πολυέλεον ἀντίφωνον τῆς ἐκλογῆς, ψαλμὸς ργ'· Εὐλόγει, ἡ ψυχὴ μου, τὸν Κύριον, Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς μου· ψάλλομεν δὲ εἰς τὴν ἐκλογὴν καὶ τὰ ἐγκώμια τὰ τριαδικά, ἅπερ εἰσὶ ταῦτα ὕμνοι εἰς ἀντίφωνα τῶν Ἀσωμάτων· Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις, δὶς. Ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος εἶ ὁ Θεὸς παντοκράτωρ, δὶς. Ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ, δὶς (ἅπερ λέγονται ἐκ δευτέρου). Δεῦτε πάντες ἄσμα μέλψωμεν Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν. Ἀλληλουῖα. Σοὶ τῷ πάντων ποιητῇ πρέπει αἶνος, ὕμνος πρέπει, δόξα καὶ μεγαλωσύνη εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας. Σοὶ τῇ τριφύτῳ Τριάδι πρέπει Τρισάγιος ὕμνος. Ἅγιος, ἅγιος, ἅγιος Κύριος Σαβαώθ, πλήρης ὁ οἶκος τῆς δόξης σου, Κύριε. Ἄγγελοι ἀνύμνου τὸ Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις, ἡμεῖς δὲ σοὶ βοῶμεν· δόξα σοι, Χριστέ, ἡ σωτηρία πάντων, δόξα σοι. Ἀρχάγγελοι, ἄγγελοι, θρόνοι, κυριότητες, τὰ χερουβὶμ καὶ σεραφίμ, δοξάσατε τὸν Κύριον, λέγοντες· Ἀλληλουῖα. Δόξα, Αἴνεσιν Τρισάγιον ἢ φύσις τῶν ἀνθρώπων, Χριστέ Σωτήρ, βοῶσα· δόξα σοι Χριστέ, ἡ σωτηρία πάντων, δόξα σοι. Καὶ (νῦν), Δεῦτε τῇ Πανάγνω βοήσωμεν συμφώνως φωνὴν τὴν τοῦ ἀγγέλου· Χαίρε, εὐλογημένη καὶ μόνη χαίρε, χαρᾶς ἢ πρόξενος. Πληρουμένων δὲ τῶν ἀντιφώνων, κάθισμα καὶ ἀνάγνωσις...⁹

This typical configuration, which I use here to corroborate the above thesis, is in almost complete correspondence with the description of the order and mode of chanting of the Great Doxology recorded in the musical manuscript NLG 963: by correlating the these two cases, I intend to provide a solution to the question of why these radical and original settings were created in the first place.

The Typikon of the Simonos Petras Monastery records what is chanted after the Polyeleos. This consists of selected verses from Psalm 103 and of five Trinitarian Encomia, which are short extra-psalmonic texts written especially for the celebration of the Feast of the Archangels. At the

6 Dimitri E. Conomos, *The treatise of Manuel Chrysaphes the Lambadarios: On the theory of the art of chanting and on certain erroneous views that some hold about it (Mount Athos, Iviron Monastery MS 1120 [July, 1458])* (Corpus Scriptorum de re Musica II), Vienna 1985, 40-46.

7 On the addition of text in transmitted papadic compositions, see Gr. Th. Stathis, *Οἱ ἀναγραμματισμοὶ καὶ τὰ μαθήματα τῆς βυζαντινῆς μελοποιᾶς*, Athens 1979, 69-70, 137, and, especially, Achilleas Chaldeaques, *Ὁ πολυέλεος στὴν βυζαντινὴ καὶ μεταβυζαντινὴ μελοποιᾶ*, Athens 2003, 553 ff.

8 Cf. the Typikon of the Library of Paris 388 (year 1573), in Al. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgitseskich rukopisej*, vol. III, Hildesheim 1965, 341.

9 Al. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgitseskich rukopisej*, vol. III, Hildesheim 1965, 333.

end of the selection, there are two poems (a Triadikon and a Theotokion), chanted after the verses of the lesser Doxology. On the other hand, the musical codex NLG 963 includes two settings of the Great Doxology, composed by two Cretan musicians, to which are added five extra-psalmic texts, the so-called “canticles” (“*ἄσματα*”, according to the manuscript’s inscription). The first three are transmitted with a double refrain (ephymnion) – the doxological invocation *Δόξα σοι Χριστέ, ἡ σωτηρία πάντων, δόξα σοι*, and part of the Trisagion (*ἅγιος ὁ Θεός* for the first text, *ἅγιος Ἰσχυρός* for the second one and *ἅγιος Ἀθάνατος* for the third one) – whereas the other two, the Trinitarian chant and the Theotokion, appear under the verses of the lesser Doxology.

The instruction concerning the manner of chanting the added Trinitarian encomia together with the concluding doxastic texts for the Feast of the Archangels displays an almost perfect correspondence with musical practice as recorded in older manuscript sources. In the Athenian codex 2046, from the year 1453, the composition is introduced using the following characteristic formula: “*ἕτερον ἀντίφωνον ψαλλόμενον, εἰς τὴν Σύναξιν τῶν Ἀσωμάτων, ποιηθέν, παρὰ τοῦ δομεστίκου κυροῦ Νικηφόρου τοῦ Ἡθικοῦ καὶ ἐτέρων ἤχος πλ. β*”.¹⁰ Examination of this composition is revealing: to selected psalmic verses are added, in place of refrains, the exact same poetical texts provided by the aforementioned instruction in the Typikon, the only divergence being the absence of the verse “*Ἄισατε, ψάλατε, δοξολογήσατε καὶ ὑμνήσατε τὸν ὕμνον τὸν ἀγγελικόν*” melodized by the Cretans. Yet another remarkable point is the following instruction of the codicographer to the future chanters of the composition, written in the lower margin of f. 132a: “*ἀρχάγγελοι ἄγγελοι: ἄγγελοι ὑμνήσατε: αἰνοῦσί σε στρατιαὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων: δεῦτε τῆ πανάγνω: ταῦτα εὐρήσης ἐν τῷ λατρῖνῳ πολυελέω*”. This indication shows that the copyist, in order to avoid writing out the musical setting a second, urges chanters to search for it in the same codex, but within the Latrinos Polyeleos.¹¹

Study of this musical manuscript in question leads to some interesting conclusions:

The addition of the extra-psalmic poetical texts to the antiphon chanted at the Feast of the Archangel as well as its musical setting are related to an excellent composer of the second half of the 13th century, Nikephoros Ethikos;

In the so-called Latrinos Polyeleos, and more precisely in its first stasis, Psalm 131, the setting of a psalmic verse and of the refrain *ἀλληλοῦῖα* coexists with the setting of a psalmic verse with the addition of extra-psalmic texts in the place of the refrain: these texts refer to major feasts related to Christ, the Mother of God, the Angels and great Saints. The composer chooses the text corresponding to the feast either from the inexhaustible hymnographic tradition or from the biblical texts, though sometimes he may write a new text to replace the common refrain *ἀλληλοῦῖα* and stress this text melodically in order to emphasize the feast¹². This new technique is best represented by the renowned composer Ioannis Koukouzelis to whom we owe the addition and the musical setting of the above-mentioned extra-psalmic poems in the Latrinos Polyeleos;

The composition by Nikephoros Ethikos is set in second plagal mode, while the texts added to the verses of the Latrinos Polyeleos are set by Koukouzelis in the first mode.

A more thorough examination of the above tradition reveals that:

The section of the Latrinos Polyeleos under discussion is added in some manuscripts with the indication “*ἀλλάγματα ἀσματικά*”¹³, which can be easily interpreted using the melodic technique and general morphological structure of this part in comparison to the other verses of

10 NLG 2406, ff. 131a-132a.

11 The above mentioned poems, which have been added as refrains to some verses of the 131th Psalm, all set to music by Ioannis Koukouzelis, are anthologized in codex NLG 2406 as follows: *Εὐλογήσατε τὸν Κύριον ἄρχάγγελοι, ἄγγελοι* (f. 95b), *Ἄγγελοι ὑμνήσατε* (f. 96a), *Αἰνοῦσί σε στρατιαὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων* (f. 96a), *Εὐλογήσατε τὸν Κύριον ἄρχάγγελοι, ἄγγελοι* (f. 95b).

12 For a thorough discussion of the subject, see Achilleas Chaldeaques, *Ὁ πολυέλεος σπὴν βυζαντινὴ καὶ μεταβυζαντινὴ μελοποιΐα*, Athens 2003.

13 See the codices NLG 2401, f. 89a, and NLG 906, f. 100a.

the Latrinos Polyeleos set in the same way. Furthermore, it is obvious that the use of the term “*ἄσματα*” by the Cretan composers in order to describe the melodized extra-psalmic texts of the Great Doxology aims at defining and justifying this very technique;

This technique, which was established and spread during the 13th and 14th centuries, was also used by later composers who imitated the older masters, such as Benediktos Episkopopoulos and, to a lesser extent, Dimitrios Tamias, whose settings of verses of the aforementioned Polyeleos are quite remarkable¹⁴.

In addition, one might point to the imitation of the Constantinopolitan tradition in setting the chanted *heirmoi*¹⁵ by Episkopopoulos and Tamias, but also to the influence of the Byzantine musical tradition of the Akathist Hymn on the corresponding setting by Episkopopoulos, who did not hesitate to admit that “*ἐπηκολούθει καὶ οὐ κατεφρόνει τὰς ἐκείνων [τῶν παλαιῶν διδασκάλων] μεθόδους*”¹⁶.

THE CASE OF THE GREAT DOXOLOGY

The evaluation of the aforementioned data leads me to the following conclusions regarding the original setting of the Great Doxology by the Cretan composers:

- The two compositions display an innovative textual form which is not encountered elsewhere in the manuscript tradition of the hymn;
- the addition, for the first and last time in the hymn’s history, of an extra-psalmic part, is in fact an imitation of the practice of adding extra-psalmic texts to the Polyeleos by the most renowned Byzantine melodists;
- the poetical texts interpolated in the Great Doxology are in fact loans from the antiphon of the Domestikos Nikephoros Ethikos “*εἰς τὴν Σύναξιν τῶν Ἀσωμάτων*”, with the exception of the Theotokion chanted after the second verse of the lesser Doxology “*Δεῦτε τῇ πανάγνῳ, βοήσωμεν συμφώνως*”, which comes from the “*ἀλλάγματα ἀσματικά*” of the Latrinos Polyeleos composed by Koukouzelis;
- musical communication between Turkish-occupied Constantinople and Venetian-occupied Crete remained unbroken, and younger melodists were proud to imitate Byzantine compositions;
- the description of the added poems as “*ἄσματα*”, beyond the imitation of the melodizing techniques of the Polyeleos, is a token of the adoption of the terminology used by Byzantine composers for artistical and kalophonically elaborate compositions;
- first Benediktos and, later, his disciple Dimitrios, reformed the Great Doxology, by ending it with short poems referring to the glorification of God by the angels, in exactly the same way as in the first verse;
- the probable reason for the addition of extra-psalmic text and for the more melismatic elaboration thereof is the need to extend the duration of the chanting of the Great Doxology with a view to adapting it to the requirements of vigils “*τῶν τε δεσποτικῶν καὶ θεομητορικῶν ἑορτῶν καὶ ἁγίων ἑορταζομένων*”;
- in addition to the adoption of the poetical texts used by Ethikos in the antiphon, Benediktos chose to set his composition in the same mode used by the former, the hard chromatic second plagal. On the other hand, Dimitrios, in order to convey a celebratory tone and a triumphal conclusion to the service of Matins, sets his own composition in the magnificent first mode, imitating in this the technique used by Koukouzelis to melodize the texts added to the verses of the Latrinos Polyeleos.

14 On the regular addition of extra-psalmic texts to polyeleos compositions by Cretan melodists, see Achilleas Chaldeakes, *op. cit.*, 561-567.

15 See, for example, the Codex Sinaiticus 1452, f. 153a ff.

16 Koutloumoussiou 448, f. 2a.

My intention in the present paper was to show a forgotten image of liturgical and chanting practice in 16th-17th century Crete, as created by two important Cretan composers. This is an original image in which the traditional chanting components of the Byzantine psaltic art are combined with elements that are obviously new, resulting from these composers' talent. Followed by many other excellent melodists, they made their own contribution to the evolution of the psaltic art, leaving their legacy to future generations as we are reminded by the inscription that accompanies their compositions in the manuscripts: *“καθὼς γράφονται καὶ ψάλλονται παρὰ τῶν κρητῶν μουσικῶν”*. Their original creations on hymn texts both known and unknown, their settings in modes and styles that transcend traditional compositional techniques, the new melodizing elements added by them, all greatly contributed to the evolution of the psaltic art in a period during which historical conditions had led to a new reality, resulting in the stagnation of the Byzantine musical tradition. I also believe that their works constitute an attempt to adapt to the new liturgical needs of their time rather than a radical attempt at introducing and imposing new liturgical customs and chanting practices.