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AN ABBREVIATED HEIRMOLOGION

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This paper describes the process behind the on-going work at St Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery (South Canaan, Pennsylvania) to produce an abbreviated and practical Heirmologion to meet the needs of English-speaking monasteries and parishes within the tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Heirmologion is unique among liturgical books in that it contains a single genre of hymn: the heirmos (Gr. Εἰρμὸς, Slv. Ирмосъ), that is, the hymn at the beginning of each of the nine odes of a canon, most often sung at Matins and Compline. There does not, as yet, exist a comprehensive or widely available anthology of heirmoi in the English language. The music staff at St Tikhon's Monastery,¹ therefore, is endeavouring to fill this gap in the library of liturgical books in English.

The compilation of an abbreviated Heirmologion in English was first attempted in 2011, but only the text of the Tone 1 heirmoi from the Octoechos was compiled. Four years later the idea for an English Heirmologion was revived by the need for such a collection at St Tikhon's Monastery. Theodore Heckman, former music director at St Tikhon's Seminary, contributed a considerable amount of work by notating heirmoi from the Sunday Octoechos, Menaion, Triodion, and Pentecostarion, primarily for mixed choirs. Archimandrite Sergius, the monastery's current abbot and former music director, has taken further steps in compiling the text for heirmoi from the weekday Octoechos canons. Until 2017, therefore, the monastic male choir either sang from old mixed choir scores or from text, but there was no standard collection of notated heirmoi that was adaptable to the small choir's daily needs.

With consideration for these needs the first part of the present collection was submitted as a senior honours project, titled "An Abbreviated Irmologion: The Octoechos," in 2017 at St Tikhon's Seminary by Paul Kappanadze. It contained the heirmoi for the canons in the Octoechos and two commonly used canons to the Theotokos. This initial anthology has since been expanded as heirmoi from the canons of the Festal Menaion, Lenten Triodion, and Pentecostarion have been and continue to be added. Although this is an on-going project, the entire process has been informed by choices made at its inception: namely, decisions about the contents, the texts to be used, the chant melodies, notation, and how to organize the contents.

¹ This project is currently spearheaded by Paul Kappanadze, Assistant Choir Director at St Tikhon's, in cooperation with the liturgical publications arm of the monastery press: Hieromonk Herman (Majkrzak), Hierodeacon David (Armstrong), and Benedict Sheehan, Monastery Choir Director.

CONTENTS

In no way is this compilation of heirmoi meant as a comprehensive or critical edition of an Heirmologion. Instead, it is abbreviated in an attempt to create a practical source for those who follow Russian liturgical practice, specifically as it relates to the common way of combination of multiple canons in a service. For instance, if an ode at Matins has two or more canons, only the first heirmos of the first canon is sung; the rest of the heirmoi from the other canons are not included. The singers only require text and music for an heirmos at the very beginning and, if appointed, a *katavasía* at the end. This means that the abbreviated Heirmologion does not include every heirmos that can be found in the liturgical books, especially the Octoechos. Since contemporary practice calls for no other heirmoi to be sung in an ode until the *katavasía* at the end, the Octoechos section only includes the heirmoi of the first canons for each day of the week.

In this abbreviated Heirmologion the selected heirmoi from the Octoechos come first, together with commonly used canons to the Theotokos. These are followed by heirmoi from the Menaion, including the twelve great feasts and other notable feasts and saints:

September: 8, Nativity of the Theotokos; 14, Exaltation of the Cross
 November: 8, Synaxis of the Archangels; 21, Entry of the Theotokos
 December: 6, *St. Nicholas*; 25, *Nativity of Christ*²
 January: 1, *Circumcision of Christ*; 6, *Theophany*; 30, *Three Holy Hierarchs*
 February: 2, Meeting of the Lord
 March: 25, Annunciation
 June: 24, *Nativity of the Forerunner*; 29, Apostles Peter & Paul
 August: 6, Transfiguration; 15, Dormition; 29, *Beheading of the Forerunner*

The last two sections are comprised of heirmoi from the Lenten and Paschal cycles:

Katavasiae for the Preparatory Sundays
 Heirmoi and *Katavasiae* for Weekdays of Great Lent (Monday to Saturday of each week)
Katavasiae for the Third Sunday (Sunday of the Cross)
 Lazarus Saturday
Palm Sunday
Holy Week
 Pascha (heirmoi only)
 The Sundays of Pascha (Thomas Sunday to the 5th Sunday)
 The Midfeast of Pentecost
 Ascension
Pentecost

The most considerable abbreviation to this Heirmologion is that it excludes the many more heirmoi found throughout the Menaion. Given the large number of

2 Italics indicate sections that these are incomplete to date.

canons provided in the Menaion for the entire liturgical year, the total number of heirmoi is immense. The present abbreviated Heirmologion contains approximately 500 heirmoi, making it considerable in size, but much smaller than its historical predecessors, which sometimes include as many as 2,000 heirmoi.³ The additional heirmoi from the Menaion, however, should not be overlooked, and it is hoped that they will be addressed in the future.

CHOICE OF TEXTS

Once the above contents were outlined, the next step in the project was to select adequate translations, a perennial problem in the English-speaking Orthodox world. There does not, as yet, exist a comprehensive or widely available anthology of heirmoi in the English language, so the needed heirmoi were taken from the various liturgical books and organized as needed. Texts for the Sunday canons from the Octoechos, and many of the first canons of the great feasts are from the Orthodox Church in America's Department of Liturgical Music and Translation, with the permission of the department's chairperson, David Drillock.

Many of the daily Octoechos texts are from the *Octoechos* from the Monastery of the Protecting Veil in Bussy-en-Othe, France. Other festal texts and those for the Lenten Triodion are from the *Festal Menaion*, *Lenten Triodion*, and *Lenten Triodion Supplement* translated by Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) and Mother Maria who also translated the aforementioned *Octoechos*. Texts have also been sourced from various musical publications from St Vladimir's Seminary Press (see bibliography), and Mother Maria's *Pentecostarion*. Care was taken to edit the above texts—especially those from the Monastery of the Protecting Veil—for accuracy, singability, and general stylistic consistency for the many texts from a variety of sources.⁴ The result is a body of texts that are not glaringly disparate, but demonstrate a certain uniformity.

CHANT MELODIES AND NOTATION

To make this abbreviated Heirmologion as practical and useful as possible, the heirmoi provided are set to musical notation. Chant melodies were chosen from the already established body of canon melodies used in the Russian Orthodox tradition (especially by the Orthodox Church in America and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia) as exemplified by the monasteries of St Tikhon of Zadonsk and Holy Trinity (Jordanville, New York), and countless other institutions.

In its current form, however, this tradition does not have a unified system of canon melodies that neatly fit within chant systems. This results in a mixture of Abbreviated Znamenny, Kievan, Greek, Abbreviated Greek or Common Chant

³ For example, Athos Laura B 32—the oldest extant Heirmologion—contains over 300 *akolouthiae* [canon sets] of heirmoi, each set containing between two and eight or more heirmoi, meaning it could contain as many as 2,000 discrete heirmoi, depending on how many heirmoi are in each set. The *Irmologii* published by the Russian Synodal *Typographia* in 1890 contains approximately 1,042 discrete heirmoi (see Simon Harris, "The 'Kanon' and Heirmologion," *Music & Letters*, 85, no. 2 (May, 2004): 180–181, accessed September 22, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3526092>). It should be noted, however, that the number of heirmoi included in heirmologia is not fixed. The two examples above are given merely as historical bookends in the development of heirmologia, and to illustrate the great quantity of heirmoi in the liturgical tradition. According to the research of Nikita Simmons, heirmologia manuscripts from the Russian Old Rite contain 762 heirmoi, (cf. "A Catalog of Heirmoi in the Znamennyi Irmologion," available on www.synaxis.info). The heirmologion of the Solovetsky Monastery (1913) contained only 581 heirmoi, far fewer than the edition printed in Moscow in 1890.

⁴ Special thanks for this aspect of the project are due to all the individuals named above, as well as Priest John Mikitish for his help with translating, checking the accuracy of existing translations, and resolving inconsistencies between Greek and Slavonic sources.

and various monastery chants.⁵ The easiest way around this lack of uniformity and systematization was to embrace it. Starting from scratch, or introducing unfamiliar melodies would be unproductive. Instead, an attempt has been made in the abbreviated Heirmologion to present a normative collection of chants for the canon melodies that are already in use. The music in the present volume comes principally from the *Спутникъ Псаломщика* [*Church-singer's Companion*], as well as from the ubiquitous variants of those melodies commonly used in the OCA and ROCOR that can be found in multiple sources, as illustrated below:

<i>Tone</i>	<i>Chant Name</i>	<i>Sources</i>
Tone 1	Common Chant	<i>Pascha: The Resurrection of Christ</i> , SVS Press, 1980 (adapted from N. Bakhmetev's <i>Обиход</i> , 1869)
Tone 2	Abbreviated Znamenny Chant	No specific source; commonly used within OCA & ROCOR
Tone 3	Kievan Chant	No specific source; commonly used within OCA & ROCOR
Tone 4	Kievan Chant [or Abbreviated Greek Chant]	<i>Спутникъ Псаломщика</i>
Tone 5	Abbreviated Znamenny Chant	<i>Спутникъ Псаломщика</i>
Tone 6A (Octoechos)	Abbreviated Znamenny Chant	<i>Спутникъ Псаломщика</i>
Tone 6B (Great Canon)	An unnamed melody	<i>Спутникъ Псаломщика</i>
Tone 6C (Holy Week; Forefeasts of the Nativity of Christ & Theophany)	Lesser Znamenny Chant	<i>Holy Week vols. 1, 2 & 3</i> (SVS Press)
Tone 7	Kievan Chant	No specific source; commonly used within OCA & ROCOR
Tone 8	Greek Chant	No specific source; commonly used within OCA & ROCOR


The chant melodies were applied to the texts so that a varying number of singers could sing the heirmoi from text with as much accuracy as possible. Notating all of the heirmoi also allows the texts to be set to the music in a way that adequately and satisfactorily respects the natural cadence of the text, and better conveys meaning. This helps avoid some of the awkwardly misplaced stresses that commonly occur when hymnography is sung to the Russian pattern melodies from text.

All of the heirmoi are engraved on one staff in two parts. This follows the current kliros practice at St Tikhon's Monastery, the precedent for which was established in

⁵ Even Znamenny chant is not entirely consistent, since many of its heirmos melodies are idiomatic, based on a given heirmos's text, despite common themes and musical figures in the respective tones.

print by Benedict Sheehan's *A Common Book of Church Hymns: The Divine Liturgy* (St Tikhon's Monastery Press, 2016). In this arrangement only the melody and bass are provided, as seen in this example:

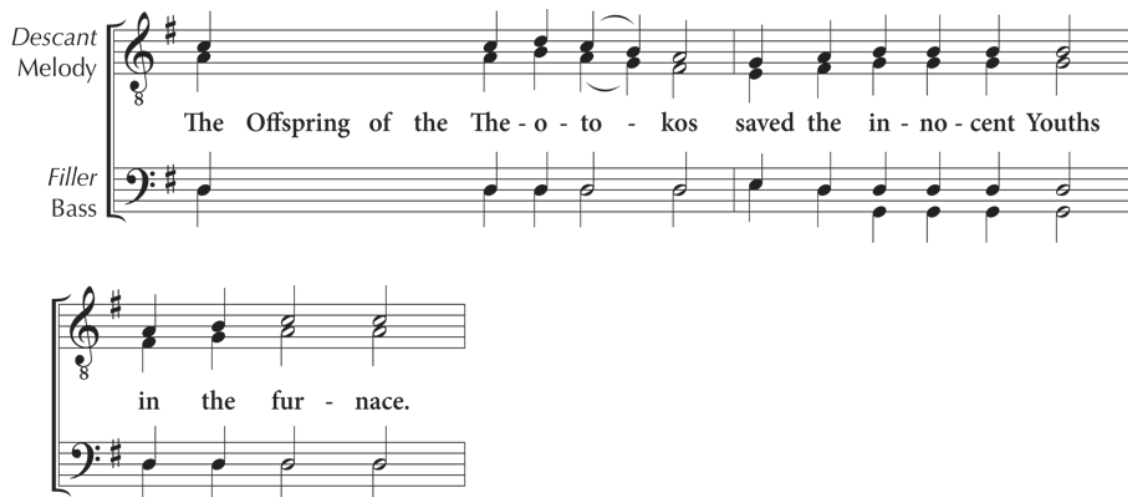
Octoechos: Tone 4, Ode 8, Friday



Melody
Bass

The Offspring of the The - o - to - kos saved the in - no - cent Youths
in the fur - nace.

Depending on the strength and size of an ensemble, up to two more voice parts can be added to those printed on the page. A descant that moves above the melody in parallel thirds produces a third voice. Transposing the bass where possible, and adding a filler-part results in four parts. The following transcription illustrates how the choir at St Tikhon's Monastery sings the above chant in four parts, when the voices are available:



Descant
Melody

8

The Offspring of the The - o - to - kos saved the in - no - cent Youths

Filler
Bass

8

in the fur - nace.

This method of singing up to four parts from the two that are printed has potential for choirs of varying sizes that have any need for an heirmologion, whether for Sundays, weekdays, or feasts. There is a variety of vocal configurations possible, and it is hoped that the flexibility of parts will be a further aid to those wishing to sing canons in English.⁶

ORGANIZATION

This abbreviated heirmologion uses the two common historical methods for organizing heirmologia in the Byzantine and Slavic traditions: Order of Canons and Order of Odes.⁷ Many Byzantine heirmologia follow the Order of Canons, in which sets of heirmoi corresponding to specific canons (the full texts of which

6 For more technical information on singing from two parts see "How to Harmonize These Chants" in Benedict Sheehan's *A Common Book of Church Hymns: Divine Liturgy*, xiv-xvii.

7 Milos Velimirovic, "The Byzantine Heirmos and Heirmologion," *Gattungen der Musik in Einzeldarstellungen, Gedenkschrift Leo Schrade* (1973): 206, 224, accessed May 8, 2017, <http://analogion.com/forum/showthread.php?t=16712>.

are elsewhere) are arranged according to tone or mode. For instance, all canons with heirmoi in Tone 1 would be given as “canon sets” or *akolouthiae*: Odes 1–9 for the Nativity of Christ, then Antipascha, Dormition, and any other canon with heirmoi in that tone. The abbreviated heirmologion utilizes this organizational scheme for the heirmoi of canons from the Menaion, Triodion, and Pentecostarion.

The Order of Odes system⁸ is system as ancient as that of the Order of Canons. In this system all the heirmoi are arranged by ode and tone individually, rather than in complete canon sets. For instance: all heirmoi for Ode 1, Tone 1, followed by all heirmoi for Ode 2, Tone 1, etc. until the end of the Tone, when the same ordering for Tone 2 begins. While only a few Byzantine heirmologia follow this ordering, it was widely adopted for Slavonic heirmologia, which have been the main reference points for this current heirmologion project.

In the abbreviated heirmologion the heirmoi for the canons in the Octoechos are arranged by Order of Odes, since many heirmoi are repeated throughout the week in any given tone. This allows all of the needed heirmoi for a tone to be given in order of the odes, without the reprinting required by the Order of Canons scheme.

This abbreviated heirmologion is, God willing, only the first step in the longer development of the heirmologion, heirmos, and canon in the English language. It is hoped that a more comprehensive edition will eventually be produced that is helpful for both singers and scholars, and addresses the issue of the many more heirmoi throughout the Menaion and the other liturgical books. Though admittedly incomplete, this abbreviated heirmologion may help those who keep the daily cycle of services to do so more beautifully and with less confusion. A compilation of heirmoi in English may also serve to introduce many people to the rich body of hymnography found in the canons. Whether or not it is useful and worthwhile will only be determined by those who use it and apply it to its intended purpose. Nevertheless, may it help us all to sing a triumphant song to our God, for He has been glorified!

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