Prolegomena

As we look toward the twenty-first century, it is clear that our Holy Greek Orthodox Church in the Diaspora of the U.S.A. will mature rapidly in a fast-moving world.

To meet the challenge, we must reach into the treasury of resources which our Faith offers, to bring forth, use, and interpret those gifts which will lead us into a deeper relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Certainly, one of the instruments from the treasury is Byzantine Music and the Hymnography of the Church. Our musical tradition is that medium which will guide us in our efforts to interpret the hymns of our Faith, uplifting our spiritual senses.

These notes, which will later be published, are offered to the students of Byzantine Music of Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology with the humble prayer that the words on the pages to follow will assist in removing the “light from under the bushel,” place it on a stand, so that it will “give light to all in the house” (Matthew 4:15).

+Fr. N. M. K.

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Introduction

Byzantine Music is the liturgical music of our Holy Greek Orthodox Church. Certainly, the term “Byzantine” betrays its association with the once-great Byzantine Empire. It is also known, more precisely, as the Psaltic Art, Ecclesiastical Chant, Eastern Music, or Psalmody. It is most certainly Eastern in ύφος, ηθος, and φρόνημα (yphos, ethos, and phronema).

Byzantine Music is expressed, almost exclusively, by the human voice. The wealth of hymns, and their external musical dressing, is interpreted by human voices, seeking to enter the “Divine Darkness” of the mystery of salvation via theosis.

What differentiates Eastern chant from Western music is – as noted above – its yphos, ethos, and phronema. It is that sacred medium of expression whereby the person allows the weightiness of lyrics to inspire, unite, interpret, crucify, and resurrect.

Musically speaking, Orthodox Ecclesiastical Chant, in its present form, is based on a system of eight Tones or Modes. This system comes to us as a result of the serious work of interpreting the “ancient notation” by the three great teachers of Byzantine Music, namely, Gregory the Protopsaltis, Hourmouzios the Hartophylax, and Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Prousα. The latter published his ΕΙ΢ΑΓΩΓΗ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΘΕΩΡΗΤΙΚΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΗΣ ΜΟΥΣΙΚΗΣ ("Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Ecclesiastical Music") in Parish, in 1812. This work, one could say, is the cornerstone of all theory books on Byzantine Music later published.
These notes serve as a stepping stone to the better understanding, in English, of Eastern Chant – always for the glory of God.

The author would like to acknowledge Father Photios Dumont for typing this manuscript and especially for his development of the Byzantine Music Font, a project which took more than two years to complete. The author would also be remiss in not acknowledging the students of Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology – the future clergy of our Church – for whom these class notes are specifically designed. May they be inspired to “praise the Lord as long as they live,” to “sing praises to God while they exist” (Psalm 146:2).
Section I

Musical Scale

The musical scale (ἡ κλίμαξ, ἡ κλίμακα) of Byzantine music is formed by the seven sounds/pitches (οἱ φθόγγοι) Νη, Πα, Βου, Γα, Δι, Κε, Ζω (Ni, Pa, Vou, Ga, Thi, Ke, Zo) corresponding in Western music to Do, Re Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti (Si).

When ascending, we chant Νη, Πα, Βου, Γα, Δι, Κε, Ζω, Νη’, adding the pitch Νη’ (high Νη; the same pitch as the first Νη, only an octave higher) to round out the scale by completing the octave. We descend by chanting Νη’, Ζω, Κε, Δι, Γα, Βου, Πα, Νη.

The Vocal Signs/Notes (οἱ χαρακτήρες) of Eastern Chant

There are ten symbols which must be mastered: Five which ascend, four which descend, and one which repeats the pitch of the previous note.

Ascending Notes

τό ὀλίγον (oligon) – ascends one step within the scale.

ἡ πεταστὴ (petastē) – ascends one step with a flutter.

τά κεντήματα (kentēmata) – ascends one step “softly”; that is, usually extending a syllable.

τό κέντημα (kentēma) – ascends a number of steps depending on its usage in combination form with the oligon or petastē. It never stands alone.

ἡ ὑψηλὴ (ypsēlē) – ascends a number of steps depending on its usage in combination form with the oligon or petastē. It never stands alone.
**Equal Equal Note**

tó ἰσον (ison) – repeats the pitch of the previous note. That is, it neither ascends nor descends.

**Descending Notes**

ὁ ἀπόστροφος (apóstrophos) – descends one step within the scale.

ἡ ύπορροή (yporroē) – descends two steps consecutively; equal to two apostrophoi. Not to be confused with the kéntēma.

tό ἑλαφρόν (elaphrón) – descends two steps transgressively.

ἡ χαμηλή (hamelē) – descends four steps transgressively.

**Exercise #1**

\[\text{Nη \ Nη \ Πα \ Πα \ Βου \ Βου \ Γα \ Γα \ Δι \ Δι \ Δι \ Δι}\]
Exercise #2

Nη Nη Nη Nη Nη Πα Βου Γα Δι Δι

Δι Δι Δι Γα Βου Πα Νη

Exercise #3

Nη Nη Πα Βου Γα Δι Κε Ζω Νη Νη

Ζω Κε Δι Γα Βου Πα Νη

Meter/Rhythm/Tempo (Ρυθμός)

Byzantine Music bases itself on tonic rhythm (τονικός ρυθμός), where the weight of the music, the downbeat, is the accent of the word.

For example: ἐκ νεώτητος μου ὁ ἔχθρος μέ πειράζει...

Nη Εκ νε ο τη τος μου ο εχ θρο ος

με πει οα ζει

Thus, we may not have consistency of rhythm in a particular rhythm, but, rather, a mixture of two beats, three beats, and four beats depending on the accent mark(s) (2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time).
For example:

```
2/4 | 2/4 | 4/4 | 4/4
```

Εἰς νὲ ὁ τῆς τοὺς μου ὁ εὐθυὸς ὁς

| 3/4

μὲ πεῖ ραζ ζεῖ

SPECIAL NOTE!!!
(a) Byzantine Music is rendered by the singing of notes as solfège (παραλλαγή) or words (μέλος). Instructionally speaking, the most effective way of mastering a melody is via παραλλαγή.
(b) Byzantine music strives for stability of rhythm in the sense that we will have an even count tempo: 2/4 (δίσιμος), 3/4 (τρίσιμος), 4/4 (τετράσιμος). VERY rarely will we have odd number counts.

Exercise #4

```

```
Exercise #5

Exercise #6

Exercise #7
Exercise #8

Combination Forms

There are a number of notes which, when in combination form, have various interval values. The most common combination forms use oligon, petastē, and kēntēma to ascend or descend transgressively.

**Ascending**

- ascends two steps transgressively (jump of two), also referred to as an *ascending third*

- ascends three steps transgressively (jump of three), also referred to as an *ascending fourth*

- ascends four steps transgressively (jump of four), also referred to as an *ascending fifth*

- ascends five steps transgressively (jump of five), also referred to as an *ascending sixth*

- ascends six steps transgressively (jump of six), also referred to as an *ascending seventh*

- ascends seven steps transgressively (jump of seven), also referred to as an *ascending eighth or an octave*
Descending

- descends three steps transgressively, also referred to as a *descending fourth*
- descends four steps transgressively, also referred to as a *descending fifth*
- descends five steps transgressively, also referred to as a *descending sixth*
- descends six steps transgressively, also referred to as a *descending seventh*
- descends seven steps transgressively, also referred to as a *descending eighth or octave.*

**Temporal Signs which Add Time**

As previously stated, each note has a rhythmical value of **ONE BEAT.** Certain signs are added to a note to increase the rhythmical value:

- τὸ κλάσμα (klasma) adds one beat to a given note; it is placed above or below the note. For example:
  
  \[ \text{1 beat} - \text{1 beat} - \text{2 beats} \]

- ἡ ἀπλῆ (aple) adds one beat to a given note; it is placed below the note. For example:
  
  \[ \text{1 beat} - \text{1 beat} - \text{2 beats} \]

- ἡ διπλῆ (diple) adds two beats to a given note; it is also placed below the note. For example:
  
  \[ \text{1 beat} - \text{1 beat} - \text{3 beats} \]
-ἡ τριπλή (triplē) adds three beat to a given note; it is also placed below the note. For example:

1 beat – 1 beat – 4 beats

Exercise #9

Exercise #10

Exercise #11

Exercise #12
Exercise #13

Exercise #14

Exercise #15

To Νηφέν (yphén)

The yphén is used to unite two notes of the same pitch. It is comparable to the tie in Western staff notation. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
&2 \text{ beats} & 2 \text{ beats} & 2 \text{ beats} \\
\gamma \quad \eta &\quad \alpha & \quad \nu
\end{align*}
\]
Exercise #16

Exercise #17

Temporal Signs which Divide Time

There are three basic signs which divide time in Byzantine Music:

-τό γόργον (gorgón), placed above or below a note.

- τό δίγοργον (digorgon), placed on top of a note.
- τό τρίγογον (trigorgon), placed on top of a note.

The gorgón divides the time into two equal parts (½ + ½ = 1 beat); it involves two notes. The note preceding the note with the gorgón on top takes ½ beat, and the note with the gorgón on top takes ½ beat. It is equivalent to two eighth notes in Western staff notation. For example:

\[ \text{\begin{align*}
\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} &= 1 \text{ beat} \\
\end{align*}} \]

Exercise #18

Exercise #19
The digorgon is a composite of the gorgón and divides the time of three notes into three equal parts. It is placed above the second of three notes. It corresponds to the triplet in Western staff notation. For example:

\[ \begin{align*}
\underline{\text{\text{-}\text{-}\text{-}}} &= 1 \text{ beat} \\
\underline{\text{\text{-}\text{-}\text{-}}} &= 1/3 \text{ beat} \\
\underline{\text{\text{-}\text{-}\text{-}}} &= 1 \text{ beat} \\
1/3 + 1/3 + 1/3
\end{align*} \]

Exercise #20

The trigorgon is also a composite of the gorgón and divides the time of four notes into three equal parts. It is also placed above the second of four notes; thus, we have four notes being sung in the time of one beat. It corresponds to sixteenth notes in Western music. For example:

\[ \begin{align*}
\underline{\text{\text{-}\text{-}\text{-}}} &= 1 \text{ beat} \\
\underline{\text{\text{-}\text{-}}} &= 1/4 \text{ beat}
\end{align*} \]
Regarding the Petastē

The petastē ascends one step with a vocal flutter. For example:

Exercise #21

Exercise #22
Regarding the Kentēmata

The kentēmata ascend one step “softly” (extending a syllable), and will follow, usually, an oligon or an ison. They may also appear on top of an oligon or below it.

-- When the kentēmata appear above the oligon, then we perform the oligon first.

-- When the kentēmata appear below the oligon, then we perform the kentēmata first.

For example, this exercise:

\[\text{is to be chanted in the following fashion:}\]

Regarding the Μαρτυρίαι (Martērēae), or Pitch Indicators

Martyrias (singular: martyrria) are those signs or indicators that are placed at the beginning of a melody, during a melody, and at the end of a melody to indicate the pitch or the starting note, preceding note, or final note, depending on the placement of the particular martyrria. These indicators have already been in use throughout this book, but without explanation.

There are three families of scales in Byzantine Music: Diatonic, Chromatic, and Enharmonic. At this point, we will concern ourselves with the Diatonic scale. The martyrrias of the Diatonic scale are:
Please note that the letter above the symbol corresponds to a particular note of the scale: Νη, Πα, Βου, Γα, Δι, Κε, Ζω, Νη. That is:

\[ \gamma = \text{Νη}, \quad \pi = \text{Πα}, \quad \delta = \text{Βου}, \quad \gamma' = \text{Γα}, \quad \Delta = \text{Δι}, \quad \chi = \text{Κε}, \quad \zeta' = \text{Ζω}, \quad \gamma' = \text{Νη'} \]

For example:

Regarding Παύσεις or Σιωπέi (Pafseis or Siopē)
There are rests (a pause in the melody in which nothing is sung) in Byzantine Music of one, two, three, and four beats:

- \( \cdot \) = rest of one beat
- \( \\
\cdot \cdot \cdot \) = rest of three beats
- \( \\
\cdot \\
\cdot \cdot \) = rest of two beats
- \( \\
\cdot \\
\cdot \\
\cdot \\
\cdot \cdot \cdot \) = rest of four beats

Exercise #23
Temporal Signs which Divide and Add Time

There are three signs in Eastern Chant which divide and add time simultaneously. They are:

- τό αργόν (argōn)
- τό ἡμιόλιον (ēmēōlēon)
- τό διαργόν (dēargōn)

Special note! The argōn appears more frequently than the emiolion or the diargon.

Τό αργόν (argōn) is placed only above the oligon which has kentēmata below. The argōn divides the time of two notes (the
kentēmata and the note before it) into two equal parts (1/2 beats) and adding a beat to the final note (the oligon). Essentially, this places a gorgón on the kentēmata and a klasma on the oligon.

\[ \text{\frac{1}{2}} + \text{\frac{1}{2}} + 2 = 3 \text{ beats total} \]

(Keep in mind the rule discussed earlier: when the kentēmata are found below the oligon, they are chanted first; when the kentēmata are above, the oligon is chanted first.)

**Exercise #26**

\[ \text{\frac{1}{2}} + \text{\frac{1}{2}} + 3 \]

Τό ἡμιώλιον (ēmēōlēon) operates in a similar fashion, dividing the time of two notes (the one with the emiolion on it and the preceding note) into two half beats, but adding two beats to the value of the oligon, essentially by adding a diplē. For example:

\[ \text{\frac{1}{2}} + \text{\frac{1}{2}} + 3 = 4 \text{ beats total} \]

Τό διαργόν (dēargōn) also operates in a similar fashion, but adds three beats to the oligon, essentially by adding a triplē. For example:
Western Music Equivalents

The following equivalents are offered as a helpmate when comparing Byzantine Music with Western staff notation.

Exercise #27
Τό Συνεχές Έλαφρόν (The Continuous Elaphrón)

When an apóstrophos and an elaphrón are linked as shown below, the combined symbol takes on a new meaning than when the two symbols are separate. The elaphrón no longer indicates a descent of two steps consecutively, but rather a descent of one. Also, the beat of the apóstrophos is divided in half, as is the beat of the note before it. This combination looks like this:

Practically speaking, it is chanted in the following fashion:

Exercise #28
Ἡ Ὑπορρόη (Yporroē)

The yporroē operates like two apostrophoi. That is:

\[ \text{yporroē} \]

It should be noted that a gorgón or an aplē can be placed on the yporroē. When this (or other similar combinations) happen, they are executed in the following fashion:

\[ \text{yporroē} \]

Exercise #29
Signs of Alteration (Accidentals)

ἡ Διεσις (ēphesis = flat) and Ὑφεσις (thēsis = sharp)

In Byzantine Music, we use two basic signs as accidentals: ἡ Διεσις, the sharp, which is found under a note, and ἡ Ὑφεσις, the flat, which is found over a note.

-- ἡ Διεσις operates as a sharp by raising the musical pitch of a note by a semitone.

-- ἡ Ὑφεσις operates as a flat by lowering the musical pitch of a note by a semitone.

These two signs of alteration influence only one note within the melody; that is, the note which the particular sign of alteration is placed over or under. For example:

(a)

(b)

Exercise #30
Exercise #31

Special Notes!
1) While the two basic symbols/signs of alteration are ἕφεσις and θῆσις, there exist other subdivisions of flats and sharps which divide the tone into quarter tones or less. While they do not appear frequently, they are, nevertheless, a vital part of the Eastern chanting style. These subdivisions are shown below (each line which crosses the bar of a sharp or a flat represents a certain raising or lowering of pitch, as indicated):

- μονόγραμμος δίεσις
- μονόγραμμος ύφεσις
- δίγραμμος δίεσις
- δίγραμμος ύφεσις
- τρίγραμμος δίεσις
- τρίγραμμος ύφεσις
2) The Cross ( + ) is used as a breath mark. Consequently, a quick breath is taken after the note it follows.

**Signs of Expression**

There are five basic signs of expression. They are:

- ἡ βαρεία (vareia)

- τὸ ψηφιστόν (psēfistón)

- τὸ ὀμαλὸν (omalón)

- τὸ ἀντικένωμα (antikénoma)

- τὸ ἔτερον or σύνδεσμος (heteron or sýndesmos)

The **Vareia** demands that the note which follows it be stressed. Example:

The **Psēfistón** is usually found under an ison or an oligon. It also stresses, in a lively fashion, the note which appears over it and demands a softening of the two notes following it (which are usually to apostrophoi). Example:
The **Omalón** is placed below a note and demands a vocal flutter of that note. Example:

\[ \text{\textcopyright} \]

The **Antikénoma** is found below a note and also requires a vocal flutter of that note. Example:

\[ \text{\textcopyright} \]

The **Heteron** or **Sýndesmos** is found under a number of notes (3 or 4) and demands that the notes be rendered without a breath, sweetly, and with a slight vocal flutter. Example:

\[ \text{\textcopyright} \]

**SPECIAL NOTE!!!**

**Tó èvδóφονον** (endofonon) is a sign of expression that is used very rarely today. It requires that the note it is placed below be sung through the nose with the mouth closed, making a guttural noise. It is shown below:

\[ \text{\textcopyright} \]
Special Notational Forms

Within the notational script of our ecclesiastical music, we will meet certain forms which are written in such a way as to conform to the principles and rules of the orthography (“correct writing” or musical spelling) of Byzantine Music. Some of these forms are as follows:

The line which supports the two notes is not an oligon, but a “support table” with no musical value.

Again, the line which supports the two notes has no musical value.

is performed as an apóstrophos and kentēmata. Again, the line which supports the two notes has no musical value.

is performed as an ison with the vocal flutter characteristic of a petastē.

is performed as an apóstrophos with the vocal flutter characteristic of a petastē.

is performed as an elaphrón with emphasis.

Exercise #32:

Δοξα Σωτηρίων τω δει ξαν το φως δο ξα εν

υ ψι ει στοις Θεω και ε πι γης ει
Exercise #33:

Θε ος Κυ ρι ος και ε πε φα νεν η
μιν εν λο γη με νος ο ερ χο με νος εν ο
νο μα τι Κυ ρι ου

Exercise #34:

Προσ δε ξαι την δε η σιν η μων ο καθ
η με νος εκ δε ξε ι ω ων του Πα τρος
και ε λε η σον η μας

Exercise #34:

Εν τω κε κρα γε ναι με προ ος σε ε ε ε
ε η ει σα κου σο ον μου Κυ υ υ υ
Regarding the Ἑχοι (Ēhē), Tones/Modes (Ἡχος in the singular)

The Eastern Orthodox Church uses eight Modes to express its hymns. The musical origin of the eight Tones dates to ancient Greece. The eight modes are:

- Ἑχος Πρώτος (Ἡχος Α.')(Prótōs)
  **First Mode** (also known as First Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Δεύτερος (Ἡχος Β.')(Théfterōs)
  **Second Mode** (also known as Second Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Τρίτος (Ἡχος Γ.')(Trítōs)
  **Third Mode** (also known as Third Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Tέταρτος (Ἡχος Δ.')(Tétartōs)
  **Fourth Mode** (also known as Fourth Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Πλάγιος τοῦ Πρώτου (Ἡχος πλ. Α.')(Plágiōs tou Prótou)
  **Plagal First Mode** (also known as Plagal First Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Πλάγιος τοῦ Δεύτερου (Ἡχος πλ. Β.')(Plágiōs tou Theftérou)
  **Plagal Second Mode** (also known as Plagal Second Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Βαρύς (Ἡχος Βαρύς)(Varees)
  **Grave Mode** (also known as Grave Tone, etc)

- Ἑχος Πλάγιος τοῦ Τέταρτου (Ἡχος πλ. Δ.')(Plágiōs tou Tetártou)
  **Plagal Fourth Mode** (also known as Plagal Fourth Tone, etc)
Their corresponding names from the ancient Greek modes are
1) Dorian, 5) Hypodorian,
2) Lydian, 6) Hypolydian,
3) Phrygian, 7) Hypophrygian
4) Milesian or Mixolydian 8) Hypomilesian or Hypomixolydian

The eight Modes of ecclesiastical chant are made up of different scales. There are three main types of scales, and each Mode utilizes one of these scales. The different Modes use the following scales:

- **Diatonic Scale** – First Mode, Plagal First Mode, Fourth Mode, Plagal Fourth Mode
- **Chromatic Scale** – Second Mode, Plagal Second Mode
- **Enharmonic Scale** – Third Mode, Grave Mode

**Ἔνδοκαί (Fthoré): Signs which change the Musical Pattern**

Fthoras are those signs in the musical notation of Eastern Chant which require a change of the musical pattern from one mode to another, by the use of sharps and flats (which, however, are different from ἡ Διεσίς and ἡ Υφεσίς discussed earlier). There are eight diatonic fthoras, each of which represent a different degree of the diatonic scale:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Δη} & \leq \Pi & \alpha & \phi & B & \delta & \Gamma & \alpha & \delta \\
\text{Δε} & \leq & K & \varepsilon & & & & & N & \varepsilon
\end{align*}
\]

There are four chromatic fthoras, each of which represent a certain degree of the chromatic scale. Two are used specifically for Second Mode, and two are used specifically for Plagal Second Mode:
For Second Mode: \[ \Delta \nu \quad \text{\textbullet} \quad \mathrm{N}\eta \quad \checkmark \]

For Plagal Second Mode: \[ \Pi \alpha \quad \text{\textbullet} \quad \Delta \nu \quad \checkmark \]

There is one enharmonic fthora:
\[ Z_{\omega} \quad \checkmark \]

The most commonly seen of all of the fthoras shown above are the two fthoras of Plagal Second Mode, and the diatonic fthora of \( \Delta \nu \).

Below is an example of the use of fthoras:

In this example, the chromatic fthora of \( \Pi \alpha \) is placed on the continuous elaphrón. This demands that the oligon (\( \mathrm{Bou} \)) which follows be flat (\( \checkmark \)) and the oligon after (\( \Gamma \alpha \)) be sharp (\( \checkmark \)) and \( \Delta \nu \), natural. The next note, the petastē, which is \( \mathrm{K\varepsilon} \), has a diatonic fthora (\( \checkmark \)) over it, indicating that the melody now follows its original musical pattern – that is, the diatonic scale.

Below is another example:
In this example, we see that the chromatic fthora (ς) is placed on the emphasized ison note Πα in the first line. This demands that the Νη after it be sharp (σ), that Ζω be flat (ρ), Νη sharp again on ascent, and Πα natural. The ascent of a fourth to Δι which follows the martyria takes a diatonic fthora (α) for the melody to return to its original diatonic scale.

The Hymns and Their Classification

The hymns of the Orthodox Church fall into three distinct categories:

1) Παπαδικά (Papadiká) – hymns which use very slow melodies, such as communion hymns and the Cherubic hymn. In this category, a single syllable of text can be extended over dozens of notes.

2) Στιχεραρικά (Sticherariká) – hymns in which each syllable of text carries approximately three or four notes. These sticheraric hymns are relatively slow, but chanted at a quicker pace than the papadic hymns. These include melodies such as “Lord, I Have Cried”, Doxastika, and so on.

3) Ειρμολογικά (Eirmologiká) – hymns which are more “up-tempo”, such as the apolytikia, katavasiae, and so on. Each syllable of text carries approximately one or two notes.

Αἱ Χρόει (Hroē): Special Alteration Signs

These are special signs of alteration used less frequently than those previously discussed in this text. Each sign indicates a change in the melody by the use of sharps and flats. Three of these signs are in use in Eastern Chant today:
Ἡ Σπάθη (Spáthi) is placed on Κε and demands that Ζω be flat and Δι be sharp. Sometimes, however, it is placed on Γα; when this is the case, it requires that Δι be flat and Βου be sharp.

Ὁ Ζυγός (Zygós) is placed on Δι and demands that Γα be sharp, Βου natural, and Πα sharp.

Τό Κλίτον (Klitón) is placed on Δι and requires that Γα be sharp and Βου be sharp as well.

Special Note! – The musical negation of the above-mentioned signs is by use of a diatonic fthora.

The desert
Section II
The Eight Modes

Part I: The Diatonic Family

Ἡχος Πρώτος – The First Mode

Base Note (Βάσις)

The base note for the First Mode is Πα. However, in very few instances, the base note will be Κε; examples include the Slow Doxology of Iakovos Protopsaltis, the communion hymn from the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, and others. These are referred to as “tetraphonic” First Mode.

Intonation (Ἀπήχημα)

Every mode of ecclesiastical chant has its own introductory melody or intonation, which is usually very brief. The First Mode is introduced by any of the following brief musical phrases:

Scale (Κλίμαξ)

The First Mode belongs to the Diatonic Family of Modes. Hence, it uses the Diatonic Scale, which includes two tetrachords: Πα-Βου-Γα-Δι as the lower tetrachord, and Κε-Ζω-Νη'-Πα' as the upper tetrachord. These two tetrachords are separated by the major tone interval of Δι-Κε.
**Dominant Notes (Δεσπόζοντες Φθόγγοι)**

The dominant notes for the papadic and sticheraric hymns are Πα and Γα. The dominant notes for the eirmologic hymns, however, are Πα and Δι.

**Cadences/Endings (Καταλήξεις)**

By cadences, we mean the various resting points or pauses which are made when singing a hymn. By extension, then, it may be said that cadences are the same as punctuation marks. There are three types:

1) Ατελεῖς (Imperfect Cadence) is usually the note before a comma in any hymn. It may also be the note before a semicolon).

2) Εντελεῖς (Perfect Cadence) is usually the note before a period which is found within the hymn, or a semicolon.

3) Τελεικεί (Final Cadence) is always the note before the final punctuation mark at the end of a hymn.

For papadic and sticheraric hymns in First Mode, the cadences/endings are as follows:

- Imperfect: Γα
- Perfect: Γα
- Final: Πα

For eirmologic hymns,

- Imperfect: Δι
- Perfect: Πα
- Final: Πα

**Peculiarities (Ἰδιώματα)**

For the Modes which belong to the Diatonic Family (and, specifically, the First Mode), the following peculiar musical alteration occurs: Ζω is at times natural and at other times flat in a melody.
• \( \text{Zw} \) is natural when the melody ascends past \( \text{Zw} \), on its way to \( \text{Nη}' \), \( \text{Πα}' \), or higher.
• \( \text{Zw} \) is flat when the melody descends on its way to the lower tetrachord, passing \( \text{Zw} \).
• \( \text{Zw} \) is also flat when the melody extends up to \( \text{Zw} \) and then descends, but does not pass \( \text{Zw} \).

Borrowed Melodies (Ἐπείσακτε Μέλη)

The First Mode Kathismata hymns from Orthros “borrow” from the musical rules and formulas in the Second Mode. Thus, \( \text{Κε} \) will always be flat.

Ἡχος Πλάγιος τοῦ Πρώτου – The Plagal First Mode

Base Note

The base note for the papadic and sticheraric melodies is \( \text{Πα} \). The base note for the eirmologic melodies is \( \text{Κε} \).

Intonation

Any of the following musical phrases can serve as an introduction for the papadic and sticheraric melodies in Plagal First Mode:

Also, any of the following introductory musical phrases can be used for eirmologic melodies in Plagal First Mode:
The Plagal First Mode uses the same scale as that of the First Mode (that is, the \( \Pi\alpha\)-\( \Pi\alpha\)-\( \Gamma\alpha\)-\( \Delta\iota \) lower tetrachord, and the \( \Lambda\epsilon\)-\( \Upsilon\omega\)-\( \Pi\alpha\) upper tetrachord, with the same major tone interval of \( \Delta\iota\)-\( \Lambda\epsilon\)).

**Dominant Notes**

The dominant notes for the papadic and sticheraric are \( \Pi\alpha\), \( \Delta\iota\), and \( \Lambda\epsilon\). For the eirmologic hymns, the dominant notes are \( \Lambda\epsilon\) and \( \Pi\eta\).

**Cadences/Endings**

For papadic and sticheraric melodies, the cadences are as follows:
- Imperfect: \( \Delta\iota\), \( \Lambda\epsilon\)
- Perfect: \( \Pi\alpha\), \( \Delta\iota\)
- Final: \( \Pi\alpha\), \( \Delta\iota\)

For eirmologic melodies, the cadences are as follows:
- Imperfect: \( \Pi\eta\)
- Perfect: \( \Lambda\epsilon\)
- Final: \( \Lambda\epsilon\)

**Peculiarities**

The same peculiarity occurs with \( \Upsilon\omega\) as occurs in First Mode. That is:
• Ζω is natural when the melody ascends past Ζω, on its way to Νη’, Πα’, or higher.
• Ζω is flat when the melody descends on its way to the lower tetrachord, passing Ζω.
• Ζω is also flat when the melody extends up to Ζω and then descends, but does not pass Ζω.

Note: when a hymn in Plagal First Mode has Κε as its base (that is, if the hymn is eirmologic), the above peculiarity with Ζω does not apply.

Ήχος Τέταρτος – The Fourth Mode

Base Notes
• For eirmologic melodies – Βου (λέγετος)
• For sticheraric melodies – Πα
• For papadic melodies – Δι

Intonation
For eirmologic melodies, any of the following introductory melodies can be used to introduce a hymn:

For sticheraric melodies, any of the following:
Finally, for papadic melodies, the following intonation is used:

Scale
- For eirmologic melodies, two tetrachords: Πα-Βου-Γα-Δι and Κε-Ζω-Νη'-Πα’, separated by Δι-Κε.
- For sticheraric melodies, the scale is the same as for eirmologic melodies.
- For papadic melodies, Δι-Κε-Ζω-Νη’ is used.

Dominant Notes
- For eirmologic melodies, Βου, Δι, and sometimes Ζω.
- For sticheraric melodies, Πα, Βου, and Δι.
- For papadic melodies, Δι, Ζω, and Βου.

Cadences/Endings
- For eirmologic melodies:
  - Imperfect endings on Δι
  - Perfect endings on Πα
  - Final endings on Βου

- For sticheraric melodies:
  - Imperfect endings on Δι (and sometimes Βου)
  - Perfect endings on Πα
  - Final endings on Βου
• For papadic melodies:
  - Imperfect endings on Βου and Ζω
  - Perfect endings on Δι
  - Final endings also on Δι

Peculiarities
• For eirmologic melodies
  - Ζω is sometimes natural and sometimes flat, as it is in First Mode and Plagal First Mode
  - Γα is usually sharp

• For sticheraric melodies
  - Ζω is sometimes natural and sometimes flat, as in First Mode and Plagal First Mode

• For papadic melodies
  - Κε is sharp
  - Ζω is natural, except when the melody is centered around it
    (when this is the case, Κε is sharp, as is Γα)

Borrowed Melodies
The Fourth Mode borrows from the Second Mode and the Plagal Second Mode in certain instances, such as the Kathismata at Orthros to the melody Κατεπλάγη Ιωσήφ (Joseph was Amazed).

Ἡχος Πλάγιος τοῦ Τετάρτου – The Plagal Fourth Mode

Base Note
The base note of Plagal Fourth Mode is Νη.

Intonation
Introductory phrases include:
Scale
The scale uses two tetrachords: Νη-Πα-Βου-Γα and Δι-Κε-Ζω-Νη’, with the major interval of Γα-Δι.

Dominant Notes
The dominant notes in Plagal Fourth Mode are Νη, Βου, and Δι.

Cadences/Endings
-Imperfect: Βου and Δι
-Perfect: Νη
-Final: Νη

Peculiarities
Zω has the same alteration that is found in First Mode and Plagal First Mode. That is:

- Zω is natural when the melody ascends past Zω, on its way to Νη’, Πα’, or higher.
- Zω is flat when the melody descends on its way to the lower tetrachord, passing Zω.
- Zω is also flat when the melody extends up to Zω and then descends, but does not pass Zω.

Special Note!!!
Plagal Fourth Mode uses the three-tone system.
Part II: The Chromatic Family

Ἡχος Δεύτερος – The Second Mode

Base Note

The base note of the Second Mode is Δι.

Intonation

Any of the following musical phrases can serve as an introduction for hymns in Second Mode:

Scale

Second Mode bases itself on the scale from Δι to Νη’ (Δι-Κε-Ζω-Νη’), with a flat on Κε. The flat is less than a normal flat, in that it is a “monogram” flat: (~P~)

Dominant Notes

The dominant notes of Second Mode are Δι and Βου.

Cadences/Endings
- Imperfect: Βου
- Perfect: Δι
- Final: Δι
Peculiarities

Γα is attracted to Δι when the melody centers around Γα; thus, Γα takes a sharp. When a melody in Second Mode descends to the lower tetrachord (Νη-Πα-Βού-Γα), it operates diatonically or chromatically. That is:

- The melody operates diatonically when it descends to Πα and returns to Δι or above. When this occurs, Πα is natural.
- The melody operates chromatically when it descends to Νη and returns to Δι or above. When this occurs, Πα is flat.

Borrowed Melodies

The Second Mode, in many instances (most especially eirmologic hymns) will borrow from the musical formulas and rules of Plagal Second Mode.

Ηχος Πλάγιος του Δεύτερου – the Plagal Second Mode

Base Note

The base note of Plagal Second Mode is Πα.

Intonation

Either of the following can serve as introductions to hymns in Plagal Second Mode:

Scale

Plagal Second Mode uses the tetrachord Πα-Βού-Γα-Δι, where Πα is natural, Βού is flat, Γα is sharp, and Δι is natural.
Dominant Notes
The dominant notes are Πα and Δι.

Cadences/Endings
- Imperfect: Δι
- Perfect: Πα
- Final: Πα

Borrowed Melodies
For some eirmologic melodies, Plagal Second Mode borrows from Second Mode. Thus, these hymns or (parts of hymns) are chanted according to the musical rules and formulas which govern the Second Mode.

Peculiarities
As stated earlier, Πα is natural, Βου is flat, Γα is sharp, and Δι is natural. The upper tetrachord (Κε-Ζω-Νη′-Πα′) is usually natural.

Part III: The Enharmonic Family

Ἡχος Τρίτος – the Third Mode

Base Note
The base note of Third Mode is Γα.

Intonation
Any of the following can be used as an introduction for a hymn in Third Mode:
Scale
Third Mode is based on the scale of Γα-Δι-Κε-Ζω, with a flat on Ζω.

Dominant Notes
The dominant notes for hymns in Third Mode are Γα, Κε, and Πα.

Cadences/Endings
- Imperfect: Κε
- Perfect: Πα
- Final: Γα

Peculiarities
Βου is attracted to Γα – that is, Βου is slightly sharp.

’Ηχος Βαρύς – the Grave Mode

Base Note
The base note of Grave Mode is Γα.

Intonation
Any of the following can be used as an introduction for a hymn in Grave Mode:
Scale
Grave Mode uses the same scale as Third Mode: Γα-Δι-Κε-Ζω, with a flat on Ζω.

Dominant Notes
The dominant notes of Grave Mode are Γα, Δι, and Ζω.

Cadences/Endings
-Imperfect: Δι
-Perfect: Γα
-Final: Γα

Special Note!
It is important to know that Grave Mode has two other forms, each with its own base note, scale, dominant notes, cadences, and peculiarities. These other two forms are known as Diatonic Grave Mode (which has low Ζω-natural as its base) and Enharmonic Grave Mode from high Ζω-flat.

The end, and glory be to God!